

**CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



**MOBILITY ACTION PLAN (MAP) PHASE I
IMPLEMENTATION STUDY
FINAL REPORT**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES PUBLIC TRANSIT- HUMAN SERVICES
COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLANS
VOLUME I
LARGE AND SMALL URBAN COUNTIES**

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This is the first volume of a report documents the work activities associated with MAP Goal 2, and Subtasks 3.1 and 3.2 of the study work plan. The original request for proposal (RFP) relative to these subtasks required that the JNTC project team complete the following activities:

“...review and summarize California’s large/small urban areas Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Coordination Plans. The summary must be based on analysis of current providers, assessment of existing needs, strategies and implementation of local priorities”.

Moreover, as the MAP study progressed, the project team was subsequently engaged to review and summarize the Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Coordination Plans developed for rural areas within the state.

In response to the study objectives, the project team completed a comprehensive review of the existing Coordination plans for all regions statewide, towards the goal of developing a combined Statewide Executive Plan Summary document.

The review of the plans was conducted for the purposes of:

- Developing a combined document which generally summarizes the Coordination plans of all regions for information sharing and ease of reference;
- Gaining an informed understanding of transportation coordination needs and efforts planned and underway to address those needs in both large/small urban and rural areas;
- Identifying the unique and similar key issues presented in the plans;
- Assessing thoroughness and consistency of the plans with federal and state regulations and guidelines; and
- Gathering information that will validate and/or augment qualitative information and data collected during the stakeholder involvement process.

The plan review also allowed the project team to capture information that will be useful in development of the Interregional Gap Analysis (Subtask 3.3 of the MAP study) and that can be translated into a broad, but sufficiently detailed view of existing conditions, challenges and opportunities.

This document summarizes the large and small urban county Public Transit – Human Services Coordination Plans prepared statewide. This report documents the project team methodology, findings and recommendations associated with this Task as presented below.

METHODOLOGY

Consistent with study goals and objectives the project team reviewed a total of twenty-one (21) large and small urban Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Coordination Plans and twenty-four (24) coordination plans developed by rural counties. A total of forty-five (45) Coordination plans were reviewed.

The project team proposed to develop a summary of each plan specifically targeted to the following six (6) plan areas:

- Transportation Needs
- Transportation Resources
- Gaps
- Barriers
- Priorities
- Recommendations

We proposed to compile and combine the existing Executive Summaries of each plan to develop the integrated statewide document. However, early on it was discovered that many large/small urban agencies had either not prepared an executive summary of the overall plan, or that the executive summary that accompanied the some plans did not contain all the information needed for our review. This necessitated a more thorough review of most plans to ensure that plan summaries were thorough and reflective of each region's plan.

The review required that project team members extract information from each plan in the areas identified above. The individual Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Coordination plans for each region in California can be found on the Department of Transportation website at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/Coord-Plan-Res.html>.

The urban and rural plan documents reviewed by the project team in almost all cases were the first transportation coordination plans ever developed by transportation agencies in response to the Federal Coordination guidelines. Therefore it is likely that the needs of the target populations, as well as, the transportation resources of public transit and human services agencies/organizations in each region will have changed since the initial development of these plans, especially given the severity of economic conditions in the state.

Moreover, the project team review of the plans provides a solid initial planning and information-sharing baseline relative to coordination plans and programs statewide. In addition, as a means to obtain a more current picture of the status of coordination throughout the state, the stakeholder involvement process was conducted to supplement plan review findings.

It should also be noted that special efforts were taken to ensure that the original language in each plan was not altered. Editing was confined to condensing and/or formatting plan information for presentation.

The large/small urban and rural coordination plan summaries have been arranged alphabetically by county. In addition, for ease of handling and review the comprehensive Statewide Executive Summary is detailed are in two separate volumes (large and small urban counties: Volume I; and rural counties: Volume II). The key findings and the recommendations associated with the review of both the large and small urban and the rural plans are presented and discusses below.

KEY FINDINGS

The review of the plans yielded a number of key observations and findings related to coordination specific to the categories reviewed by the project team for both large and small urban and rural counties. Common or shared issues that surfaced in many regions and issues that were uncommon and/or relatively unique to urban or rural counties and communities are summarized by review category for both urban and rural counties below.

Key Urban Plan Findings

Transportation Needs

Transportation to healthcare-related appointments (e.g., doctor and clinic visits, dialysis appointments, therapy, pharmacy, etc.) was cited as the highest trip need in large and small urban plans.

The need for improvement to the fixed-route public transit network was expressed repeatedly throughout the urban plans. The types of operational and service-related improvements cited include: more frequent and reliable on-time service, greater span of service, service levels (i.e. more buses on routes), longer hours on weekdays and new and/or expanded night and weekend service.

Limited interregional/intercity connections between remote rural areas and urban centers make it difficult for the target populations to make long distance trips to healthcare and employment related destinations.

Same day and door-through-door service is needed for persons with disabilities in almost all regions.

Escort and companion assistance for persons with disabilities and frail seniors was cited repeatedly as an important need in many plans.

Newer and larger vehicles are identified as a continual need for use by human service agencies and organizations.

The need for amenities at bus stops and transfer centers (e.g. bus shelters, benches, lighting, etc.) was mentioned in most urban plans as necessary to ensure rider safety, security and comfort.

Transportation needs for specific low-income and welfare to work-related sub-group (e.g. parolees, agricultural workers, older disabled students to work, court ordered visitation, etc.).

The need for accessible local and intercity taxi service was mentioned by both large and small urban counties in their plans.

Transportation Resources

Large and small urban areas have significant levels of fixed-route service which is operated by one or more public operators for the general population, and local municipalities for their residents.

ADA complementary paratransit service is operated by public transit agencies. In addition, general public and senior paratransit services are operated by public, private, non-profit and non-for-profit agencies.

Intercity bus services are provided in many regions operated by both public operators and Greyhound in some counties. These services provide long distance trips between rural and urban areas for riders. In addition, Amtrak operates intercity rail service in regions throughout the state.

Non-profits, not-for-profit agencies/organizations, including tribal organizations in small urban areas provide demand-responsive and/or shuttle services to members of the target populations.

Given the amount of public transit service available, minimizing service duplication in urban environments was mentioned numerous times relative to management of scarce transportation resources.

Gaps/Barriers

Lack of available funding, specifically for operation of services, was expressed as the most significant gap in the majority of the both large and urban areas.

Funding restrictions require that agencies and organization providing transportation restrict access to only their clients (e.g., vets, dialysis, etc.).

Insurance and the accompanying risk management issues relative to sharing of vehicle and driver resources was a recurring theme in the plans.

Lack of information on transportation services and options that are available to the target populations remain a key issue in the urban plans. The provision of information is often segregated, with agencies and organizations providing the public with information only on the services they provide.

Farebox recovery ratio requirements associated with use of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds was raised as a deterrent to implementation or expansion of new services for the target populations.

Path of travel issues exist for persons with disabilities in all regions relative to access to transit stops and facilities (e.g., unpaved streets, curb cuts, sidewalk wheelchair ramps, spaces limitations, limited crossing times at intersections, etc.).

Language barriers relative to the provision of information on transportation options (especially in Spanish) was cited as a deterrent in ethnically diverse geographic regions.

Mixing of clients who may be unable to travel successfully with other customers/clients (e.g. clients/customers with behavioral disabilities, etc.) is an obstacle cited in coordination plans.

Passenger fares and pricing of service differences exist between cities and communities providing transportation. These variances are confusing and can financially impact the ability of those in the target populations needing to travel between localities.

Lack of standardized driver recruitment and training methods and/or variances in procedures and training inhibit the ability of agencies and organizations to coordinate and/or consolidate their efforts in these areas.

Limited staff resources to devote to transportation was repeatedly identified by human service agencies in the plans as a key issue that impacts their ability to participate in transportation coordination efforts.

Restricted service area and boundaries between jurisdictions limit the target populations' ability to travel to intercity/county destinations.

Operational and service-related incongruence exists between neighboring cities and communities (i.e., fares, service/days hours, transfers, age eligibility, certification parameters, etc.) and must be addressed.

Local and regional land use policies that permit new development in remote geographic areas with no requirement for fee-based transportation-related mitigations from developers, was identified in numerous plans as an on-going, hard to solve issue that will impact the cost of coordination.

State reimbursement for Medi-Cal trips carried by public transit operators was a transportation-related policy limitation identified in urban plans.

Priorities

Identifying and securing on-going funding for transportation projects, with particular emphasis on operating revenue was a priority for all regions.

Improvement of existing fixed-route services was recognized as a logical first step in the process of improving mobility for the target populations and will likewise serve to promote coordination and cooperation in and between regions.

Mobility management surfaced as an important priority for many large and small urban areas. Establishing mobility management centers and/or creating mobility management positions at the local and regional levels was viewed as necessary to assure that coordination goals are achieved.

Improvement of demand-responsive services to ensure availability of same day service for seniors and persons with disabilities is viewed as a priority.

Vehicle accessibility continues to be reflected as a critical priority which will enable public transit and human service agencies and organizations to better meet the increasing transportation needs of persons with disabilities.

Almost all counties in both large and small urban areas **identified and prioritized the need for escorts/companions** to assist frail elderly and persons with disabilities in accessing mobility options.

Improved transit and service-related information for riders was identified as important to ensure that current and potential riders are informed of available travel options.

The development of travel training programs for the target populations was a frequently mentioned priority in the plans.

Taxi voucher programs and/or bus pass subsidies surfaced as a coordinated project priority for both public transit and human service agencies and organizations in urban areas.

Creation and/or expansion of existing volunteer-based local transportation programs (e.g. drivers, escorts and companions, community travel training, etc.) was listed a viable priority for agencies and organizations in their efforts to further coordination.

Continued procurement of new and replacement of older vehicles used to provide services was repeated as a priority in all regions, with special emphasis on purchasing of larger vehicles.

Recommendations

General Plan Project Recommendations

The recommendations contained in the Public Transit – Human Service Coordination plans of large and small urban counties are consistent with and reflect the priorities outlined in the plans. Plan recommendations generally fall in the following project categories:

- Existing fixed-route service improvements
- New and expanded (beyond ADA) demand-responsive services for seniors and persons with disabilities
- Mobility management activities (regional and agency/organization-based)
- Vehicle acquisition or replacement
- Transit voucher and/or bus pass purchase programs
- Low-cost volunteer-based transportation programs
- Travel Training and “bus buddy” programs for riders

Mobility Management

Recommendations associated with establishing mobility management centers and/or participating in mobility management-related projects and activities was shown to be the fundamental recommendation surfacing in the large and small urban plans. Plan stakeholders recognized the need to create a central “facilitating mechanism” to effectuate coordination, both regionally and within individual public transit and human service agencies and organizations.

Creation of regional mobility management centers and/or hiring of new personnel to assume the roles and responsibilities of a mobility manager within an agency or organization are important coordination strategies that can serve to multiple purposes, which include, but are not limited to:

- Serving as a communications conduit between public transit and human services in the development of coordinated transportation plans and programs;

- Working with agency and organization partners to identify and address barriers to coordination of services at the local level; and
- Identifying funding to sustain coordinated projects;
- Ensuring consistency with agency/organization goals to improve mobility for members of the target populations; and
- Assuring compliance with programmatic and funding requirements of funding agencies.

Policy-Related Plan Issues

Issues related to the challenges in meeting Transportation Development Act (TDA) farebox recovery ration requirements and Medi-Cal's reimbursement policies for public transit operators were identified in a limited fashion during the stakeholder input process associated with the development of some urban plans. Although these policy issues were raised as barriers to coordination, the final recommendations in urban coordination plans overall did not reflect an urgency to address the impacts of these policies on the local and regional transportation environment.

Key Rural Findings

Transportation Needs

The needs in all rural plans prepared by Caltrans show the **needs of each county expressed according to the following categories: Coordination, Connections, Service Availability and Acquisition of Capital Equipment.** This general plan "template" was used to present plan elements.

In addition to the stakeholder involvement process conducted in each county, rural plan authors used the unmet needs process findings as a significant source of transportation needs-related information documented in the plans. Similar to their rural counterparts located in the remote areas of large and small urban counties, California's rural county areas identified similar needs for seniors, persons with disabilities and low-income individuals, as follows:

- Funding for transportation projects and programs
- Fixed-route services that provide more frequent service and extended service hours on weekdays, nights and weekends;
- Transportation for frail seniors and persons with disabilities that extend beyond ADA
- Door-to-door and door-through-door service
- General public and demand-responsive shuttle services
- Pedestrian and transportation-related infrastructure (i.e. paved sidewalks, streets and roads, curb cuts, bus shelters and benches, etc.)
- Non-emergency medical (NEMT) transportation
- Long distance transportation (intercity/intercounty) to major medical facilities and employment centers
- Vehicle acquisition and replacement
- Increased transportation technology as warranted (e.g. automated scheduling and dispatching, automated vehicle location, etc.)

Transportation Resources

For the most part, **fixed-route and demand responsive services are being operated in rural counties, but the level of service and geographic coverage is significantly limited** as compared to urban areas. In smaller more remote, hard-to-serve rural counties, baseline transit services are limited to route deviated services with specified collection/pick-up times and special needs services.

As transportation services are limited, **human service agencies play a more prominent and much needed role in rural counties to provide specialized transportation services** for their eligible or certified clients, who are also members of the target populations. These programs administered by these agencies and organizations provide direct operation of services, bus transit passes and tokens and gasoline vouchers.

The Consolidated Transportation Service Agencies (CTSA) in rural counties serve as a well-respected partner with public transit agencies and human services in both the operation of services, and in addressing specialized transportation need.

More tribal transportation services are being operated in rural counties. Transportation is for the most part limited to tribal members for healthcare and employment-related (job training, work) purposes. There are some efforts being taken by public transit agencies in cooperation with tribal representatives to negotiate the provision coordinated services.

Subsidized private taxi service is utilized as a transportation option in rural areas.

Gaps/Barriers

The gaps and barriers identified in rural plans were for most part very similar to those identified in the large and small urban plans. However, there was some confusion in rural plans about the differences between gaps in the transportation resources available to meet the identified needs of the target populations, and barriers to coordination.

Therefore, in many of the rural plans, gaps and barriers were identified and combined and were documented as follows:

- Additional funding is needed for service operations, vehicles and staffing.
- Insurance and risk issues related to sharing of vehicles and driver resources need to be addressed.
- Farebox ratio recovery requirements Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) present challenges with Medi-Cal reimbursement for provision of trips and sharing of client information.
- Service boundary restrictions between jurisdictions operating service impact rider access to intercity destinations.
- Agency/organizations must comply with funding-based limitations on clients that can be transported.

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- Geographic isolation in an issue in some remote rural regions as transit is not readily accessible.
- Public transit costs as much as operating a vehicle with bulk fare options.
- More information on transportation options available to riders should be provided.
- Staff resources at public transit and human service agencies and organizations insufficient to address coordination.
- Transit and paratransit improvements needed (span of service, on-time, same day service, etc).
- Language issues create challenges for riders in understanding printed information on transportation options.
- Lack of a centralized lead or “champion” agency to administer and manage coordinated programs.

Priorities

- **Improve public transit service levels/hours on weekdays, weekends and nights**, including gradual expanded fixed-route coverage in upcoming years.
- **Seek additional funding for operating costs for new and expanded transit and paratransit services.**
- **Mobility management should be used as a tool** to enhance coordination in rural areas.
- **Maintain and/or strengthen existing CTSA's and establish new CTSA's in rural counties.** CTSA's could be used to create centralized joint procurement and standardized driver training programs.
- **Establish or increase volunteer driver and escort/companion programs.**
- **Address and resolve outstanding and/or difficult barriers to coordination** (i.e. insurance, etc.).
- **Vehicle fleet replacement is a high priority in rural transportation environments** as vehicles are subject to considerable wear and tear due to rugged and rough terrain.
- **Continued participation of SSTAC** is critical to growth of coordination efforts in rural counties.
- Enhanced public transit and human service coordination to **provide transportation information for riders on all options.**
- **Increase in demand-responsive services for frail seniors and persons with disabilities beyond ADA.**
- **Gradual expansion and strengthening of fixed-route and long-distance travel options.**

- **Coordination of operating policies between systems and providers** (e.g. fares, transfers, age eligibility, days and hours of operation, etc.).
- **Regulated accessible taxis should be effectively used** as an additional mobility option for riders.

Recommendations

The recommendations contained in the Public Transit – Human Service Coordination plans of rural counties are mostly consistent with and reflect the priorities outlined in the plans, and are similar to those of urban counties.

Plan recommendations generally fall in the following project categories:

- Establish and support new CTSA's in rural areas where they do not currently exist.
- Create regional mobility managers or transportation brokerages to facilitate coordination in agency and/or regional transportation environments, including negotiation of coordinated agreements between public transit and human service agencies.
- Implement intercity/interregional or rideshare services that facilitate travel to employment for low income persons.
- Develop non-emergency medical transportation options.
- Work with rural agencies and organizations to coordinate automated scheduling and dispatching of transportation services.
- Timely replacement of vehicles.
- Develop joint driver testing and training opportunities.
- Establish or expand volunteer programs (drivers, travel training, escorts and companions, etc.).
- Work to establish functioning transportation legal structure and decision-making processes within each subregion.

Plan Compliance and Consistency Issues

The four (4) federally required elements of the Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Coordination plans were not clearly delineated in some urban and most rural plans, as follows:

1. An **assessment of available services** identifying current providers, public and private;
2. An **assessment of transportation needs** for individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with low incomes – this assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of planning partners or on data collection efforts and gaps in service;
3. **Strategies and/or activities and/or projects** to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to improve efficiencies in service delivery; and

4. **Priorities for implementation** based on resources (from multiple program sources), time and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

The project team review of the plans was more challenging as these elements were not clearly presented in or were absent in some of the plans.

The level of detail varies relative to transportation resources available in each county.

The rural plans overall demonstrate a greater level of detail as compared to the urban plans, specific to services operated by both public transit and human services (e.g. fixed-route, demand-responsive, route deviation, etc.) and provision of other service-related information (service span, hours and days of operation). In many cases, urban regions included only very basic summary level information on transportation services available, which can likely be attributed to the considerable volume of transportation services operated in these urban areas.

Although not required, the coordination plans were limited in their discussion about project performance monitoring and success measurement. This will likely be an issue that is addressed in the upcoming Federal re-authorization and will need to be addressed in plans.

Federally mandated coordination plan requirements and the associated concepts need greater definition and clarification to promote improved understanding for those preparing plans. For example, many of the plans demonstrate some level of confusion about the nature of the information that should be included in the following required plan sections: transportation needs versus gaps in transportation, and, gaps versus barriers to coordination. There is considerable overlap shown in these areas. In addition, there is uncertainty about the differences and similarities between mobility management centers and transportation brokerages, as well as, the current role of CTSA's versus newly established mobility management centers and mobility managers.

Other Shared Large/Small Urban and Rural Plan Issues

Human service agencies collectively play important role in providing transportation for the target populations in small urban and rural areas (i.e. Independent Living Centers, Regional Centers, Department of Public Social Services, etc.) These agencies have vendor-based contracted transportation programs (provision of rides) and pass and voucher subsidies in place that serve only eligible clients. The impact to the transportation environment is often overlooked as the public operators are in the day-to-day business of providing mass transportation and have considerably more transportation resources.

The role of school districts and schools in local coordination efforts remains undetermined as discussed in coordination plans prepared throughout the state. The regulatory requirements associated with the use of school buses and transporting school age children is restrictive and challenging to overcome.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Collectively the Public Transit –Human Service Transportation Coordination plans prepared by both large and small urban and rural counties were both comprehensive and informative. However, in the updates to the plans, it is recommended that the state consider some funding guideline modifications and clarifications that provide greater clarification on required plan elements and definitions and examples to explain important coordination concepts.

The rural plan authors in the initial first versions of the plans did employ a “template-based” approach to preparation. Overall, this approach made review of the rural plans more straightforward. However, the template format and categories used to develop the rural plans likewise made it challenging to extract information related to the required plan elements, and problematic to ascertain the extent to which plan requirements were met.

Therefore, we believe that a standardized plan organizational format should be developed and incorporated into the funding guidelines that remains in compliance with federal and state funding requirements and guidelines, and clearly demonstrates that all required elements of the plan have been completed by urban and rural agencies.

In addition the development and incorporation of the standardized organizational format and associated definitions/clarifications, the following is also recommended:

- Greater guidance should be developed related to project performance measures for coordination projects as agencies and organizations are unclear as to how to establish, measure and achieve productivity and performance objectives for projects and programs that involve coordinated services and related mobility support projects.
- Develop standard for incorporation of existing transportation resource information into plans that will provide sufficient information on services available. Service information should include, but is not limited to:
 - Identification agency/organization
 - Mode of services operated (e.g. fixed-route, demand response, etc.)
 - Routes/Destinations served
 - Days and hours operated
 - Number of vehicles
- The stakeholder involvement effort associated with plan development should logically include some level of input from the larger human service agencies and organizations providing services to the target populations throughout the county (e.g., Area Agency on Aging, Department of Public Social Services, Regional Centers, Independent Living Centers, Veterans Administration, Cal Works/GAIN, etc.) Good faith efforts should be made to include these agencies and organizations at a minimum in the coordination dialogue as their participation is promoting transportation coordination activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES - LARGE AND SMALL URBAN COUNTIES

BUTTE COUNTY

Transportation Need

Although the system is well-conceived and enjoys growing utilization, it is not equipped to meet specialized requirements of the county's substantial low-income, disabled and senior populations. As a result, those who rely on public transportation for non-emergency medical visits, mental health appointments, job training and interviews, and other trip purposes frequently are defeated by the size and largely rural character of the county. Reported transportation needs found agreement on the top-ranked need across public transit, human services and private-sector organizations – non-emergency medical trips ranked as the highest need by 64 percent of responding agencies. After medical trip needs, human service agencies ranked the next top needs as counseling/mental health trips; shopping with multiple errands and trip-chaining needs; training, educationally oriented or job interview trips.

All of the Plan data collection activities are discussed in Chapter 6 in terms of three dimensions:

1. Individualized needs of consumers
2. Organizational issues and requirements of human service agencies and public transit agencies, and
3. Infrastructure issues.

Based upon the California Department of Finance numbers, suggest that significantly increasing numbers of residents will be within the target population:

- By 2010, between 46,000 and 64,000 persons, up to 28 percent of projected 230,000 residents
- By 2020, between 57,000 and 79,000 persons, up to 28 percent of 281,000 residents
- By 2030, between 69,000 and 96,000 persons, up to 29 percent of 335,000 residents

Public transit trip need was also estimated as a range. Projected annual trip needs of 752,000 to 2.2 million public transit trips are estimated, based upon the 2000 Census population base. Contrasted with trips currently provided in FY 2007, B Line reported almost 1.4 million trips on both paratransit and fixed-route transit; current total trips are approximately in the middle of the projected range of total trips needed.

The Plan further hypothesizes that of total public transit trips needed, one in four trips, or 25 percent, requires special assistance. Special assistance could be paratransit or individualized services, or it could be information about fixed-route transit. From among the public transit trips potentially needed by the target populations, a projected 188,000 to 553,000 specialized transportation trips are estimated as needed annually by the target populations. Contrasted with specialized transit trips of just below 400,000, current specialized transit trips provided sit squarely within the range of projected specialized trips needed.

Other key areas of need are as follows:

1. Issues with the public transit network with need for increased frequency, increased coverage, improved reliability, improved customer service and easier information access.
2. Requirements for additional services and more transportation assistance than is currently available, including same-day service, non-emergency medical transportation, special shuttles and directed group trips.
3. Affordability of transportation is a significant challenge, particularly in light of rising fuel prices. Paying even the subsidized bus fare is very difficult for the lowest income individuals.
4. Agency personnel needs that include transit information and transit trip planning education for case workers and front-line staff who have little knowledge of B-Line services.
5. Agency transportation provider needs that include driver training, driver recruitment, insurance availability, vehicle replacement and brokered or shared-ride opportunities to improve availability and cost-effectiveness of services.
6. Unserved areas of the county exist that will never be effectively served by public transit but where multiple human service agencies have clients with mobility needs.

Transportation Resources

Total trips provided are reported as 1.6 million passenger trips, across all modes and including public fixed-route, public paratransit and human service agencies. A breakdown of these 1.6 million trips – represented as 7.5 trips per capita – shows that demand response trips total almost 393,000 and account for 1.8 trips per capita. This current demand response level of 1.8 trips per capita is below the 2.7 trips per capita indicator of trips needed, but not impossibly so as an increase of 200,000 trips annually could meet this projected demand level.

What Public Transit Resources Now Exist? Beginning in 2001, Butte County initiated consolidation of the multiple programs that made up public transit for its residents. Branded as B-Line, public transit services are now provided within the urban areas and between the urban areas of Chico and Oroville and Chico and Paradise, with some limited service to the rural areas, including Gridley/Biggs. The system-wide map shows the current reach of B-Line fixed-route services, with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services provided within Chico, Oroville, Paradise and Gridley/Biggs. B-Line Fixed Route -Chico

This system provides transportation to the general public and consists of 10 routes throughout the city of Chico. Weekday frequency ranges between 30 minutes and one hour, with an operating schedule between the hours of 6:15 a.m. and 9:45 p.m. Regular fare for this service is \$1.00, while a 10 ride pass costs \$9.00. Prices are discounted by 50 percent for all seniors aged 65 and older and persons with disabilities, and anyone with a valid Medicare card.

□ B-Line Fixed Route – Oroville

Service is provided to the general public, consisting of routes connecting with the city of Chico and traveling within Oroville. There are four routes traveling within the city of Oroville, and two routes connecting Oroville with the cities of Biggs and Paradise.

Weekday frequency ranges between 30 minutes and two hours, with an operating schedule between the hours of 5:50 a.m. and 7:42 p.m. Regular fare for this in-city service is \$1.00, while a 10-ride pass costs \$9.00. Prices are discounted by 50 percent for all seniors aged 65 and older and persons with disabilities, and anyone with a valid Medicare card.

□ B-Line Fixed route Intercity Routes

There are five routes that exist and create connections with the cities of Chico, Paradise, Oroville, Gridley and Biggs. These routes also provide local service to the Paradise/Magalia area. These are considered regional routes and regular fares are increased to \$1.25, while a 10 ride pass increases to \$11.00.

□ B-Line Paratransit Service

This service serves all destinations $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from any Butte Regional transit (B-Line) fixed route, within Chico, Oroville or Paradise. This system accommodates all ADA passengers, and provides Dial-a-Ride service for persons with disabilities found not eligible for ADA service and seniors age 65 and older. The fare for this service is \$2.00 per one-way trip.

□ Inter-County Services

Service between the counties of Butte and Glenn is provided by Glenn Ride on Monday through Friday, providing seven trips per day between the hours of 5:15 a.m. and 7:20 p.m. There are three trips between these counties available on Saturdays between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Regular fare for inter-county service between Butte and Glenn is \$1.50, with a transfer to B-Line services at the Chico Transit Center.

Travel between Butte County and Plumas County is achieved by utilizing the Plumas Transit System. This is a once-a-day round trip service that is only available on Wednesdays, originating in Plumas County and arriving in Chico mid-day, then returning to Plumas in the evening. One-way fares are \$12.00 and discounted by 50 percent for seniors, children, and persons with disabilities. For one-way travel to Plumas only, riders must contact the office to ensure that a ride is available. This bus only travels to Chico when passengers from Plumas need to make the trip.

Following Vehicles reported numbered 233, of which 55 (24 percent) are in B-Line operations, 98 (42 percent) are operated by human services and 80 vehicles (34 percent) are reported by schools or commercial providers. Notably, of the vehicles reported by human service agencies, only one-third are lift-equipped, while 100 percent of the public transit vehicles are accessible and lift-equipped.

Importantly, respondents indicate that 43 percent of reported vehicles must be replaced within two years and presumably larger numbers of these should be lift-equipped. Trips provided by human service organizations annualized to 281,000, or 16 percent of total trips reported. B-Line

trips accounted for 69 percent (1.2 million trips) and public schools, as well as commercial providers, reporting just under 10 percent (155,000) of all trips reported by this sample.

Human service agency-provided trips were considerably longer than were the public transit trips, reflecting both the type and nature of these trips, often provided one-to-one and traveling distances between communities in contrast with public transit's shorter, more efficient trips.

Selective other transportations resources in Butte County Merit Medi-Trans is a for-profit company that transports mobility impaired, low-income individuals to medical appointment with Butte County and beyond. They serve a client base of approximately 2,500, and serve an average of 75-100 clients per day. Merit Medi-Trans has a fleet of 34 vehicles with a capacity of 9 or fewer passengers and employs approximately 35 drivers and 1.5 mechanics. They utilize about 27 vehicles on daily basis and have a call center with dispatching software. Funding comes from the State Department of Health Services (Medi-Cal), client fees, and passenger fares. Merit Medi-Trans is pursuing private non-profit status.

The Work Training Center Inc., (WTC) is a private, non-profit agency providing various services to adults with disabilities in Butte County. WTC serves a client base of 680, and provides transportation to 325 passengers on a daily basis. They have a fleet of 28 vehicles and utilize 21 vehicles on an average day. WTC employs 28 drivers and 4 mechanics. WTC receives funding from the Regional Center (Dept of Development Services), and FTA 5310 for vehicles.

The Feather River Tribal Health Clinic is a tribal organization serving the needs of Native Americans. It serves a client base of 5,440 individuals with an average daily attendance at its Oroville facility of 180. They transportation approximately 12 passengers a day in four vehicles, and have nine vehicles total available for transportation. Transportation is only available to Native Americans. The vehicles are Federal GSA vehicles and are also utilized by staff for home visits.

Gaps

Duplication and service gaps in the transportation network were identified as:

- Achieving efficient use of the many vehicles operating daily across Butte County, estimated at 250 vehicles from survey respondents alone.
- Redefining the role of public school transportation providers in a coordinated service model.
- Recognizing that the existing B-Line service footprint in Butte County is limited by farebox requirements to achieve certain efficiencies, as required in State regulation, limiting responses to low-density areas of the County.
- Recognizing the challenges of two very different service systems – public transit and human services – which each share some responsibility for the mobility of the three target groups.
- Recognizing that there is no infrastructure, and limited mechanisms in place, to bring together those human service agencies with public transit to facilitate meeting some of these mobility needs can also be seen as the gaps.

The California Transportation Development Act requires a 10 percent recovery of fares to expenses for paratransit or in rural areas and 20 percent farebox recovery ratio for fixed-route

services in urban areas. It is this requirement that limits what public transit can do, to the extent that transit planners attempt to design and put on the streets services that will be sufficiently utilized to meet these minimum farebox recovery requirements.

A consequence of this is that certain areas of the Butte County are not served, notably many of the small, isolated areas in the less-densely populated eastern and southern sections of Butte County, as well as some neighborhoods within or adjacent to the County's cities. These gaps in service represent areas of need for which coordinated solutions may be built.

Different Service Systems, Different Cultures and Different Missions Public transit and human service agencies, on the face of it, have more differences than commonalities. Public transit's sole mission is the provision of public transportation while transit programs of any type are a support service for human services and not the sole or primary mission. Where human services transportation does exist, it is simply to help implement the agency's mission. In California, as in Butte County, the SSTACs – Social Services Transportation Advisory Councils – were convened to invite input and participation across the two systems.

The languages these service systems speak are unarguably different, using different acronyms and funding streams, measuring different indicators and with different emphasis on effectiveness versus efficiencies. These differences become problematic at the intersection of these systems. For public transit, this is with regard to customer service and to its annual planning processes around the unmet needs hearings. For human services the inverse is true when case worker and agency staff have difficulty translating "transit-ese" into a viable trip plan for a consumer in areas served by the B-Line or in knowing how to make input to the larger planning processes that can extend the reach of the existing public transit services.

These differences make mutual service planning more complicated than it might seem on the face of it. Coupled with this, human services agencies are spending some dollars towards meeting transportation needs. Whether these funds could be more efficiently spent, whether they could leverage additional, not currently feasible public transit services or help to bring about new alternatives has not been explored, given the historical complexities of communication between the public transit and human services industries.

Infrastructure for Collaborative Responses, including Volunteer Assistance

There has been limited opportunity for constructing collaborative, coordinated responses to the hard-to-serve transportation needs that this Plan documents. Again, the SSTAC is a means of bringing together leadership in the human services community with the public transit operator. But as with many counties, the agenda tends to focus on the existing service system namely the B-Line services and the means by which to improve those. There has been little opportunity, save for the Section 5310 vehicle grant process, to promote coordinated responses nor has there been any meaningful institutional setting in which to construct these solutions.

Related to this, this Plan and supported by the May Project Development Workshop, has documented that multiple human service agencies in Butte County are providing services to individuals in the isolated communities that dot the foothills along Butte County's eastern boarder, and other somewhat more populated areas of the County. But there has been little way of coordinating trip provision, except for that which happens informally through the provider, such as by Merit Medi-Trans as one of the primary Medi-Cal providers in the County.

The role of volunteerism in Butte County surfaced as an important resource, both through the interviews and in the survey with 13 agencies reporting some type of volunteer driver activity. There is real opportunity in Butte County to extend existing, purchased transportation through appropriate volunteerism. Volunteer programs have been significant elsewhere in the country in responding to needs of seniors who are decreasing their driving, for children and youth in isolated communities who need to get into services or other individuals in-need of time-limited transportation assistance, such as cancer treatments.

Again, while individual programs have noted significant volunteer activity, there is no mechanism to match potential volunteers with individual needed trips.

Multiple Transportation Operations

There is minimal evidence of duplication of transportation resources within Butte County. That said; it is a fact that Butte Community College, the Work Training Center, Merit Medi-Trans and the B-Line collectively operate approximately 90 vehicles and many of these vehicles pass one another during a typical day and over the course of a week. These vehicles do not necessarily represent duplicative resources. They may however be underutilized and not well targeted towards some of the harder-to-serve needs identified by this Plan. As such, these vehicles represent opportunity for coordinated responses to these needs.

Barriers

What emerged from the Agency survey Top-ranked barriers to accessing needed transportation identified by responding agencies includes:

- Funding challenges for directly operating or contracting for transportation. Funding is of interest to this review. For FY 2007, public transit expenditures countywide were \$11.9 million. Human service organizations reported \$5.5 million, with the largest proportion spent for direct operations, but also including support for mileage reimbursement, bus tokens and passes, and taxi vouchers. More than a quarter of the transportation-providing agencies, these all human services organizations, report significant funding from “soft money” sources that include fundraising, private donations and client fees. Substantive differences in the funding base exist where public transit reports stable, continuing sources that are likely to increase with time while human services funding, with such reliance upon donations and fees, is reported as less likely to increase.
- Difficulty in working with public transit, in terms of its reliability, and its rules and requirements that sometimes conflict with the individualized needs of consumers.
- Public transit’s availability, e.g., when it operates and when it does not sometimes represents a mismatch with transit-dependent consumers’ needs.
- Agency restrictions, due to structure or organizational limits’ that impact the ability to provide transportation.
- Geography of Butte County and the long distances required for some trips.
- Information assistance is needed, both to help frail consumers navigate services and to assist those new to public transit in finding their way.

- Consumers' individualized needs make it difficult to use available public transit. These needs include assistance in booking trips, gurney transportation and special help for individuals on dialysis or with behavioral health needs.

Priorities

This Plan strongly recommends that BCAG and its strategic planning partners move forward expeditiously with decisions around a regional Mobility Manager/CTSA for Butte County. This is seen as the missing piece that can, to a significant degree, promote and nurture the coordination potential that exists in Butte County.

This entity can provide the leadership necessary to leverage existing resources and to promote new efficiencies and cost-effective alternatives by which the needs documented in this Plan can be addressed.

BCAG can establish a process for decision-making around the Mobility Manager/CTSA structure, governance and funding base, as well as initial membership and functions. Potentially a modest organizational planning study is indicated. Any adopted structure should ensure a flexible, responsive organizational design that allows the Mobility Manager/CTSA functions and membership to develop with time.

Making choices among equally worthy alternatives requires developing consensus and supporting policy makers in moving forward activities. All funded projects, strategies and activities must:

1. Adequately address the unmet/underserved and individualized transportation needs of the target populations;
2. Demonstrate coordination efforts between public transit and human services agencies;
3. Maintain consistency with current Federal and State funding regulations;
4. Be financially sustainable;
5. Include measurable goals and objectives;
6. Build and/or increase overall system capacity and service quality;
7. Leverage and maximize existing transportation funding and capital resources. the realization of marketing economies of scale, a much broader reach in terms of the people who can access the information, increased customer service levels, and possibly the realization of operational efficiencies.

Recommendations

This Plan sets forth a Vision statement and identifies three implementing goals, providing a framework for potential strategies and projects.

VISION: TO IMPROVE MOBILITY FOR BUTTE COUNTY SENIORS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND PERSONS OF LOW-INCOME THROUGH COORDINATED PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS.

GOAL 1: FACILITATING LEADERSHIP AND INFRASTRUCTURE – The formation of a regional Mobility Manager/CTSA entity is recommended with decisions taken regarding the structure, organizational location, membership and funding to be developed. This Mobility Manager/CTSA provides the infrastructure necessary to further coordination of human service agency transportation and facilitates appropriate integration with B-Line’s network of services.

GOAL 2: BUILDING SERVICES – Working collaboratively, the regional Mobility Manager, human service agencies and the B-Line can grow the capacity of existing services, develop and test new services and build creative mobility responses to gaps in the existing service fabric.

GOAL 3: ENHANCING INFORMATION PORTALS – The regional Mobility Manager/CTSA becomes a clearinghouse for information on transportation options, both human service transportation and public transit services. Expanded information roles could involve trip-arranging for the most frail populations and mobility training to teach all potential users, including youth, seniors and other transit-dependent persons how to use Butte County’s public transit network.

Chapter The Federal circulars require that a competitive process be undertaken to identify and select those projects to which JARC and New Freedom funding should be directed. This is complicated for Butte County, again as with other small counties, where the total funding levels are modest, at no more than \$80,000 for the first funding year. Therefore, the following actions are proposed:

1. Recommend that BCAG seek discretionary funding to move to decisions regarding the regional Mobility Manager/CTSA organizational structure and related issues.
2. Recommend that either alternative funding such as TDA Article 4.5 be sought to fund the Mobility Manager or that no more than half of the annual JARC/New Freedom funding be used to underwrite the regional Mobility Manager.
3. Recommend a competitive Call be offered to BCAG’s planning partners, inviting projects either in defined areas or left open to the interest and willingness of prospective applicants.
4. Recommend that BCAG enter into discussion with its own member agencies about providing graduated funding, based upon TDA Article 4.5 provisions for those who cannot use conventional transit, to establish a baseline operations budget for the CTSA. Such graduated funding levels could accommodate very modest beginning initiatives that might grow subsequently.

Each of these actions involves considerable implementation detail. All of BCAG’s planning partners concerned with the content of this Plan are encouraged to participate and to assist with the steps that this will entail, as appropriate to each organization. Notably, where reallocation of resources is involved, it is a complicated and difficult process at best, and more so when the statewide budget picture is not favorable. These strategies intend only to suggest potential projects, to further evolve as the County’s response to this Coordinated Plan unfolds.

FRESNO COUNTY

Transportation Needs

Effective coordination builds on existing resources and infrastructure utilizing the fixed route system as the backbone.

The Region: The Fresno County region's disabled population exceeds the statewide average, meaning their mobility needs will be a major challenge for many government, human-service-providers, and community organizations. Another factor is the aging population. When older-adults lose their ability to drive, they also risk losing their vital connections to needed services and community involvement. These issues can be as basic as medical appointments, grocery shopping or attending religious services. Safe and convenient modes of transportation ensure independence and self-sufficiency and delay costly home care or nursing home services, while reducing demand for community and government services. Many of the aging population live in rural areas of the County where there is low-residential density and a lack of public transportation.

Transit services are currently lacking in rural areas. People often live in rural areas or edges of cities due to lower-cost housing options.

Even within transit service areas, service levels in some areas may not meet travel needs of the people. For example, ADA-paratransit service only extends three-quarters of a mile beyond the fixed-route transit system.

There are also people who are eligible for ADA paratransit services, but need a higher level of service than the transit agency provides (e.g., door-to-door or door-through-door). Human-service agencies typically provide a higher level of service, but are often designated for a specific target population or specific destination type. COG takes public testimony on unmet transit needs in Fresno County at the Annual Unmet Needs Hearing in February.

There are repeated requests for new public transit service, however new service must meet the COG "unmet needs and reasonable to meet" criteria. There are reoccurring requests for extended evening service and providing later service on weekends.

Additionally, there are requests for service to outlying rural areas, which are less reasonable to meet due to low ridership and a higher cost.

Transportation Resources

Fixed-route and Paratransit:

The City of Fresno, Department of Transportation/Fresno Area Express (FAX) provides the majority of public transportation services in Fresno County. FAX provided over 11 million passenger trips in 2005/2006 on its fixed-route system. The Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission (FCEOC), acting as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) for Fresno County, provided 532,067 trips. The majority of the remaining trips were provided by Fresno County Rural Transit (FCRTA) and Clovis Transit with 401,444 and 45,531 respectively.

In addition, a number of social service agencies and organizations (Appendix C) operate transportation services for their clients. FAX also provides complimentary paratransit service within the urban boundaries of Fresno County (Map 3). Paratransit service (Demand-Response) is provided within three-quarters of a mile of fixed route service. A person must be certified as eligible to use Demand-Response.

Specialized Transit: While the main support of public transportation is a fixed-route system, it is not always available, or may not meet special transportation needs. Human-service transportation is an ancillary function of agencies that transport clients to and/or from services or programs they offer as part of their mission. These agencies, in coordination with transit agencies, make up the landscape of special needs transportation. The following agencies provide the majority of specialized transit for clients with special needs.

- Fresno County Economics Opportunity Commission (FCEOC) is a private, non-profit agency established in 1965 as a Community Action Agency. Its purpose is to serve low-income persons throughout Fresno County. With an annual budget of \$130 million, it operates over 37 various human services and economic development programs aimed at providing a variety of resources to low income families, disabled persons, senior citizens, women, youth and children.

The programs provide services to approximately 200,000 persons on an annual basis with a staff of over 1,300 persons.

- Laidlaw Transit, Inc. offers special needs transportation for non-emergency medical, fixed route, and charter bus rentals in the Central Valley region as well as nationwide. Information on this agency is not available for release.
- Non-Emergency Medical Transportation: Several private sector companies are in the business of providing non-emergency medical transportation services in the metropolitan and rural areas of Fresno County. These trips are generally prescribed by a doctor for a medical purpose. Vehicles driven by specially trained personnel transport patients in seats, wheelchairs or gurneys.
- King's County Area Public Transit Area: King's County operates two vanpool programs in Fresno County. The first is Kings Area Rural Transit (KART), a traditional vanpool providing service to a variety of workers including state and federal employees, working at nine different prisons in the San Joaquin Valley. The second is a farm labor vanpool called Agricultural Industries Transportation Services project or AITS. This program is designed to provide qualified agricultural workers in Kern, Kings, Tulare and Fresno Counties with safe, affordable vans they can use to drive themselves and others to work.

Intercity Transportation: Amtrak offers direct train service and intercity feeder bus connection throughout the state via the San Joaquin Rail Route. Greyhound Bus Lines offers multiple northbound and southbound departures daily from the Fresno terminal. Transportation is also available through Orange Belt Stages, as well as other charter bus companies.

Gaps

- People with special transportation needs that live outside the three-quarters of a mile boundary are often unable to obtain service.

- FAX does not offer service past 10:00 pm, or past 7:30 pm on weekends. Clovis Transit does not offer service after 6:30 pm and has no weekend service. Although extended evening service and weekend service is a recognized benefit, there is a low-probability these services would meet the COG-established farebox requirements.
- In many communities, a lack of transportation stands in the way of receiving adequate medical attention for some citizens. These persons are often older, disabled, and poor.

Barriers

Major constraints for transit growth are funding, transit costs, limited ridership, and land-use development patterns. Local area plans must comply with federal and state requirements and also meet local needs. More funding is dependent on coordination at planning and implementation stages of transportation activities. Coordination must occur at the service level and at the planning level. Demographics: Fresno County has a higher percentage of disabled and low-income residents than statewide. Due to lower real estate prices and lower cost of living, many retirees relocate to Fresno County from major metropolitan centers. As this segment of population ages, it is expected there will be increased demand for specialized services for senior citizens. Land-Use: Due to low residential density and a large service area, it is not feasible to expand traditional transit to serve a large service area. New development should incorporate transit-friendly design and provide funding through development impact fees. Service Area Boundaries: Service area boundaries differ between human-service programs and public transportation providers. Driver Requirements: Different agencies have different requirements for vehicle safety, driver training, driver licensing, or other standards.

Exchanging Information – Software:

Transportation providers and brokers use different scheduling, dispatching, and reporting software, which makes sharing information difficult. Transferring regional eligibility and scheduling data between and among ADA-paratransit providers, Medi-Cal brokers, school districts, and others is not automated. Exchanging Information – Privacy: A primary barrier in sharing information has been addressing confidentiality and privacy requirements. Privacy Acts, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) prohibit sharing client information and authorize penalties for offenders. Funding: Due to limited available operational funding, public transit needs to achieve maximum cost effectiveness.

Liability:

Indemnification issues prohibit agencies from sharing or loaning vehicles. Regulatory Constraints: Federal and state transportation funding agencies often make coordination and funding efforts difficult. Reporting Requirements: Federal, state, and local agencies that fund special needs transportation have different reporting requirements attached to their funds. Agencies receiving funds from multiple funding sources must set up labor-intensive and costly data collection mechanisms to meet multiple reporting requirements. Staff time to meet such requirements means less money to provide services.

- Learning how to use the system may be difficult for new riders due to various reasons such as:

- Different transit systems have different fare schedules, which can be confusing and difficult for riders.
- Riders may require help getting on and off a vehicle, but there is often no one available to help them at transfer points.
- Paratransit systems generally do not provide same day service, which means riders must schedule trips in advance. FCRTA, the rural provider, does offer a real time demand – response service for limited number of customers.

Priorities

The priorities and recommendations overlapped SHORT-RANGE STRATEGIES (1-5 YEAR HORIZON):

Priority 1: Finding a ride online in larger urban areas, ride-sharing programs offer trip connection information to individuals seeking to ride-share with others. Interested persons can access an internet website for an instant list of potential carpool partners, people who live and work near them and have a similar schedule. The CHSTP recommendation is for COG, or another agency, to research the feasibility of implementing a web-based trip planning program. Trip-planning software will require funding resources to purchase, and an agency or organization to host, a local trip planning website.

Priority 2: Travel Training Travel training would be provided to senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and non-English speaking customers. The program would be designed to provide the necessary assistance for each person to successfully learn how to use Public Transit's regular route bus system so that they do not have to rely on family, friends and/or neighbors for their trips. Travel training will give our seniors and people with disabilities the freedom to go where they want, when they want, and an increased sense of confidence and independence. It is recommended that the CTSA, COG, and SSTAC research resources available to fund a Travel Training program, and to seek potential agencies to administer the program.

Priority 3: Increase the availability of qualified transit drivers - Agencies have different requirements for vehicle safety, driver training, driver licensing, and employment qualifications. Consistent standards could increase the availability of qualified drivers in the region, and eliminate the cost of duplicated training programs. It is recommended that the CTSA take the lead in developing a working group to develop consistent driver standards for transit providers in the region.

Priority 4: Developing volunteer driver programs. Many people in outlying areas are without transit service. To provide cost-efficient service to the largest population, transit agencies typically provide more frequent service in urban areas. What happens when an individual living in outlying rural areas can no longer drive? How do they get to medical appointments and other resources? One option is a volunteer driver program. Volunteers escort clients to their appointments and offer support and encouragement. Often they provide the link to a better life by helping them to access the resources that can help them out of poverty or resolve a medical need. Beverly Foundation is an example of an established volunteer driver program.

Priority 5: The growing older-adult population - One option is to keep older-adults driving safely for as long as possible. Driver wellness and training programs could be offered to older-adults, helping them to continue driving safely. AARP offers a driver safety course for drivers age 50

and older. This course is currently available in a classroom setting in Fresno County and cost \$10.00 per course. 55-Alive is another program that teaches seniors to drive safely. The CHSTP recommendation is for the CTSA, COG, and SSTAC to contact senior advocacy groups, senior centers, and retirement homes regarding sponsoring driver safety and wellness programs for seniors in our region. The COG should assist agencies or organizations in seeking funding resources to develop local driver and wellness training programs.

Priority 6: 511 Information System - 511 is the national telephone number for traveler information. With 511, travelers can access accurate information about local highway and public transportation options, including carpool and vanpool ride matching services, anytime and anywhere in the United States. The eight counties making up the Central Valley are one of the last areas in the Western United States that does not have a 511, or Traveler Information System in place. Currently, Fresno COG staff is working with the remaining Valley COGs, Caltrans, and the Sacramento Council of Government (SACOG) to implement a 'baseline' 511 system in the San Joaquin Valley.

A 'baseline' system is being pursued because this would allow Valley COGs to establish very basic traveler information services at the lowest cost. There are many benefits to a 511 system for the transportation community. A 511 system offers the transportation community a better way to serve its customers. Traveler Information Systems help balance today's multi-modal transportation systems. A 511 system can inform travelers of alternate routes during an incident, report weather conditions, divulge transportation-related information and much more. Specific benefits of a 511 Traveler Information System for transit users include centralized telephonic and online access to transit-related information, a much more user-friendly experience for the user, and much more information in one place.

Additional benefits for users include much easier access to information because instead of having to remember the contact information of several different providers, the user will only need to remember one three digit number to access all transit information for Fresno County. Benefits to transit agencies include the realization of marketing economies of scale, a much broader reach in terms of the people who can access the information, increased customer service levels, and possibly the realization of operational efficiencies.

The CHSTP recommendation is that the eight Valley COGs, decision-makers, and transportation providers implement a more comprehensive 511 system for Fresno County than the proposed 'baseline' system. It is further recommended the Fresno COG and transit providers find short-term and long-term funding mechanisms that would enable a comprehensive 511 information system to be built for Fresno County, the San Joaquin Valley and the State of California.

Priority 7: Improve coordination by expanding agency participation in the CTSA - The CHSTP recommendation is that the CTSA, COG, and SSTAC contact local area transit providers and human-service agencies and invite them to participate in the training programs. It is further recommended to continually recruit new SSTAC members who are involved in transit related activities.

Priority 8: Shared use of vehicles - In order to coordinate transportation services, there must be a liability indemnification for a provider that eliminates possible legal action caused from coordination efforts. It is recommended that the CTSA and other local agencies work in conjunction with transit advocacy groups such as the American Public Transit Association, California Transit Association, CalAct, United We Ride, and the Long Range Strategic Plan on

Aging Transportation Task Team to advocate for policies to address legal ramification for those involved in coordination efforts under the guidance of SAFETEA-LU.

Priority 9: Reduce operating costs Cooperative purchasing programs could help reduce operating costs for transit providers. The CTSA in Fresno County uses a “Card-Lock” fueling system. This has allowed them to reduce their fuel cost and maintain convenience. This type of cooperative purchasing could include contracts with other vendors for operating supplies such as tires and parts. The CHSTP recommendation is that the CTSA, and transit providers strive to develop joint purchasing programs for items such as fuel, operating supplies, and other expenses related to vehicle operations.

Priority 10: Create transit friendly amenities - The CHSTP recommendation is for transit providers to identify special needs and incorporate these needs into capital improvements, and facility upgrades such as benches and bus shelters. Joint use and sponsorship of bus shelters should be considered to increase “user-friendly” transit stops throughout the county and reduce costs to individual agencies.

Priority 11: Increase public awareness of transit through outreach and marketing strategies - The CHSTP recommendation is that FAX implements marketing strategies addressed in the Short and Long-Range Transit Plan, if deemed feasible to meet, and research the possibility of implementing cooperative marketing strategies with other transit providers in the region. Transit providers should research the feasibility of establishing kiosks with internet capabilities at areas with high public attendance.

Priority 12: Making easy connections - A centralized transfer point or transfer station for interregional services offers amenities to riders, such as access to information, pay phones, customer service, and restrooms. Under agreement, the county authorizes FAX the usage of the Downtown Transfer Center for riders conducting business in Fresno. FCRTA connects to downtown Fresno bus service at the Intermodal Facility. The CHSTP recommendation is for the COG to examine intercity grants, such as Federal Transit Administration 5313(f) that connects rural areas to regional and local connections.

Priority 13: Increasing revenue resources - It is recommended that CTSA and other local agencies enlist assistance from transit advocacy groups such as CalAct, United We Ride, and the American Public Transit Association to advocate for new and expanded resources to fund small urban area grants.

Priority 14: Transportation for those who can no longer drive - Identifying what public, private, and community transportation services are available can help individuals keep their independence. It is recommended that the CTSA, COG, and SSTAC develop a procedure for distributing information to those who can no longer drive. Senior publications or local media may be utilized to fully inform older-adults about available transportation options. Develop a subcommittee of the SSTAC to attend local senior centers, meetings, organizations, and advocacy groups to provide information about public transit options. Future residents should be informed of limited transportation options in rural areas before they relocate. Include the Fresno County Board of Realtors, Fresno Builder’s Exchange, and other land-related agencies in receiving information on limited transit options in rural areas.

Priority 15: Create “transit-ready” environments Land-use patterns also have a major impact on the mobility of those requiring specialized transportation. Future land developments should be “transit ready” meaning that they should not only have sufficient density and walk-ability, but

also a plan that considers the location and right- of-way for potential users (New Urban News October/November 2004). COG is involved in a Regional Blueprint Planning process that will identify land uses and land use types supporting community goals related to the regional economy, environment, and social equity. Adoption of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Plan will be incorporated into local general plans, review policies, and the Regional Transportation Plan. The CHSTP recommendation is that the COG should encourage local agencies to include San Joaquin Valley Blueprint strategies, such as Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in their plans.

Priority 16: Resolving inter-jurisdictional transportation: An efficient coordination process must be established and maintained for identifying, reviewing, and resolving inter-jurisdictional transportation concerns in the region. The San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Plan will be completed in 2008. Performance measures and goals of the Blueprint Plan will be adopted into county and local government long-range planning documents and development review policies and standards. It is recommended that the COG continue to actively participate in the planning processes of the region to ensure planning efforts are coordinated.

LONG-RANGE STRATEGIES (6-10 YEAR HORIZON)

Regulatory and fiscal restraints make coordination and funding efforts difficult for many of the long range strategies addressed in this plan. Regulatory and fiscal changes cannot be done at a local level, but require legislative action. It is recommended that CTSA and other local agencies enlist assistance from transit advocacy groups such as CalAct, United We Ride, and the American Public Transit Association to advocate for policies to address issues and concerns that may require changes in regulatory constraints or require legislative action.

Priority 1: Consolidation of operations and service delivery into one system - A case example of a centralized dispatch system is Access Services (<http://www.asila.org>), the designated CTSA for Los Angeles County. Access Services was created by Los Angeles County's public transit agencies to administer and manage delivery of regional ADA paratransit service. Access Services was established by forty-four public fixed-route transit operators in Los Angeles County. Access Services is responsible for paratransit brokerage, dispatch and scheduling, training management, contract monitoring, customer information services, as well as other activities related to operation of a paratransit system.

The CHSTP recommends that the CTSA, COG, SSTAC, transit providers, human-service providers, and human service agencies research the feasibility of developing a centralized dispatch system that will reduce duplication of scheduling, dispatching, and reporting requirements. Implementation will require transportation providers to develop a system that meets the approval of all agencies involved.

Priority 2: Shared maintenance facilities - Many small transit providers do not have a maintenance facility and purchase vehicle maintenance service from local businesses. Shared maintenance facilities could reduce the cost of service and facility investments. It is recommended that the CTSA, COG, SSTAC, and transit providers research the feasibility of FCEOC and FAX providing routine maintenance and repairs on vehicles from other transit fleets. This would require expansion of FAX's maintenance facility to accommodate additional vehicles.

Priority 3: A ride for everyone in areas with limited public transportation, there may be transportation available but transit providers are only allowed to transport passengers that meet their rider criteria. It is recommended that the CTSA, COG, SSTAC, and service providers enlist

the aid of CalACT or similar transit advocacy agencies to convey this information to transportation leaders.

Priority 4: Investing in infrastructure - The CHSTP recommendation is for the COG to review the implementation of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Plan for project delivery and infrastructure changes that address growing needs.

Recommendations

COG is required to prepare a Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) every other year for regionally significant transportation projects, and all projects receiving federal funding over the next three to four years. In the 2006/2007 FTIP, Fresno County programmed over \$188,400,000 in state, regional, and local funding for various forms of transportation in the region. Approximately \$20 million (about 11 percent of the region's overall transportation spending) is allocated for public transportation.

A CHSTP can be developed separately from metropolitan and statewide transportation processes and then incorporated into broader plans, or it may be developed as part of the statewide transportation planning process. The MPO is responsible for determining that projects selected within the CHSTP are included in the FTIP, statewide transportation plans, and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). FTA proposes that the CHSTP follow update cycles for MPO plans (four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas, and five years in air quality attainment areas).

The CHSTP will be utilized by COG as a framework for administering FTA funds and encouraging coordinated planning. The below recommendations match up with their appropriate barrier

Possible Solutions to Barriers in Coordination

Demographics Possible Solutions:

- Establish driver wellness and training programs to help older adults continue driving safely.
- Inform future residents about limited transportation.
- Ensure that seniors in rural areas are fully informed about available transportation services.
- Utilize senior publications and other media to keep the public informed of current transit resources, projects, and transportation coordination.
- Create volunteer driver programs.
- Utilize web-based trip planning programs.
- Increase limited stop and express routes.

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- Permit rural transit providers to transport passengers other than persons which meet their passenger requirements.
- Create projects that connect rural areas to regional and local connection points.

Land-use Possible Solutions:

- Expand land-use projects that connect to transit.
- Promote pedestrian-friendly communities.
- Promote Transit Oriented Development (TOD).
- Develop projects that improve access to medical facilities, employment areas, and social activities.
- Improve facilities and amenities at transfer stations to encourage ridership.
- Expand mobility-training programs.
- Increase use of low-floor buses to expedite passenger loading and off-loading transportation.

Service Area Boundaries Possible Solutions:

- Promote projects that establish a centralized and coordinated regional transfer point between service providers.
 - Encourage referrals to other agencies.
 - Develop a common fare structure among providers.
 - Improve local coordination among human-service providers and public transit providers.
- Coordinate with local transit providers to establish a single contact for inquiries about and receiving assistance regarding public and private transportation – “one-stop shopping”.

Driver Requirements Possible Solutions:

- Develop vehicle and driver standards that are consistent throughout the region.
- Increase the available pool of qualified drivers.
- Develop centralized driver training programs.
- Pursue grants for small transportation providers to develop programs and training.
- Locate a champion for volunteer driver programs.
- *Exchanging Information-Software Possible solutions:*

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- Develop a centralized dispatch system.
- Installation of Advanced Vehicle Location (AVL) hardware.
- Encourage participation in the Consolidated

Transportation Services Agency (CTSA).

- Promote use of smart-card technology to track fares.

Exchanging Information-Privacy Possible Solutions:

- Riders or clients sign release forms.
- Utilize technology to share rider data between agencies and non-profits while maintaining rider privacy.

Funding Possible Solutions:

- Further promote transit and human-service provider's participation in the Consolidated Social Services Agency (CTSA) and Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC).
- Support projects that promote ongoing dialog, planning, and decision-making for regional special needs transportation coordination.
- Collaborate with community human-service providers to develop programs designed to increase usage of public transportation resources by seniors and adults with disabilities.
- Educate social service case workers about utilizing the lowest cost transportation options for their clients.
- Assist human-service providers in obtaining transit services through coordination of small scale mobility projects.
- Seek grant and other funding sources to support continued coordinated transportation projects.
- Increase access and outreach on available transportation services countywide.
- Develop new and innovative marketing strategies.
- Increase public awareness of transportation modes.
- Leverage taxpayer investments such as 511 calls and smart card technology.
- Pursue development of shared maintenance facilities.
- Expand joint purchasing programs.

Liability Possible Solutions:

- Offer affordable insurance pools for small service providers and non-profit agencies.
- Indemnification for agencies that share or loan vehicles. Regulatory Constraints Possible Solutions:
- Promote regional framework for agencies to work together to resolve transportation, land use, and other issues of mutual concern.
- Emphasize strong state and regional roles in planning, prioritizing, and funding transportation.
- Active participation by “elected officials” of all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision making process.
- Create community and regional partnerships that utilize and build upon assets of our communities.
- Integrate land-use and transportation planning with health and human-services planning to promote service delivery at affordable costs.
- Support legislation that adequately funds a coordinated transportation system for the state and county. Increase integration of state and local interest in development and implementation of transportation services and facilities.
- Balance state and local needs in development and implementation of multimodal transportation projects.
- Reduce delays in vehicle delivery from state procurement contracts.
- Allow depreciation expense on vehicles. Reporting Requirements Possible Solutions:
- Promote projects that increase coordinated trip scheduling and billing between school districts, transit agencies, and human-service agencies.
- Promote development of standardized reporting requirements.

KERN COUNTY

Transportation Needs

Several key issues were expressed frequently and consistently by stakeholders throughout Kern County Medical Trips:

1. There is a clear need for greater communication between public transit agencies and administrators of medical facilities to improve transportation for patients and ensure they can arrive at their appointments on time and minimize wait time on their return trip.

Scheduling

1. A desire exists for longer service hours, more service days, and more frequent service for almost all services.
2. There have been requests to restore service from the Kern River Valley to Ridgecrest so students can use it to attend classes there.
3. The schedule for KRT is complex, with each route having its own hours of operation. The fare structure also varies between routes. KRT has received requests to add more local stops, especially in Bakersfield, but KRT staff noted that this would increase travel times, especially if a significant number of stops were added.
4. Some particularly common origin/destination pairs could benefit from express service, such as from Oildale to the Bakersfield Adult School. Also, some schedules (both local and KRT) have difficulty accommodating destinations with firm arrival times, such as schools and colleges.
5. Door-to-door service was once available upon request in Ridgecrest. Riders and social service providers have asked for that to be provided again, if possible.
6. Almost universally, residents of West Kern communities would like weekday service hours extended both earlier and later. Another common request is for weekend service to allow trips to shopping, social events and church, as well as connections to the North Kern Express (which operates seven days a week). Saturday service has proven popular where it has been introduced, such as in the City of Taft.
7. In Delano, residents sometimes wish to travel to Tulare County. DART stops at the county line, however, and transfers across county lines are not coordinated. Some passengers, especially those with limited mobility, have requested that there be additional stops so they can be dropped off closer to their destination. Though inter-county service is available, some trip requests across county lines are not able to be fully accommodated.
8. Information/ Marketing For fixed-route service, requests have been made for more amenities at bus stops, reduced spacing or more strategic placing of stops, and improved signage identifying bus stop locations. In agricultural areas, public transit does not always serve employment destinations. Information about the diverse transportation services is difficult to obtain.
9. No central location (telephone number, website) is readily identifiable as a source for this information. Limited information is available in Spanish, provided by individual transit agencies and human service agencies. Some bus stops are not clearly marked, and more shelters, signage, lighting and other amenities are needed.

Spatial Need

1. In rural areas, stops are often quite far apart, especially for seniors who cannot walk long distances. Some senior communities do not have bus stops close by.

2. Destinations may not be set up to handle buses, so that riders have to walk far distances or in unsafe conditions. For example, KRT cannot go beyond the gates of the military base at Ridgecrest, limiting the service it can provide there. Some senior centers do not have sufficient space for buses to turn around, so passengers must be let off on the road.
3. With added growth, urbanized areas outside of the city limits are not served by transit; the town expands, but the transit service area doesn't.
4. Insufficient transportation to medical facilities was cited by almost all interviewees.
5. Students taking night classes and who live outside of Bakersfield have a hard time getting transportation home after classes.

Temporal Need

1. Riders have made frequent requests for more frequent service, longer hours of operation and weekend service, especially in smaller communities. Transit hours of operation do not always match those of important medical facilities, education and training facilities and other destinations; often hours are not long enough for people working regular business hours.
2. Service must be suspended in mountainous regions during winter. Paratransit Dial -a-ride.
3. It is difficult/costly for people in high-risk (but not emergency) medical situations in outlying areas to get to a Bakersfield hospital in a timely fashion.
4. There is a need for more door-to-door service (rather than just curb-to-curb). For specific areas that are affected by the unmet needs and gaps see chapter 8 of the plan. It will also be important to evaluate needs for transit service beyond that which is currently available, including areas not currently served by transit, days and time periods when service is not currently available. The ability of these services to meet the needs of seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income populations will also be especially important to examine, since these groups are often particularly in need of transit service.

Transportation Resources

Transit service in Kern County reflects the rural character of most of the county, though more comprehensive service exists within the City of Bakersfield. Regional service connects communities throughout Kern County, often through the City of Bakersfield. Several communities have local fixed-route and/or demand-responsive service (also often referred to as "dial-a-ride" service). Service is also provided from eastern Kern County to employment centers in the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale in Los Angeles County. Kern County Operators

- Intercity fixed route service is provided throughout Kern County by Kern Regional Transit (KRT). Additionally, KRT provides local fixed route service in Lamont and Weedpatch and the Kern River Valley, dial-a-ride services within and between a number of rural communities in Kern County, and a demand-responsive medical shuttle in Bakersfield.

Tehachapi also contracts with KRT for local dial-a-ride service. KRT also provides service beyond Kern County to the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale in Los Angeles County, where passengers can access Metrolink Commuter Rail, Santa Clarita Transit Commuter Services and Antelope Valley Transit Authority bus service.

- Kern Regional Transit is a division of the Kern County Roads Department, which is part of the Kern County Resource Management Agency. KRT initiated operations in 1980. Service is operated through contracts with First Transit, Inc. and, in Buttonwillow, the Pioneer Senior Citizens Center. KRT reimburses the cities of Delano, Taft, Ridgecrest, Shafter and Tehachapi for transit services these cities provide to adjacent urbanized unincorporated areas of the county.
- The incorporated cities of Arvin, California City, Delano, McFarland, Ridgecrest, Taft, Shafter, Wasco, and Tehachapi each provide local dial-a-ride transit services, with limited service in some areas to adjacent unincorporated areas. As noted above, the City of Tehachapi contracts with KRT to provide its services. The cities of Bakersfield, Delano, and Taft also provide local fixed route service within their city limits.
- Public transit service is provided within the City of Bakersfield and adjacent unincorporated areas by Golden Empire Transit (GET), including 18 fixed routes and complementary dial-a-ride service (for ADA-certified individuals). GET began operations in 1973 and is governed by a five-member board that includes both City of Bakersfield and Kern County representatives. Annual ridership for 2005-2006 was 6.5 million passenger trips.
- The Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA), which is administered by the North Bakersfield Recreation and Park District, provides paratransit service in Bakersfield to seniors 60 and older and persons with disabilities. Demand-Responsive Services provided by Kern Regional Transit
- In addition to the fixed route services described above, KRT provides demand-responsive services within Frazier Park, the Kern River Valley, Lamont, Mojave, Rosamond and Tehachapi. KRT also operates a dial-a-ride shuttle within Bakersfield specifically for medical trips. Local Fixed Route/Scheduled Deviated Services Delano Area Rapid Transit (DART) provides fixed route and demand-responsive service within its city limits. DART initiated demand-responsive service in 1988, but now provides fixed route service, as well, on three routes.
- The City of Arvin operates five trips to the neighboring unincorporated community of Lamont, Monday through Friday. The bus makes regularly scheduled stops in Arvin, but passengers must call ahead to schedule a pick-up in Lamont for all but the first trip. The Ridgecrest Transit System (RTS) provides service to Cerro Coso College Monday through Friday, by reservation only.
- Local Demand-Responsive (Dial-A-Ride) Services - Most small Kern County cities provide demand-responsive (dial-a-ride) transit services to all local residents. Unlike other demand-responsive services in Kern County, which primarily provide transportation for city residents, Delano, Shafter, Taft and Ridgecrest provide transportation for county residents living in adjacent unincorporated areas. These

services are funded by Kern County. Tehachapi, however, contracts with KRT to provide its local service.

- Kern Regional Transit (KRT) operates a medical dial-a-ride shuttle to assist those passengers traveling to Bakersfield (via KRT intercity routes) to make connections to medical appointments. These trips are provided free to anyone requesting them for any medical appointment, including dialysis, optometry, and dental appointments. Local Paratransit Services In metropolitan Bakersfield, GET-A-Lift operates curb-to-curb paratransit service.
- Kern COG contracts with NOR to provide door-to-door demand-responsive service to seniors (age 60 or older) and persons with disabilities, for medical, shopping or recreation trips. Passengers may schedule travel up to two weeks in advance. The CTSA publishes a Transportation Resources Directory (currently being updated by Kern COG), which summarizes complementary paratransit services available in Kern County, and provides service to five senior centers in the Bakersfield area.
- The Cities of Taft and Delano also operate paratransit dial-a-ride services. In Taft, service is available to the general public but persons with disabilities and seniors are given priority. All of the general public dial-a-ride services discussed previously, including those operated by KRT, are wheelchair accessible. Figure 4-7 summarizes Kern County’s paratransit services.
- A variety of transit services are available throughout Kern County, including local and intercity service, and service south to Lancaster and Palmdale in Los Angeles County. Other connections beyond Kern County are available via Amtrak, Greyhound, service providers in adjacent counties and two airports. Kern County is fortunate to have substantial public transit service compared to other counties with similar population densities. Most local services, both fixed-route and demand response, are provided by local public transit agencies, including Golden Empire Transit (GET), which provides local service within metropolitan Bakersfield.

Kern Regional Transit (KRT) is the primary provider of regional transit services within Kern County, but significant variation exists within its system regarding service hours and fares, especially eligibility requirements for discounts on fares.

KRT also provides local service in several communities not served by local providers. Trips made locally can be made on a single transit system, but regional trips, even trips between nearby cities, most likely will require use of multiple transit systems. These services operate with independent service hours, fare policies, and ways to convey information about their service to the public.

Gaps

Several key issues were expressed frequently and consistently by stakeholders throughout, as follows:

Kern County

City Planning and Design - The County is experiencing rapid growth in unincorporated outlying areas of many communities. The remote location and low densities of these developments present a particular challenge to providing effective transit service. Some public, social service and medical agencies are also moving to more outlying areas of communities, making them harder to serve with transit. Similarly, retirement communities are being developed in remote locations without nearby medical and other services and with limited or no transit service.

Furthermore, these new developments are often in gated subdivisions inaccessible to public transit vehicles. Low-density, auto-oriented development patterns are very difficult to serve with public transit and other transportation services. Senior centers and gated retirement communities in rural or outlying suburban areas are especially difficult to serve with transit.

Some roads are unpaved in Kern County, which makes them difficult to serve with public transit.

Schedules, Fare Policies, and Service Areas

1. Some dial-a-ride services do not have subscription services, and other's subscription services are full. This means that people making recurring trips still must call each time. Furthermore, some dial-a-ride services require 24 hour advance notice for reservations (either as a policy or in practice because of demand for service), whereas others do not schedule rides but simply pick passengers up as soon as they can after passengers call for a ride (similar to a taxi service). Stakeholders and providers have noted advantages and disadvantages to each approach, and have expressed a desire for a process that accommodates both longer-term reservations as well as same-day trips, such as for a last minute medical appointment.
2. Social service providers did not express strong concerns about costs to ride. However, low-income families, seniors and people with disabilities on fixed incomes sometimes feel that even regular or discounted fares can be difficult to afford, especially if a transfer is necessary with an additional fare.
3. Local agencies are often understaffed, especially in smaller communities. This has an impact on service reliability – if a driver is sick or otherwise unavailable, no one is available as a replacement. Likewise, on days or at times with increased demand, increased service can't be provided.
4. Each agency/organization has its own fare structure. Generally no discounted transfers are available between services.
5. A wait of up to three weeks is required for an application to be approved for some specialized transportation services.
6. Some dial-a-rides do not offer subscription services for people who have regular appointments (such as dialysis patients).
7. Some patients are able to obtain a subscription for regular rides to dialysis, while others must call several times a week for rides. All of these factors lead to difficulty using public transit to get to and from these appointments.

8. Some services stop at 4:00 pm (CTSA stops at 3:30 pm), preventing some people from relying on it to get home from work or appointments. Most services do not accommodate later work shifts, which are often those of low-income and entry workers. The very low density of development in rural areas also precludes more frequent service. Operations for California City Transit recently moved to the airport, which is now too far from the KRT transfer point to meet KRT service in the morning. In addition, service ends before the KRT evening bus comes to California City. Extended local service hours would necessitate paying overtime, for which funding is not available.

Information

Public information regarding transit service is inconsistent. Some agencies provide comprehensive information in several languages and through several media (printed, web, phone), where others have no printed material at all. A need has been expressed for increased sharing of information among providers, and development of a centralized “511”-type system that offers information about various transportation services. Provision of more information, in general as well as in Spanish, is consistently expressed as a priority need.

Staffing

Staffing shortages often compromise service in McFarland, with no service available at times because drivers or dispatchers must work other jobs.

Service Duplication

Many social service providers throughout Kern County also provide transportation for their clients. In some circumstances, these services supplement public transit by providing service that accommodates special needs of their clients, is available at times or on days of the week when public transit is not available, or is customized to reduce wait times, travel times, and walking distances for their passengers. In other circumstances, however, these services are at least partially redundant with public transit services, or even with each other.

Transportation service is expensive, and is also not the primary mission of most social service providers. Opportunities may exist for social service providers to coordinate and collaborate with each other and with public transit agencies to reduce overall costs to provide these services, while still maintaining a high quality level of service that accommodates the needs of their clients.

Spatial Gaps

Some requested destinations cross county lines, outside agencies’ service areas, with limited opportunities to transfer to another system.

Vehicles/ Stops

- Some agencies have a shortage of wheelchair-accessible vehicles.
- Some agencies become overloaded with public school students at certain times of day, making it difficult to provide service for other people during those times.

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- Sometimes stops are not marked, or do not provide seating or shade. Pedestrian access to stops can involve crossing wide or unmarked intersections or walking near fast-moving traffic.
- Many rural roads are not paved and are often not able to be served by transit, because of wear-and-tear on buses.

School Trips

It is difficult to use public transit to go to classes at adult schools and colleges in Bakersfield:

- Daytime bus schedules are not coordinated with class times
- Service is not available for night classes, especially for students living outside Bakersfield. Bus passes are monthly, but school schedules are six to nine weeks long, making it difficult for students to take advantage of a discounted monthly pass.

Connectivity

- Many trips require transfers that can lead to significantly increased travel times. Paratransit/ Dial -a-ride
- There is no uniform policy in Kern County for an attendant to ride with a passenger who needs special medical assistance.
- Some transit agencies do not offer subscription services for people needing to make recurring trips. Social service providers in California City have reported difficulties with the Dial-a-Ride service, saying that pick-up times for passengers need to be more flexible for them to be able to make certain trips, including trips to Senior Centers for lunch and other social activities.
- Comparatively, in Tehachapi, social service providers have reported that the service there is able to accommodate these same sorts of trips without difficulty.

Organizational

- Several agencies have to deny requested rides, but currently don't keep records. Information
- Fare policies and route scheduling varies significantly between agencies.
- Publicly accessible information on transit services is often very limited, especially in Spanish.
- Bus stops are often unmarked, especially in smaller communities.

- There is no one central location for all transportation information for the County (such as 511), making the use of multiple systems difficult.
- Dispatchers for demand-response service often only speak English.

Barriers

Operations and Administration Consolidation is, however, perceived by some communities as a threat to their autonomy and flexibility to adapt to local transportation needs. In these communities, more collaborative approaches to service operation may be appropriate.

Schedules, Fare policies and service areas

1. Costs, farebox recovery targets, and funding sources vary between services and would require cost and revenue sharing agreements.
2. Different agencies/ organizations may have different eligibility requirements. Some services offer (or would like to offer) temporary eligibility for some clients.
3. Longer lead times on reservations can lead to more frequent cancellations or “no-shows.”
4. Cost and revenue-sharing agreements may be necessary. Funding streams may limit a provider’s ability to provide inter-county trips.
5. Information/Marketing: It is important to include both public and social service transportation providers to greatest extent feasible. Some agencies report legal concerns about the provision of Spanish translation. Medical Trips Nonprofit clinics have limited funds available for transportation. However, for-profit clinics could perhaps increase the number of patients they can serve, with a higher degree of reliability.
6. Mobile dialysis units have some challenges:
 - Costs are high to purchase mobile units;
 - Mobile dialysis units are not certified for Medicare reimbursement. School Trips Nighttime service may require extending hours, for which additional operating funds would need to be identified.
7. A 31-day rolling pass would require updated fare media and may increase driver responsibility to verify pass when boarding.
8. Existing farebox technologies may need to be modified or replaced. Alternatively, a universal transit pass/Ecopass could be developed for students. This would require cost-sharing agreements with educational institutions.

9. City Planning and Design Existing land use patterns are “fixed” in short-term but can change over time. Key will be coordinated transportation and land use planning, including exploration of opportunities for infill and “retrofitting” of existing development. Sitting and relocation of medical facilities, shopping centers and other key destinations is especially important to consider.
10. Paving will entail higher capital and maintenance costs. For fiscal year 07/08 the estimated cost is \$500,000/mile to build a road.
11. Multiple agencies/organizations are often responsible for bus stop areas. Maintenance costs can be significant, especially if facilities include a shelter. Potential opportunities for private sponsorship (in exchange for advertising space) exist. Improvements to bus stops can have a dramatic positive impact on customer satisfaction, comfort and safety.

Priorities

Action Items Schedules, Fare Policies and Service Areas Kern COG should lead a fare study to review existing fares and explore opportunities, with cost implications, for increased standardization and potential consolidation of fares.

1. Kern COG should lead a process documenting eligibility requirements for services and explore opportunities to standardize and consolidate the application process. KRT could also play a lead role – they already operate several local dial-a-ride services in addition to the regional service to which many riders transfer.
2. Each provider will have individual opportunities and challenges to providing subscription service, and will therefore need to lead their own process to explore implementation.
3. Kern COG could work with KRT, local Kern providers, and providers in adjacent areas outside the county to identify additional inter-county service needs, including perhaps coordinated transfers, or additional travel across county lines, on a limited basis.

Information/Marketing

A pilot 211 program is already under development, led by the Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK). Kern COG should work with CAP to help provide information about public transit services, in addition to other transportation services targeted towards the clients of social service organizations. This program should be coordinated with the development of a 511 program to provide comprehensive multimodal transportation information for all residents of Kern County.

Medical Trips

Representatives of dialysis centers should be invited to a future Kern COG SSTAC meeting to discuss opportunities for increased communication and collaboration. Both dialysis centers and agencies/organizations they rely on should review the specific needs of their clients/passengers, and costs associated with providing transportation services for them.

School Trips

1. KRT and GET are currently exploring opportunities to better coordinate schedules with other agencies and primary destinations of its passengers
2. Kern COG should lead a fare study to review existing fares and explore opportunities, with cost implications, for increased standardization and potential consolidation of fares.

City Planning and Design

1. The Bakersfield General Plan process is currently underway. The needs of seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income households are clearly of importance to all residents of Kern County, and the General Plan should shape future development to better meet their needs. Individual cities and the county should work together to pursue incentives, urban design and pricing strategies, and other programs and policies that encourage compact development that better supports public transit and walkable communities.
2. Kern COG should meet with the Kern County Roads Department to discuss paving needs in unincorporated Kern County, to better support transportation services. Local transit agencies should also meet with city public works departments to discuss their paving needs. Incorporate transit needs into evaluations of which roads should be prioritized for paving. Currently, roads are prioritized for paving utilizing traffic volume information.
3. The Kern COG SSTAC is an excellent forum to discuss and develop a capital improvement plan specifically targeted at bus stops and necessary amenities. A comprehensive needs assessment should first be conducted, followed by a process to prioritize improvements (what amenities and at which locations), and an expenditure plan that identifies costs and funding sources.

Recommendations

Communication/Information and Marketing

Many stakeholders agreed that more frequent communication between public agencies, human service providers, and representatives of key travel destinations (medical centers, schools, community and shopping centers, etc.) is a fundamental strategy for improving transportation services for seniors, the disabled and low-income individuals. They acknowledged that even with limited time, it is important to meet face-to-face. A quarterly forum on transportation should be established with each of these collaborative to maintain paths of communication and support the implementation of strategies and solutions to improve transportation for these populations. Kern COG staff could help get transit agencies in contact with the Collaborative and set aside time on the agenda of an upcoming meeting.

Information and Marketing Opportunities should be explored to provide comprehensive, concise, and accessible information to all potential users of these services. Agencies could also collaborate to achieve more widespread distribution and posting of information about transit services. Increased communication between transit agencies and human service providers could also help clients become more aware of existing transit services, and more able to use them. A key strategy would be for Kern COG to work with KRT and local transit agencies to

develop a countywide map of all public transit services, in combination with a centralized phone number and website providing detailed information.

Even as local agencies maintain a degree of autonomy, a common branding scheme and combined marketing program could support increased transit ridership for all participating agencies. Currently, several transit agencies in western Kern County are pursuing a collaborative marketing program. This program, if successful, could eventually be expanded to encompass a larger area of Kern County.

Operations and Administrations

Previous planning efforts in Kern County have noted that consolidation of agencies could reduce administrative costs. Driver training could be shared between agencies; drivers could even be trained to work in multiple nearby communities. Supplemental driver training for all agency staff could enable them to serve as backup drivers, and likewise, other training for drivers could enable them to complete other agency tasks during times they are not needed as drivers.

Capital Expenditures Significant savings could be achieved through coordination of capital expenditures between agencies and organizations, to the extent that they rely on similar equipment – from office equipment up to actual vehicles. Particularly small agencies and organizations may also be able to “piggyback” their purchases on those made by larger organizations.

Kern COG should work with various agencies and organizations providing transportation services to identify opportunities for shared equipment and vehicle purchases. Further cost savings may be achieved through shared maintenance facilities and/or training of mechanics. Agency directors and maintenance supervisors should discuss potential collaboration of maintenance facilities and expenditures at an upcoming SSTAC meeting. Locally as well, public transit agencies should discuss with social service organizations providing specialized transportation services opportunities for the social service organizations to contract their maintenance needs with the public agency and participate in shared fuel purchases for their vehicles.

Elimination of Duplication of Service

It is, therefore, important to explore opportunities for public transit agencies and other larger-scale organizations to accommodate the transportation needs of social service providers and their clients. Recognizing that these clients often have “special needs” beyond traditional ADA services, public transit agencies may enter a specific agreement with an “agency fare” that accounts for these needs but also takes advantage of the expertise and economies of scale of the public transit provider.

Social service providers should thoroughly evaluate the transportation needs of their clients to better understand how they could be accommodated by existing public transit options, including both fixed route and dial-a-ride services. Such an evaluation will help identify which clients are in particular need of specialized transportation services, as well as help other clients better understand the options available to them to obtain the social services they need. Increased communication and collaboration may also help agencies establish partnerships with each other that could enable them to better address the needs of their clients.

A key advantage of public transit is that it goes beyond getting people to a specific program or destination, allowing human service agency clients increased mobility to shopping and recreational destinations that human service transportation providers may not offer.

Identification of New Funding Sources

Securing additional funding, however, could improve transportation services, especially in combination with these strategies to increase efficiency and collaboration between providers. Although not likely to support a substantial increase in service, three key funding sources under SAFETEA-LU offer opportunities for improvements targeted towards seniors, the disabled, and low-income individuals: the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC, Section 5316), New Freedom funds (Section 5317), and the Formula Program for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310).

A forum involving Kern COG, KRT and local transit agencies could help all providers to become fully aware of the funding sources for which they are eligible to apply, to collaborate in the grant application process, and to ensure all Federal and State requirements are met. The ultimate goal is to expand and improve transportation services for the target populations throughout Kern County.

Some stakeholders have suggested that medical insurers and for-profit providers such as dialysis centers, for example, may be persuaded to dedicate funding toward transportation services, especially if they are already funding more expensive transportation options for their clients. This could take the form of direct contributions for receipt of services or higher fares for providing a high level and guaranteed service. Other opportunities could be pursuing grants through foundations or a longer term option of exploring Medicaid funding for transportation services.

Integrated Transportation and Land Use Planning

The City of Bakersfield, along with Kern County, is currently updating the Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan. A fundamental goal of the plan should be to better integrate transportation and land use planning to make communities more walkable and supported by transit, especially given the dependence on transportation services of many seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income populations. Regional agencies such as Kern COG can encourage transit-supportive land use through a variety of policies and programs. Transportation investments could be linked to land use through transportation demand management programs and establishment of a countywide transportation impact fee to help fund transit investments.

Furthermore, some human service providers, especially in the greater Bakersfield area, have moved facilities to more remote locations, making it more difficult for transportation providers to bring clients to these facilities – distance and travel time can increase significantly, increasing operating costs for operators and travel time for passengers. In addition to other important considerations such as cost and availability of land, human service providers may need to better understand and consider the transportation needs of their clients when evaluating where to site their facilities. Street and Bus Stop Design Beyond transit service levels, the walk to transit stops and the experience waiting for a bus have significant impacts on the accessibility, attractiveness and overall quality of public transit and other transportation services.

Improving these conditions may require additional investment in infrastructure and maintenance, but also can have a significant positive impact on ridership and customer satisfaction. Many

communities have leveraged the additional funding necessary to provide these amenities by selling advertising space on bus shelters, or through transportation impact fees on new development. A comprehensive needs assessment should first be conducted, followed by a process to prioritize improvements (what amenities and at which locations), and an expenditure plan that identifies costs and funding sources.

Conclusion

Several key strategies have been identified to improve transportation services in Kern County:

- Increased communication and collaboration between transportation providers and social service providers;
- Expanded information availability and marketing programs;
- Increased cost efficiencies and elimination of duplications of service; and
- Identification of new funding sources, and integrated transportation and land use planning.

These strategies will require communication and participation from a variety of public agencies, social service organizations, and private entities, with strong leadership from Kern COG, as well as smaller organizations whose clients have distinct and pressing transportation needs. Short term solutions will establish a foundation for more comprehensive longer-term solutions.

KINGS COUNTY

Transportation Needs

- Transit services lacking in rural areas.
- People with special transportation needs that live outside the three-quarters of a mile boundary are unable to obtain service.
- There are reoccurring requests for extended evening service and providing service on Sunday.
- Kings County's TDA-funded transportation providers do not offer service past 11:00 p.m., or on Sunday. KART offers Saturday service with shorter service hours, while CAT does not.

Transportation Resources

Existing Transit Agencies

Kings Area Rural Transit (KART)

KART presently uses a fleet of vehicles ranging in size from a 9-passenger van to a 33-passenger bus to provide transit services. All public transit vehicles in the KART fleet are equipped with wheelchair lifts and bicycle racks. KART offers reasonable fares for all fixed route and demand-response services. In addition to regular fares, there are discount tickets and

monthly passes available. The KART system has been, and will continue to be, responsive to its customers needs as stated in its service goal: “It is the goal of this agency to provide reliable Public Transportation service that is clean and convenient; focused on that portion of the public which is transit dependent; in a proactive manner, resulting in continued improvements and cost effectiveness.”

Fixed Route Kings Area Rural Transit

(KART) provides the majority of public transportation services in Kings County. The fixed route service runs throughout the county. It serves the cities of Hanford, Lemoore, Avenal, and parts of Corcoran. Fixed route stops also include unincorporated areas such as Armona, Hardwick and Grangeville. The KART system also provides services daily to Visalia in adjoining Tulare County and tri-weekly service to Fresno. Demand Response Service In addition to the fixed route service, KART also provides demand response service. Demand response (door to door) service is available to residents of Hanford, Lemoore, Armona and Avenal traveling more than 1/2 of a mile from an existing bus route or for those riders certified by KCAPTA as disabled.

Vanpool KCAPTA also operates a vanpool program

Vanpools provide reliable transportation to and from work at a lower cost than operating a personal vehicle. All 8 and 15-passenger vans are equipped with a Global Positioning System (GPS), so that KART can locate the driver should an emergency arise. The cost to the user is based on the number of days and distance traveled. The cost is divided among the passengers and paid on a monthly basis.

Agricultural Industries Transportation Services (AITS)

The AITS program was designed to provide qualified agricultural workers in Kings, Kern, Tulare and Fresno Counties with safe, affordable vans they can use to drive themselves and others to work. The program is seeking to reach workers who are having trouble getting to work, or may be paying too much for rides in vehicles that are unsafe. Through radio announcements and information booths, the Agency is actively spreading the word about the program. The AITS program costs employers nothing. It's a non-profit transit organization. Workers pay a modest fee to ride an AITS vanpool. Like the vanpool program, AITS holds drivers to the same qualifying standards. GPS, insurance coverage, and special necessary industry amenities such as water cooler brackets, hitches tool boxes, and floor lining are also provided.

Corcoran Area Transit

The City of Corcoran has provided its own transit service since 1975 for Corcoran residents and for those living in the rural “fringe” area surrounding Corcoran. Initially, the service was only for senior citizens, but in 1989 the service was expanded to include the general public. CAT operates the Corcoran Depot and a fleet of five transit buses. CAT is an on-demand service.

Gaps

- Different transit systems have different fare schedules
- Riders may require help getting on and off a vehicle, but there is often no one available to help them at transfer points.

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- Paratransit systems generally do not provide same day service, which means riders must schedule trips in advance except for returns trips on a given day.
- Transit services may be lacking in rural areas.
- People with special transportation needs that live outside the three-quarters of a mile boundary are unable to obtain service.
- Many responses received during the unmet needs process is a request for more bus shelters.
- Reoccurring requests for extended evening service and providing service on Sunday. Kings County's TDA-funded transportation providers do not offer service past 11:00 p.m., or on Sunday. KART offers Saturday service with shorter service hours, while CAT does not. Although extended evening service and Sunday service could be a recognized benefit, but there is a low-probability these services would meet the KCAG-established farebox requirements, or “reasonable to meet” criteria
- Vehicles from different agencies may be traveling in the same corridor at the same time, but offer different services and may not pick up additional riders.

Barriers

Restrictions Program Eligibility Between Systems

Each transportation system has different eligibility requirements. A person who may qualify for more than one type of service may need to apply for several different programs with each having different requirements and processes.

Service Area Boundaries

Service area boundaries differ between human-service programs and public transportation providers.

Driver Requirements

Different agencies (schools, transit systems and Medi-Cal brokers have different requirements for vehicle safety, driver training, driver licensing, or other standards.

Vehicle Maintenance

Schools, transit systems, and other transportation providers have their own in-house maintenance programs for vehicles.

Call Center Operations

Brokers, transit systems, senior programs, and other agencies each have their own call center for people to call to arrange for transportation.

Procurement

Schools, transit systems, and community providers purchase vehicles and equipment individually

Exchanging Information - Software

Transportation providers and brokers use different scheduling, dispatching, and reporting software, which makes sharing information difficult. Transferring regional eligibility and scheduling data between and among ADA paratransit providers, Medi-Cal brokers, school districts, and others is not automated.

Service Duplication and Redundancy

Various sources of funding restrict different transportation services to specific populations for specific purposes. This results in service duplication and redundancy in multiple areas.

Funding

Funding is insufficient to meet needs for expanding fixed-route service and equivalent paratransit service.

Lack of Bus Stop Amenities

Shelters are an important part of the system's attractiveness to both passengers and non-passengers. Shelter is vital to those waiting for buses in harsh weather conditions. They also act as a clear marker for fixed route stops making the system more user-friendly.

Exchanging Information - Privacy

A primary barrier in sharing information has been addressing confidentiality and privacy requirements. Privacy Acts, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) prohibit sharing client information and authorize penalties for offenders.

Liability

Indemnification issues prohibit agencies from sharing or loaning vehicles.

Regulatory Constraints

Federal and state transportation funding agencies often make coordination and funding efforts difficult.

Reporting Requirements

Federal, state, and local agencies that fund special needs transportation have different reporting requirements attached to their funds. Agencies receiving funds from multiple funding sources must set up labor-intensive and costly data collection mechanisms to meet multiple reporting requirements. Staff time to meet such requirements means less money to provide services.

Other Barriers to Coordination of Transportation Systems

Major constraints for transit growth are funding, transit costs, limited ridership, and land-use development patterns. Local area plans must comply with federal and state requirements and also meet local needs. More funding is dependent on coordination at planning and implementation stages of transportation activities. Coordination must occur at the service level and at the planning level.

Priorities

Implementation Strategies and Priorities

The objective of the Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan (HSTCP) is to provide a framework for improvements to current transportation systems. Strategies addressed in this plan are determined to be the most effective way to provide transportation services to those in need, while increasing efficiency and making the best use of available resources. These efforts cannot be accomplished by any one agency - it will require participation by multiple human-service agencies, transit providers, transit passengers, land-use planners, and the community at large to accomplish these objectives. The HSTCP recommends that the KCAG, KART, SSTAC, and human-service providers assist in the implementation of strategies and recommendations contained in this plan.

Shared Use of Vehicles

A primary goal in SAFETEA-LU is shared usage of vehicles. This practice can cut redundancy in local agencies and encourage collaboration. Sharing vehicles can also reduce cost for agencies.

Reduce Operating Costs

As stated above, cooperative purchasing programs could help reduce operating costs for transit providers. This type of cooperative purchasing could include contracts with other vendors for operating supplies such as tires and parts. It is recommended that transit providers strive to develop joint purchasing programs for items such as fuel, operating supplies, and other expenses related to vehicle operations.

Create Transit-Friendly Amenities

Studies show that older-adults may be more likely to take public transportation if they feel safe walking to a bus stop, and travel information is easy to obtain. Improvements to facilities and amenities at transfer stations can provide a "user friendly" environment for riders. The HSTCP recommendation is for transit providers to identify special needs and incorporate these needs into capital improvements, and facility upgrades such as benches and bus shelters. Joint use and sponsorship of bus shelters should be considered to increase "user friendly" transit stops throughout the county and reduce costs to individual agencies. Increase the availability of qualified transit drivers. Agencies have different requirements for vehicle safety, driver training, driver licensing, and employment qualifications.

Consistent standards could increase the availability of qualified drivers in the region, and eliminate the cost of duplicated training programs. Many paratransit operators are purchasing smaller vehicles that only require a standard Class C driver's license, therefore eliminating the

need for a Class B license. Increase public awareness of transit through outreach and marketing strategies

Other possible strategies for increasing public awareness and outreach may include:

- Accurate service referral assistance to riders and case workers helps riders to choose a transportation mode that best meets their needs.
- Transportation referrals should be available on websites and by telephone contact.
- Transit information should be available at many shopping areas in the community.
- Transit kiosks are another means of providing traveler information and convenient access to general transit information, fares, maps, routes and schedules.

Increasing Revenue Resources

Competitive planning grants are available, but small urban areas find it difficult competing for funds with large metropolitan areas. Grants are available to rural areas with a population of less than 50,000, but urban areas with a population of 200,000 or less are not eligible for these grants. Small urban areas simply fall through the cracks. It is recommended that KART and other local agencies enlist assistance from transit advocacy groups such as CalAct, United We Ride, and the American Public Transit Association to advocate for new and expanded resources to fund small urban area grants.

The Growing Older-Adult Population

In the year 2020, 10,000 persons will turn age 65 every day (Community Transportation, Summer 2006). More older-adults means more persons with disabilities, and more demand for high quality services such as special needs transportation. Driver wellness and training programs could be offered to older-adults, helping them to continue driving safely. AARP offers a driver safety course for drivers age 50 and older. This course is currently available online for a small fee. 55-Alive is another program that teaches seniors to drive safely. The HSTCP recommendation is for KCAG to contact senior advocacy groups, senior centers, and retirement homes regarding sponsoring driver safety and wellness programs for seniors in our region. KCAG should assist agencies or organizations in seeking funding resources to develop local driver and wellness training programs.

Transportation for Those Who Can No Longer Drive

Identifying what public, private, and community transportation services are available can help individuals keep their independence. Senior publications or local media may be utilized to fully inform older-adults about available transportation options. Ask members of the SSTAC to attend local senior centers, meetings, organizations, and advocacy groups to provide information about public transit options. Future residents should be informed of transportation options in the area before they relocate. Include the Kings County Board of Realtors, and other land-related agencies in receiving information on available transit options in rural areas.

Developing Volunteer Driver Programs

One option is a volunteer driver program. Volunteers escort clients to their appointments and offer support and encouragement. Often they provide the link to a better life by helping them to access the resources that can help them out of poverty or resolve a medical need. It is recommended that KART, KCAG, and SSTAC research resources available to fund volunteer driver programs, and to seek potential agencies to administer a volunteer driver program.

Finding a Ride Online

More advertising for this service could be a good way to support coordination on a countywide as well as region wide level.

Create "Transit-Ready" Environments

Adoption of the Kings County Blueprint Plan will be incorporated into local general plans, review policies, and the Regional Transportation Plan. The HSTCP recommendation is that the KCAG should encourage local agencies to include Regional Blueprint strategies such as transit-oriented development in their plans.

Resolving Inter-Jurisdictional Transportation

An efficient coordination process must be established and maintained for identifying, reviewing, and resolving inter-jurisdictional transportation concerns in the region. Working in coordination with surrounding counties will help increase mobility and provide for transportation access throughout the region. KART currently provides service daily to the city of Laton in neighboring Fresno County, and the city of Visalia in Tulare County. Service is also provided to the City of Fresno Mondays, Wednesdays, and Friday.

A Ride for Everyone

In areas with limited public transportation, there may be transportation available but transit providers are only allowed to transport passengers that meet their rider criteria. For example, where there is no fixed-route service, the senior transportation provider frequently has requests from individuals that are not seniors for rides. Re-evaluating criteria for riders could prove beneficial.

Shared Maintenance Facilities

Many small transit providers do not have a maintenance facility and purchase vehicle maintenance service from local businesses. Shared maintenance facilities could reduce the cost of service and facility investments. Smaller service providers could work with KART to access their maintenance facilities.

Consolidation of Operations and Service Delivery into One System

The most comprehensive coordination strategies involve consolidation of operations and service delivery into one coordinated transportation system. A centralized dispatch system, or brokerage, provides better service within communities while connecting neighborhoods to other destinations. The system allows people to make simple connections to more places than is currently possible.

Investing in Infrastructure

State and local needs must be considered in development and implementation of multi-modal transportation projects. Two goals of the Regional Blueprint Planning Program are to "reduce costs and time needed to deliver transportation projects through informed early public and resource agency involvement" and "improve mobility through a combination of strategies and investments to accommodate growth in transportation demand and reductions in current levels of congestion." Through collaboration, local agencies can cross local and regional boundaries.

Recommendations

Due to historically lower real estate prices, and lower cost of living, many retirees relocate to Kings County from major metropolitan centers. As this segment of population ages, it is expected there will be increased demand for specialized services for senior citizens.

Senior Mobility: Possible Solutions:

- Establish driver wellness and training programs to help older adults continue driving safely.
- Inform future residents about limited transportation.
- Ensure that seniors in rural areas are fully informed about available transportation services.
- Utilize senior publications and other media to keep the public informed of current transit resources, projects, and transportation coordination.
- Create volunteer driver programs. • Increase limited stop and express routes.
- Permit rural transit providers to transport passengers other than persons which meet their passenger requirements.
- Create projects that connect rural areas to regional and local connection points. Land Use Due to low residential density and a large service area, it is not feasible to expand traditional transit to serve a large service area. New development should incorporate transit-friendly design. Possible solutions to accomplish this include:
 - Expand land-use projects that connect to transit.
 - Promote pedestrian-friendly communities.
 - Promote transit-ready development.
 - Develop projects that improve access to medical facilities, employment areas, and social activities.
 - Improve facilities and amenities at transfer stations to encourage ridership.
 - Expand mobility-training programs.
 - Increase use of low-floor buses to expedite passenger loading and off-loading transportation.

Service Area Boundaries: Possible Solutions:

- Promote projects that establish a centralized and coordinated regional transfer point between service providers.
- Encourage referrals to other agencies.
- Develop a common fare structure among providers.
- Improve local coordination among human-service providers and public transit providers.

- Coordinate with local transit providers to establish a single contact for inquiries about and receiving assistance regarding public and private transportation - "one-stop shopping". Driver

Requirements: Possible Solutions:

- Develop vehicle and driver standards that are consistent throughout the region.
- Increase the available pool of qualified drivers.
- Develop centralized driver training programs.
- Pursue grants for small transportation providers to develop programs and training.
- Locate a champion for volunteer driver programs.

Exchanging Information - Software: Possible Solutions

- Develop a centralized dispatch system.
- Installation of GPS.
- Promote use of smart-card technology to track fares.

Exchanging Information - Privacy: Possible Solutions:

- Riders or clients sign release forms.
- Utilize technology to share ride data between agencies and non-profits while maintaining rider privacy. Funding: Possible Solutions:
- Promote transit and human-service provider's participation in the Social Services Technical Advisory Council (SSTAC).
- Support projects that promote ongoing dialog, planning, and decision-making for regional special needs transportation coordination.
- Collaborate with community human service providers to develop programs designed to increase usage of public transportation resources by seniors and adults with disabilities.
- Educate social service case workers about utilizing the lowest cost transportation options for their clients.
- Assist human-service providers in obtaining transit services through coordination of small-scale mobility projects.
- Seek grants and other funding sources to support continued coordinated transportation projects.
- Increase access and outreach on available transportation services countywide.
- Develop new and innovative marketing strategies.
- Increase public awareness of transportation modes.
- Pursue development of shared maintenance facilities.
- Expand joint purchasing programs. Liability: Possible Solutions:
- Offer affordable insurance pools for small service providers and non-profit agencies.
- Indemnification for agencies that share or loan vehicles.

Regulatory Constraints: Possible Solutions:

- Promote regional framework for agencies to work together to resolve transportation, land-use, and other issues of mutual concern.

- Emphasize strong state and regional roles in planning, prioritizing, and funding transportation.
- Encourage active participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision making process.
- Create community and regional partnerships that utilize and build upon assets of our communities.
- Integrate land-use and transportation planning with health and human-services planning to promote service delivery at affordable costs.
- Support legislation that adequately funds a coordinated transportation system for the state and county.
- Increase integration of state and local interest in development and implementation of transportation services and facilities.
- Balance state and local needs in development and implementation of multi-modal transportation projects.
- Reduce delays in vehicle delivery from state procurement contracts.
- Allow depreciation expense on vehicles. Reporting Requirements: Possible Solutions:
- Promote projects that increase coordinated trip scheduling and billing between school districts, transit agencies, and human-service agencies.
- Promote development of standardized reporting requirements.

Conclusion

Careful planning can allow a community to meet the regulatory, budgetary, and service needs of each participating agency, while improving client and community needs. The investment of time and thought at state, local, and regional levels will result in a lower cost of individual trips, and provide more trips to more places. By working together, we can improve the transportation system and delivery services to our community members. At this time no new need for coordination was found in surveying social service providers within Kings County and its surrounding areas. KCAG will continue to work with transportation and social service providers to explore coordination possibilities and keep clear lines of communication open between all agencies.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Transportation Needs

Demand Estimation Findings Target Population

A range of 1.06 million to 1.77 million persons was estimated for the target population. These individuals are adults between the ages 16 to 64 who are low income or disabled and seniors age 65 and older. They represent between 11 percent and 19 percent of Los Angeles County's 2000 population of 9.5 million residents. Who Needs Seniors, Able Bodied, Seniors Frail and Persons Chronically ill, Persons with Disabilities, Persons of low income and homeless Persons, Persons with Sensory Impairments, Persons with behavioral disabilities.

Future Target Population

These projections suggest that increasing proportions of Los Angeles County residents will be within the target populations, as follows:

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- ☐ by 2010, up to 2.1 million persons or 20 percent of the population;
- ☐ by 2020, up to 2.4 million or 21 percent of the population; and
- ☐ by 2030, up to 2.7 million persons or 22 percent of the population.

Potentially a range of 58 to 97 million trips were projected to be needed by adults who are low income or disabled and seniors. In addition, those trips requiring special assistance were estimated at 10 percent of the total trips, reflecting of range of 5.8 to 9.7 million trips which are not now provided or not adequately provided.

Medical trips ranked as the number one trip need by the human services organizations and long-trips, beyond the local community, ranked as the number one trip need by the public transit agencies. These are often the same type of trip, as medical trips generally require medium to longer distance travel, with medical destinations frequently outside jurisdictional boundaries and not served by locally oriented transportation providers.

Special Needs Identified:

- Lack of knowledge about resources
- Concern about safety and security
- Awareness of time when driving might be limited
- Assistance to and through the door
- On-time performance and reliability critical to frail users
- Assistance in trip planning
- Need for shelters
- Need for “hand-off” for terribly frail
- Service quality and reliability
- Driver sensitivity and appropriate passenger handling procedure
- Concerns about wheelchair “pass-ups”
- Need for shelters
- Fare subsidies (bus tokens or passes) that can be provided in a medium that is not cash
- Mothers with multiple children
- Need to bring along shopping carts.
- Difficulty in accessing visual or auditory information.
- Waiting in the sun is not an option, as medications make individuals sun sensitive
- Long hour waits in the heat can lead to dehydration.
- Mental illnesses can make it frightening to be in the public spaces such as public bus stops
- Impaired judgment and memory makes for poor decision-making

Transportation Resources

Types of Transportation Modes

- Fixed route transit
- Point deviation and deviated FR
- Senior DAR
- Special purpose shuttles: recreation, nutrition, shopping

- ADA Paratransit
- Emergency and non-emergency medical transportation
- Escort/Companion Volunteer driven services.

Vehicle Availability

Over 1,600 vehicles were reported by for-profit, non-profit and public agencies/organizations through this inventory process. In addition, Metro did not provide vehicle inventory information.

As a result, a total of 927 agency vehicles were identified. A review of the vehicle resources of public transit as compared with those reported by human service agencies/organizations shows that public transit maintains a surplus of vehicles over and above the number needed for day-to-day service operation. These vehicles are known as spares and are used when necessary to avoid service interruptions. This surplus of vehicle resources does not exist for human service providers.

Public transit reports that 82 percent the available vehicles are used daily, while human services agencies/organizations report that 99 percent are used in service on a daily basis. This suggests that the vehicle resources of human service agencies/organizations are limited and vehicle reliability is likely an issue that may impact their ability to operate efficiently in their day-to-day environment. Understanding the level of capital resources needed to operate existing transportation services is a necessary step in the formulation of future coordination strategies.

The fleet characteristics of public transit in comparison with human service agencies/organizations are also significantly different. Human service agency/organizations' vehicles are smaller, and only one in ten are lift-equipped. Public transit agency vehicles are distributed across all vehicle size categories, and eight in ten are lift-equipped. Transportation services provided.

Agencies were asked to describe the transportation they may provide and were offered a number of ways in which to characterize that service, including:

- No transportation operated, contracted or subsidized
- Operating transportation with full responsibility for the transportation by this agency
- Acting as the contractor for one or more agencies to provide transportation services
- Subsidizing transportation through agency purchase of coupons, scrip, passes, fares or mileage reimbursement
- Arranging for transportation by assisting with information but clients responsible for follow-up.

Less than one-quarter of all respondents indicated that they do not operate transportation (47 agencies-23 percent). In addition, these agencies/organizations indicate that they are neither directly providing transportation nor assisting consumers in obtaining transportation services. By contrast, another quarter (52 agencies, 25 percent) are at a minimum arranging transportation for consumers in a variety of ways. This can mean simply providing phone numbers and letting consumers request their own trips. Or, their efforts could include making trip arrangements for

clients/consumers. Usually this function does not involve any expenditure of funds by agencies/organizations.

Agencies/organizations that operate transportation are the largest group (74 agencies-36 percent), while the smallest group of agencies and organizations responding act as contractors to provide transportation to others (16 agencies-8 percent). About one quarter of those agencies and organizations responding to the survey are contracting for service with others (54 agencies -26 percent), arranging for transportation (52 agencies-25 percent) or subsidizing bus passes or taxi script (53 agencies-25 percent). Two advocacy organizations are classified in the “other” category.

The agency/organization with full responsibility was most common among the private for-profits (50 percent), while public agencies were most likely to contract (49 percent). Non-profit agencies were about evenly split between operating with full responsibility (32 percent), arranging (31 percent), and subsidizing (28 percent). These non-profits were least likely to contract for services (10 percent). Faith based transportation providers were just nine in number, a small sample, but of these four were directly operating transportation.

Gaps

Gaps in service were characterized as follows: Institutional Communication Gaps exist, contributing to the difficulties of working between two very distinct service systems. For public transit, operating transportation services are its core business, around which significant infrastructure has been built.

For human services agencies, transportation is a support service and often viewed as a distraction from agencies’ primary purposes. Service Capacity is an issue where certain trip needs of the target populations are not being met, despite a significant Los Angeles County network of public transportation. Meeting Individualized Needs remains a critical characteristic of the unmet specialized transportation need of this region.

Providing service to those difficult-to-serve groups or difficult-to-meet trips are the challenges of this planning effort. Improving Performance of Demand Response Services is critical to consumers and their agency and organization representatives, issues related to service quality. These include addressing on-time performance, late pick-ups, late arrivals, too-long travel times and no-show vehicles. Reliability of paratransit services is an important issue where problems can translate into critical situations for frail, vulnerable and dependent populations.

Improving Communication between Drivers, Dispatchers and Passengers is critical to improving the capability of services to address consumers’ mobility needs. This includes expanding transit’s ability to meet the diverse language needs of Los Angeles’ populations, evident particularly among frail elderly persons who are mono-lingual, non-English speaking. Non-emergency Medical Trips and Inter-Community Medical Trips surfaced as the consistently difficult-to-meet trip type needed across all groups. This is exacerbated in California by state-level policy related to Medi-Cal reimbursement and in Los Angeles particularly where medically-oriented trips are typically long trips to distant regional facilities.

Barriers

The most frequently noted barrier to coordination was the “mixing” of clients and consumers on transportation services. This issue is reported by agencies and organizations in other settings

and presents challenges, especially in operating environments where vehicle resources are limited and where the profile of the client/customer base is varied, such as dialysis patients, adult day health care consumers and low income children attending daycare.

A second large group of respondents indicated that they do not have sufficient staff or vehicles to effectively coordinate with others.

Another common barrier was uncertainty about with whom to coordinate where agencies indicated potential willingness to coordinate but no clarity as to with whom to do so.

Other barriers mentioned by the agencies/organizations included:

- Lack of funding
- Liability issues
- Non-Profit status
- Policy and regulatory limitations to allow aides to travel with clients
- Limitations on funds relative to transportation contractors
- Language challenges
- Would consider coordinating services however there are logistical and geographical concerns

Funding is also reported as a barrier to coordination as agencies and organizations will require both additional staff and financial resources to develop coordinated plans and programs. This includes funding for staffing, vehicles, drivers, insurance, and fuel or maintenance expense, all of the critical elements needed to operate service, either as a single agency/organization or in a coordinated operating environment.

Geography and trips lengths were identified as barriers relative to isolated areas such as the City of Avalon (Catalina) and the Antelope Valley, Palmdale and Lancaster communities. This issue also emerged in relationship to the political feasibility of agencies and organizations providing transportation which extends beyond city/county boundaries as well as, the associated cost of lengthy inter-city/county trips.

Language issues of various sorts were noted: typically Spanish, but also Chinese and Cambodian. A school for the deaf noted the difficulties of their consumers in communicating with drivers in coordinated services.

Stakeholders spoke of time-related concerns that inhibit coordinated transportation, including timely pick-ups and drop-offs for medical trips, work, education and training classes, as well as the need for same day transportation of their client/consumer base which limits vehicle availability for others.

Priorities

The Coordinated plan must contain the Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

The specialized transportation needs of the three diverse and often overlapping segments of the population, seniors, persons with disabilities and low-income individuals is challenging. Actions and strategies developed will be incrementally effective in improving services, by providing a

wider array of travel options to the target populations based upon their individual needs, and informing them about those options.

This can be accomplished by gradually building the capacity of public transit and human service agencies/organizations to develop and implement coordinated projects, plans and programs. Both public transit and human service agencies/organizations must be active partners in this capacity building process.

The actions necessary to increase the capacity of public transit to offer improved access and availability of transportation options for the target populations will differ from those actions and strategies needed to build capacity for human services transportation. Moreover, the need to build the capacity and reliability of human service transportation providers to complement public transportation services is critical, since the overall mission of these agencies/organizations is to serve individualized need, including operating services that public transportation cannot (e.g., nonemergency medical, door-through-door and escorted trips).

For these reasons, project opportunities designed to strengthen the ability of human service agencies to continue to provide the hard-to serve trip needs of seniors, persons with disabilities and low-income individuals should be encouraged.

Priorities relative to the development and funding of coordinated transportation projects identified through the locally developed comprehensive unified plan should:

1. Adequately address the unmet/underserved and individualizes transportation needs of the targeted populations;
2. Maintain consistency with current Federal and State funding regulations and requirements;
3. Be financially sustainable;
4. Include measurable goals and objectives, largely developed by the applicants;
5. Build and/or increase overall system capacity and service quality; and
6. Leverage and maximize existing transportation funding and capital resources, including human services funding.

Sequencing and Prioritization of Resources

Public transit and human service agency/organization transportation in Los Angeles County are documented in this plan as extensive and substantially funded. This plan proposes the enhancement and improvement of the existing network of services through coordination -- specifically for seniors, persons with disabilities and persons of low income. A coordination vision is proposed of improved mobility for the target populations.

To accomplish this vision, several dozen implementing actions and strategies have been detailed in the body of the report with the expectation that there will be incremental implementation and refinement of actions and strategies over the next few years.

The strategies outlined should be viewed as guidance for public transit and human service agencies, as actual projects developed by stakeholders will be based upon their specific needs, resources and ability and willingness to work to establish coordination relationships with others.

Recommendations

Framework for Coordination

Recommendations are focused upon building the coordinated framework and strengthening ties between public transit and human service agencies and organizations.

The stakeholder involvement process, through interviews and surveying, points to an array of actions, strategies and project recommendations that represent the next logical steps toward coordination. The Mobility Manager construct for Los Angeles County will to a large degree assume the persona of the responsible lead agency.

Organizationally mobility management can be accomplished in any number of ways which include, but are not limited to:

1. Integration of a new functional unit or section within an existing agency/organization; or
2. Creation of a new and separate organization established for mobility management purposes.

A vision is proposed for Los Angeles County's locally developed coordination action plan:

IMPROVED COMMUNITY MOBILITY FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY SENIORS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND PERSONS OF LOW INCOME

To this end, the project team has developed four (4) goals, supported by sixteen (16) implementing objectives to accomplish coordination in the county. In addition, a total of forty-two (42) implementing actions, strategies or projects are recommended.

The goals are responsive to the Federal guidance for the locally developed plan and establish the roadmap by which mobility needs of the Los Angeles County target populations can be addressed. The implementing strategies are the methods by which gaps in services and opportunities for improved efficiencies may be effectuated, through various coordinated initiatives. The four goals and the potential projects suggested follow.

GOAL 1 - COORDINATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Projects funded under this goal should establish and/or further the development of the mobility manager concept, to be implemented at a regional level, sub-regionally and at agency levels.

This includes:

Projects submitted under this category should generally:

1. Establish a Regional Mobility Manager capability to provide leadership on coordination of specialized transportation within Los Angeles County.
2. Promote sub-regional Mobility Manager capabilities through the Call for Projects and through outreach by the Regional Mobility Manager.
3. Conceptualize tools to support voluntary, agency-level mobility manager capabilities and recruit human services and public transit agency participation.
4. Develop visibility around specialized transportation issues and needs, encouraging high level political and agency leadership. Eligible Projects may include:
 - Identification of a lead agency for the regional mobility manager
 - Defined roles and responsibilities of the regional mobility manager
 - Establish a high level advisory body, strategic oversight committee.
 - Create regional mechanisms to promote coordination including the annual inventory updating and regularly scheduled workshops for expanded training.
 - Mechanisms to identify stakeholder partners as “member” agencies and creating strategies to improve communication among these organizations around coordinated transportation issues
 - Projects to promote visibility of Regional Mobility Manager role and functions
 - Conduct of an annual Mobility Summit structured to involve highest level leadership
 - Develop sub-regional mobility manager capabilities through pilot efforts to test inter-systems coordination.
 - Create mechanisms by which the Regional Mobility Manager and sub-regional mobility managers can work together to promote the Coordination Plan vision and goals.
 - Develop joint training opportunities to bring together human services and public transit personnel, including driver, maintenance and information specialist training

GOAL 2 – BUILDING CAPACITY

Acknowledging that more transportation capacity is needed to meet the needs of a growing population within Los Angeles County, this goal proposes more trip options for the target populations. This goal inherently requires a strengthening of the ability of human service agencies to provide trips that public transit cannot, thereby increasing not only capacity but access to services.

The notions of reliability, quality of service and service monitoring are reflected under this goal, important for both public transit and human service agency transportation providers. Projects and activities under this category could involve the following: Projects submitted under this category should generally:

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1. Promote policies to increase the quantity of public transit and specialized transportation provided
2. Improve the quality of public and specialized transportation, with attention to meeting individualized needs
3. Improve transportation solutions between cities and between counties
4. Make capital improvements to support safe, comfortable, efficient rides for the target populations
5. Establish mechanisms to support transportation services provided by human services agencies
6. Establishing procedures to measure the quantities of trips provided

Eligible Projects may include:

- Expand availability of specialized transportation into evenings on Saturdays and on Sundays
- Promote vehicle maintenance, vehicle loaner and vehicle back-up programs for human services agencies
- Establish basic reporting tools, including driver logs, dispatch logs and standardized definitions of terms that can be easily adopted by human services agencies and utilized in reporting on transportation services provided
- Research liability insurance options for human service organizations, including general liability for vehicle operations and for volunteer-based programs; distribute widely information about these findings and resources.

GOAL 3 – INFORMATION PORTALS

The need to broaden the reach of information related to transit and specialized transportation services for clients/consumers, as well as stakeholder agencies and organizations is critical. Los Angeles County has a wealth of transportation service resources. Points of access to transportation information must be expanded to make it easier for everyone to understand and use the transportation network. Activities proposed under this goal include:

Projects submitted under this category should generally:

1. Integration and promotion of existing information strategies, including 211, web-based tools and Access Services Ride Info to help get public transit and specialized transportation information to consumers.
2. Development of information portal tools for wide distribution of existing information.
3. Promoting opportunities to disseminate transportation information for human services agency line staff and workers. Eligible Projects may include:
 - Establish a working group, with proper authority, to integrate the multiplicity of information resources available related to public and specialized transportation.
 - Develop regional, systems-level and agency-level pilot projects to test information applications that effectively promote existing transit to the target groups.
 - Create simple flyers and/or other media that direct agency staff of human services organizations to the wide array of resources that can help them access transportation on behalf of their consumers.
 - Work with METRO subcommittees and ASI subcommittees to identify additional methods of information dissemination.
 - Maintain and update developed portal access tools.
 - Ensure that Regional Mobility Manager tools, such as Ride Info, are maintained kept current and information about them widely distributed.
 - Develop transit information modules geared towards agency staff and provide these at various locations around Los Angeles County to help maintain current information among human services personnel.
 - Create information tools that address connections with neighboring counties.
 - Develop bi-lingual and multi-lingual information strategies including at transit customer services centers.

GOAL 4 – COORDINATION POLICIES

There is a need to effectuate changes to governmental policies and practice that may discourage coordination – at local, regional, state and federal levels for the purpose of realizing coordination goals between the two systems. For example, there is a continuing effort to challenge and potentially change Medi-Cal reimbursement policies at the state level. Other policies will need to be identified and addressed over time, in part through measurement of the success, failure and impacts of implemented projects. Activities developed under this goal may include: Projects submitted under this category should generally:

1. Work to establish non-emergency medical transportation policies to more cost-effectively meet medically-related trip needs.

2. Establish a Call for Projects process sufficiently flexible for applicants to construct projects responsive to identified needs in a broad range of ways.
3. Establish processes by which implemented projects are evaluated against goals set by applicant agencies.
4. Report on project successes and impacts at direct service levels, sub-regional levels and countywide levels and promote project success at state and federal levels.
5. Review policies related to transportation of target population members between counties where the policies are a deterrent to transporting individuals to medical facilities within a reasonable distance of county borders. Eligible Projects may include:
 - Participate in activities that promote policy changes to California’s NEMT reimbursement procedures to support need-based and not simply functionally-based tests, including inviting public transit providers into the Medi-Cal provider role.
 - Establish technical assistance roles, related to the Call for Projects, building upon the Section 5310 approach to prospective applicants.
 - Measurable goals set forth by applicant organizations that identify the means by which they wish their projects’ success/ failure to be assessed.
 - Collect and tabulate data on implemented coordination projects, assessing implementation against goals agencies themselves have established.
 - Identify successes, as well as poor performance, and report on specialized transportation projects and solutions that are effective.
 - Document successes on a range of measures that may include cost-effectiveness, responsiveness to consumer needs consumer satisfaction levels, responsiveness to agency personnel requirements and measure of coordination that may be identified.
 - Create mechanisms, including state and multi-county conferences, where lessons learned can be shared and experiences of other regions sought.

MADERA COUNTY

Transportation Needs, Gaps, & Barriers (Combined)

The primary gap/need for transportation services in Madera County is helping social service clients get to their needed destination i.e. government offices, doctor offices, and social service provider offices. Many of the social service clients are low-income, disabled, and/or elderly. All of the other identified needs are directly or indirectly related to this primary need. The needs are organized in the following categories: transit service, transit amenities, public information and bicycle and pedestrian issues.

Transit Service

A number of gaps related to transit service have been identified, including:

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- Hours of operation – some transit service does not run early enough in the morning, late enough at night, or on the weekends.
- Frequency – some transit riders would prefer more frequent service to the Madera College, Fairmead, and eastern Madera County than existing schedules permit.
- Connections – transit routes do not always transfer or connect with other services. There is a need to have better interregional connectivity.
- Service Coverage – transit does not always serve destinations that people need to reach, such as schools, employment, medical care or grocery stores as well as to outlying towns and communities.
- Travel time – travel time between stops and to destinations is too long, particularly when transfers are required to complete the trip.

Transit Amenities

- Bus shelters – transit riders would like additional bus shelters for seating and protection from the elements.
- Bus stop benches – in the event that bus stop cannot accommodate a bus shelter, transit riders expressed interest in bus benches or seats.
- Lighting – transit riders indicated that some bus stops are unsafe, especially at night due to lack of proper lighting and also because of fog.

Public Information about Transportation Services

In some cases, the issue or gap was not a lack of service, but a lack of information about service that already exists.

- Bus stops do not list enough information about the bus route/service.
- Schedules/transit information is not always available in languages other than English.
- Information about fares, transfer policies and routes is unclear.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues

Safe routes for walking or riding a bicycle are an issue in many communities:

- Traffic speed is too fast near high pedestrian areas
- Lack of crosswalks
- Lack of sidewalks, particularly in unincorporated or rural areas
- Sidewalks are in poor condition (uneven pavement or gravel)
- Safety at night is a problem due to lack of proper lighting
- No bike lanes or areas to secure bicycles

Transportation Resources

Social Service Transportation providers:

- American Cancer Society - demand response volunteer driver program to Fresno
- Heartland Opportunity Center - transportation to job sites, medical appointments, shopping, recreation
- Madera County Behavioral Health - transportation to counseling center, 21k miles per month
- Community Action Partnership of Madera County
- Pacific Family Health

Public Transportation providers:

- Eastern Madera County Senior Bus and Escort Service - demand responsive, volunteer driven, medical appointments, shopping, senior centers, 3880 miles per month
- Madera Area Express -fixed route, ridership: 158,869 FY2005-06 Madera Dial-a-Ride – demand-response, ridership 40,627 FY2005-06
- Madera County Connection -fixed-route, ridership – 9100 FY2005-06
- Chowchilla Area Transit Express -demand-response, ridership: 30,676 FY2005-06
- Community Action Partnership of MC-transportation for head start students, 5743 miles per month

Regional Transportation providers:

- Amtrak
- Greyhound

Priorities

The implementation priority of solutions involves enhancing transit operations, outreach to the community, and the participation of local government agencies to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The implementation priority should begin with enhancing transit operations. Enhancing transit operations includes operating conditions, capital, and economies of scale. Enhancing operation conditions should start with increasing the frequency of service, the days of operation, and the hours of operation. Connected to enhancing operations, transit providers will have to purchase new vehicles and replacement vehicles in order to sustain current operations as well as be able to enhance operations.

Lastly, enhancing operations also involves more coordination among providers which may include economies of scale i.e. fuel purchases and other expenses, coordinating services provided, and improving the transferability of fares.

After transit operation enhancements, an effort needs to be made to outreach or different community groups and the general population to provide them information on transit services

that are available. Education was one of the key elements that were discussed by the Coordination Committee.

Lastly, organizations need to communicate to the local government agencies the need to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities including building more sidewalks and bike lanes where needed.

Recommendations

To address the primary need of helping social service clients get to their needed destination and also to address the related needs that were identified, the following possible solutions summarized below emerged from the Coordination Committee:

Transportation Service/Amenity Solutions

- Make fixed-route bus improvements (frequency, hours of operation, routing)
- Coordination amongst providers to achieve economies of scale
- Install more bus shelters
- Improve lighting
- Initiate subsidized taxi service
- Initiate shuttle service (evening, weekends)
- Initiate medical shuttle service
- Initiate volunteer driver programs to access services
- Organize vanpools to employment destinations
- Provide additional bus pass vendor outlets

Public Information Solutions

- Make MCTC's website a local transportation information portal
- Provide more transit information at bus stops and on buses
- Improve multilingual transportation information
- Institute collaborative approach to mobility management among local agencies
- Make presentations on available transit services to community groups, i.e. parent groups at schools, social service program participants, etc.
- Have providers provide more collaborative transit information at their places of business

Pedestrian Solutions

- Build or repair sidewalk
- Improve lighting for safety
- Stripe (or re-stripe) crosswalks to improve safety

Bicycle solutions

- Offer bicycle purchase assistance programs
- Install bicycle racks or lockers
- Create more bike lanes

MONTEREY COUNTY

Transportation Needs

A. Regional

Expanding MST Service According to the August 2006 MST Monterey

Peninsula Area Service Study (PASS), residents said that MST lacks buses where people need to go, bus stops are not conveniently located, schedules don't match needs and the bus takes too long.

One-Stop Information (511) Service (bi-lingual)

The Monterey Bay region needs one telephone number (511) that consumers can call to get information needed for planning, scheduling and using all forms of available transportation available to them in the region. An accompanying website with trip-planning functions would further improve the public's opportunities to access and use the transportation information. Access to these self-service travel resources 24 hours a day would be especially valuable to individuals with limited travel choices due to economics or disability.

Paratransit and Accessible Transportation Connections

There is a lack of direct paratransit and accessible transit connections between the tri-county regions, as well as with neighboring counties. This restricts mobility options, particularly for those communities near the borders.

Expand Existing Transportation Opportunities at a Low Cost Option

Individuals needs at home care and live in remote locations have difficulty finding a care provider that can afford the fuel to drive the commute. Addressing the cost of transportation to work or volunteer sites for human-services care providers is an unmet need.

B. San Benito County

Requests have ranged from changing funding policies for public transit to route change requests.

1. Transportation for students use before school hour services
2. Allowing more time for passengers to board the bus
3. Allow same day reservations for Dial-A-Ride and Paratransit services
4. Consider policies that would allow Dial-A-Ride to pickup passengers who do not have scheduled trips.

In addition to the unmet transit needs hearings, volunteers in San Benito County face challenges to and from work sites.

C. Santa Cruz County

Lack of Publicity about Existing Specialized Transportation Services

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Many residents are unaware of the specialized transportation services available and/or are confused by the eligibility requirements for specific rides based on the requirements of the particular funding source.

Transition Services Needed for Senior Drivers

Services need to be in place to keep senior drivers safely on the road and to encourage them to stop driving when appropriate.

Specialized Transportation Minimally Available for Those who do not Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Mandated Paratransit Service Eligibility Criteria

Providing specialized transportation to these destinations is a high priority. It is also important to provide specialized transportation to residents needing these services that live in outlying rural areas. Additionally, there is a need for specialized transportation services for the following populations: for low income individuals; individuals with oversize wheelchairs or other needs outside the ParaCruz eligibility criteria; and the need for services outside the ParaCruz service hours, as mirrored by local transit.

Mobility Management Center Would Ease Confusion

A coordinated and seamless system of information and coordination for specialized transportation services is needed. A community vehicle program whereby vehicles are available to trained drivers from social service agencies and activity centers.

'Same Day' Medical and 'Bed to Bed' Medical and Non-medical Trips on Paratransit Not Available

Paratransit Vehicles Need New or Updated Equipment

Many paratransit vehicles lack updated equipment. Improving the capability of drivers/vehicles to make real time changes would improve service and could decrease missed trips.

Regular Express Bus Connections Needed

Transit service connections between South County, other parts of the County and the Highway 17

Express Bus service is lacking. Additional bus transit service would allow low income riders more job opportunities and assist with transitioning low income children and families from welfare to work.

One-Stop Information (511) Service

Providing travelers with route and roadway information, information about their travel alternatives and the tools to plan their trip will give them more control and help them make the travel choice that best fits their needs.

South County Transit Services Inadequate

Bus services in South County are inadequate to meet the needs of the fastest growing sector of the county.

Reminder Phone Call System Would Reduce Missed Trips

Missed trips on specialized transportation are costly for the service providers.

Agricultural Industries Transportation Services Assessment

Individuals working in this industry have non-traditional work schedules and labor long hours in the field for very low wages. These factors create unsafe driving conditions because workers are exhausted from working in the fields, some workers do not have a driver's license or insurance, their cars may be unreliable and workers may benefit from carpooling.

Expand Existing Transportation Opportunities at a Low Cost Option

Currently there are a number of programs that could be enhanced to provide more transportation service at a much lower cost than starting a new service.

Complete the MetroBase Facility Phase 1 and Phase 2, including Operations Building and Parking Structure

The lack of a consolidated transit operations, maintenance and fueling facility affects the availability and cost of transit service.

Travel Path to Transit Unsafe or Unavailable

A lack of safe travel paths between senior and/or disabled living areas, or other origins/destinations and bus stops is problematic and though bus stops are ADA accessible, there is a need to ensure safe paths to and from the stops.

Transportation Services to Support Foster Youth and Court Ordered Supervised Visitation Insufficient:

Safe and reliable services for transporting children to school and supervised visitation settings and funding to accomplish this mandated services is an unmet need for dependents and wards in foster care.

D. Monterey County

TAMC suggests that there are many opportunities for improving the County's special transportation services, including generating and distributing more Spanish language materials that market all services, increasing the availability of bilingual transportation agents, communication among special needs transportation providers, and adding transportation services to "unincorporated" areas. This study concluded that dial-a-ride service being operated by the Cities of Greenfield, King, and Soledad could be better coordinated with Monterey – Salinas Transit fixed-route service. This study also concluded that new demand-responsive service was warranted in the City of Gonzales.

In addition, public comments in the Fall of 2007 included:

- Request for increased frequency of MST Line 23 service
- Improved coordination between dial-a-ride service in the City of Soledad with Line 23
- Improved service to rural areas in North and South Monterey County

- Implementation of new dial-a-ride transit service in the City of Gonzales

Specifically, Monterey County residents would benefit significantly by having the following areas addressed:

Same Day Service

While current resources do not allow for the increased number of drivers and vehicles necessary to provide same-day service, a hardship nonetheless exists for some riders, as not all needed trips can be planned.

Door-Through-Door

Some riders may not be able to safely arrive and return from their planned destination without assistance from an able, responsible adult.

Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH)

While MST offers some GRH service, it does not always extend to all areas of need.

Increased Frequency and Coordination of Services

In addition, service hours and operations of local dial-a-ride transit services and fixed route regional services in the Salinas Valley are not completely coordinated, leaving a potential gap in service for riders

Mobility Management Centers and Travel Training

When training is available to teach people how to use all the forms of transportation available to them, and tickets are easy to purchase, challenged riders have greater freedom to move about their community.

One-Stop Information (511) Service (bi-lingual)

When travelers have one telephone number (toll free) they can call to assist them in their travel plans, they are much more likely to find a mode of transportation that best meets their needs. An accompanying website equipped with trip-planning features can further enhance a traveler's options.

Accessible Taxi Service

Monterey County needs a taxi authority to oversee the availability of accessible taxi services countywide.

Improved Service to Rural Areas

There are many challenged riders who currently live outside the ADA services corridor and do not have access to RIDES or accessible taxi services. The rural unincorporated communities of Pajaro, Aromas and Los Lomas in North Monterey County, and San Lucas, San Ardo and Bradley in South Monterey County are the most impacted.

Replacement of Old Vehicles

Safe, fuel-efficient and low maintenance vehicles are critical to the provision of reliable services.

Ability to Use Available Vehicles and Drivers Regardless of Funding Source

The current system of discrete, inflexible vehicle pools, where many vehicles travel with few passengers, is inefficient and prevents the preservation of resources that could otherwise be redistributed into areas of need.

Emergency Response Plan for Transportation-Challenged Consumers

Currently, there is no database containing the information needed to create an emergency response plan.

Agricultural Worker Vanpools

Many agricultural workers in the County lack adequate transportation to and from rural agricultural work sites and must rely on carpools and ad-hoc vanpool arrangements that can be unsafe.

Senior Community Special Transportation

Since some of these senior residents are not eligible for the RIDES paratransit program, and none of their helpers are eligible, an alternative transportation service needs to be developed.

Transportation Resources

A. Regional

Fixed-Route Transit

Greyhound Bus Lines

This intercity bus transportation agency provides a 10 percent discount to seniors over 62 and a 50 percent discount for any attendant traveling with the senior. If the senior citizen is handicapped, the assistant travels on the bus as an aide for free. Buses travel between Monterey and Santa Cruz connect with San Benito's County Express in Gilroy and provide low cost transportation to other parts of the state and country.

Amtrak

Amtrak connector bus service travels through Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, providing service for residents traveling for leisure or business on over one-hundred intercity trains and connecting buses in California.

Non-Profits

The Central Coast Alliance for Health, (the Alliance)

The Alliance is a non-profit health plan which provides health services for 90,000 low-income patients in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties. The agency has an annual operating budget of \$230 million and gets the bulk of that money from the state. Transportation services offered by the Alliance are limited to medical trips only and are contracted to non-profit and/or private transportation providers.

The Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL)

CCCIL is part of the nationwide network of Centers of Independent Living, providing a diverse set of services for people with disabilities with the mission of supporting their equal and full participation in community life. Serving all three counties within the Monterey Bay region, CCCIL provides clients with information and referral services regarding transportation access and mobility. They also work with the county RTPAs to advocate programs and policies improving accommodation and accessibility for the communities with disabilities.

Seniors Council's Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Program

The Seniors Council's Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion program is a region-wide volunteer program that places low-income seniors in a variety of different community sites, including public schools, day care facilities, family shelters, and hospitals.

B. San Benito County

Fixed-Route Transit

Under the name County Express, the San Benito County Local Transportation Authority operates the largest public transit service in the County. County Express provides convenient and affordable transportation to residents and visitors to San Benito County. Services include:

- Four Fixed-Route Services to the City of Hollister
- Dial-A-Ride and Paratransit Services to the Cities of Hollister, San Juan Bautista, and Tres Pinos
- Inter-county service connecting Cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista to Santa Clara County in Gilroy

The Inter-county Service allows County Express customers to connect to other public transit services such as: Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST), Caltrain, and Greyhound in Gilroy. In addition to administering and operating County Express, the Authority partners with the Council of Governments for San Benito County Rideshare Program. The Rideshare Program promotes alternative modes of commuting by providing valuable information regarding alternative commute options, including carpooling and vanpools, to residents and workers in San Benito County. Besides environmental benefits, these alternative modes of transportation assist low-income residents and workers in traveling to and from work. There is limited taxi service available through Hollister Taxi for residents and visitors to San Benito County.

Paratransit

In fiscal year 2006/2007, County Express averaged 165 lift assisted trips per month through its Paratransit service. Paratransit services are provided for individuals with disabilities that have difficulty accessing the Fixed-Route bus stops. Paratransit services may be scheduled up to 14 days in advance and on the same day. Same day service is subject to a convenience fee and availability.

Non-Profits

Jovenes de Antaño

Since May of 1975, Jovenes de Antaño (Youth of Yesteryear) has been dedicated to improving the general welfare of elderly and individuals with disabilities of San Benito County. They provide a wide variety of services that include the following:

- Senior nutrition services
- Meals on Wheels
- Adult Day Care Center
- Family caregiver support program

In addition to these services, Jovenes de Antaño is contracted by San Benito County Local Transportation Authority to provide out-of-county nonemergency transportation and to operate a senior medical and shopping assistance program. For fiscal year 2006/2007, Jovenes de Antaño ridership rose roughly 8 percent from the previous fiscal year. The fare for the medical and shopping assistance program and senior lunch program is \$1.00 each way and requires a 48-hour advance notice. There is no charge for any out-of-county non-emergency transportation, but a donation is greatly appreciated.

Fixed-Route Transit

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District is served by the METRO bus system. The vehicle features and facilities accommodate almost all residents in Santa Cruz. For example, “passenger lift” equipment permits a secure ascent on and descent off buses for persons with wheelchairs, and those unable to walk up and down stairs.

Paratransit

Paratransit, shared-ride and door-to-door transportation services are offered by a number of service providers in Santa Cruz County. The two main providers are METRO ParaCruz and Community Bridges Lift Line. METRO ParaCruz is the ADA-required service that complements METRO’s regular fixed-route bus service to origins and destinations within ¾ mile of existing bus routes. ParaCruz accommodates individuals who are unable to independently use fixed route buses due to a disability some or all of the time, and who are eligible under ADA 1990.

Community Bridges is a 30 year old non-profit, whose goal for the Lift Line transportation program is to provide "Transportation for Independent Living." Nearly 100,000 door-to-door rides per year are provided to county residents who have disabilities, elderly or frail by both the in-house Lift Line program and by contract with private operators. The majority of rides are to senior meal sites, medical destinations and “safety net” transportation to seniors and people

with disabilities who need specialized transportation to origins or destinations outside the ParaCruz service area or eligibility criteria.

University of California, Santa Cruz Transportation and Parking Services Department (TAPS)
The University of California, Santa Cruz's Transportation and Parking Services Department (TAPS) provides a Disability Van Service, a complimentary paratransit service for individuals with permanent or temporary disabilities to access the UCSC campus and fully participate in the UCSC campus environment

Non-Profits

Agencies such as the American Red Cross, the Mental Health Client Action Network and others provide specialized transportation services to clients that meet their eligibility requirements. The Volunteer Center uses volunteer drivers to provide rides and companionship to many of the region's frail elderly residents who are not eligible for other transportation services.

C. Santa Cruz County

Fixed-Route Transit

Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District is served by the METRO bus system. The vehicle features and facilities accommodate almost all residents in Santa Cruz. For example, "passenger lift" equipment permits a secure ascent on and descent off buses for persons with wheelchairs, and those unable to walk up and down stairs. METRO conducts "Mobility Training" with free instruction to seniors and people with disabilities who want instruction and assistance riding the bus. In addition, fare discounts are offered for individuals with disabilities and seniors.

Paratransit

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University of California, Santa Cruz Transportation and Parking Services Department (TAPS)
The University of California, Santa Cruz's Transportation and Parking Services Department (TAPS) provides a Disability Van Service, a complimentary paratransit service for individuals with permanent or temporary disabilities to access the UCSC campus and fully participate in the UCSC campus environment.

Non-Profits

Agencies such as the American Red Cross, the Mental Health Client Action Network and others provide specialized transportation services to clients that meet their eligibility requirements. The Volunteer Center uses volunteer drivers to provide rides and companionship to many of the region's frail elderly residents who are not eligible for other transportation services.

D. Monterey County

Non-Profits

The non-profit Hope Services serves Monterey County with a range of employment and job training programs, developmental activities, professional counseling, infant services, senior services, supported and independent living services, and mobility training for approximately 3,000 children, adults and seniors. HOPE has a partnership with San Andreas Regional Center, which provides vans that transport clients to training and activities at HOPE's office. (MV Transit also contracts with SARC for transportation.)

The Blind and Visually Impaired Center of Monterey County customizes services to the person's specific needs, goals and abilities by giving the visually impaired population access to "client instructors." Instructors give clients information about transportation services that accommodate their specific condition. A Spanish-speaking interpreter is available by appointment. The Monterey County AIDS Project (MCAP) gives clients free vouchers for public transportation.

Fixed-Route Transit

Various community service departments and senior centers offer taxi scripts for individuals over 65, offering half-priced fares. Veterans may access medical centers by contacting the Monterey County Veterans Affairs Office for van trips to outpatient clinics in San Jose and Palo Alto.

Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) Monterey-Salinas Transit serves a 280 square-mile area of Monterey County and Southern Santa Cruz County. Line #55 also provides service from Monterey County to San Jose. MST's serves an estimated population of 352,000 people with 35 fixed-routes and two general public dial-a-ride demand response routes.

Paratransit

The Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) RIDES MST RIDES grants ADA complementary paratransit transportation to individuals with disabilities that prevent them from using fixed-route systems independently. The program provides service throughout the Monterey Peninsula to Carmel, Carmel Valley, Salinas, Chualar, Gonzales, Greenfield, Soledad, King City, and to the Watsonville Transit Center. For certified MST RIDES, MST provides medical related service trips to San Francisco twice each month for \$15.00.

Gaps

A. Regional

According to the August 2006 MST Monterey Peninsula Area Service Study (PASS), residents said that MST lacks buses where people need to go, bus stops are not conveniently located, schedules don't match needs and the bus takes too long.

Paratransit and Accessible Transportation Connections

There is a lack of direct paratransit and accessible transit connections between the tri-county regions, as well as with neighboring counties.

B. San Benito County

Gaps

Agricultural Industries Transportation Services

A large number of individuals have non-traditional work schedules and labor long hours in the field for very low wages. These factors create unsafe driving conditions because workers are exhausted from working in the fields, most do not have a driver's license or insurance, and the cars may not be reliable.

Before and After School Hour Service

In San Benito County, there are 14 elementary, middle, and high schools and one community college in the service area. However during recent unmet transit needs, concerns were raised for the lack of public transportation service for before and after school hour programs. Many of the schools provide before and after school programs for their students and some are not able to participate in them because they do not have a transportation alternative other than the school buses.

Mobility Management Program

The rural nature of San Benito County poses as a mobility obstacle for the elderly, individuals with disabilities and persons of limited means because the agricultural terrain and sparsely populated areas are not pedestrian friendly. Qualified and dedicated mobility trainers will be the key to the success of such a program

Santa Cruz County Regular Express Bus Connections Needed

Transit service connections between South County, other parts of the County and the Highway 17 Express Bus service are lacking.

South County Transit Services Inadequate

Bus services in South County are inadequate to meet the needs of the fastest growing sector of the county.

C. Monterey County

Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH)

While MST offers some GRH service, it does not always extend to all areas of need.

Increased Frequency and Coordination of Services

In addition, service hours and operations of local dial-a-ride transit services and fixed route regional services in the Salinas Valley are not completely coordinated, leaving a potential gap in service for riders, especially riders with special needs.

Senior Community Special Transportation

Such a service would provide linkage between isolated facilities and a nearby transit stop where riders could safely embark and disembark accessible MST coaches.

Barriers

A. Santa Cruz County

A lack of publicity and insufficient funds for outreach, coupled with high fuel costs, serve as barriers to organizations that recruit for and organize volunteer drivers, one of the most cost efficient transportation programs servicing primarily seniors in the community.

Lack of Publicity about Existing Specialized Transportation Services

Many residents are unaware of the specialized transportation services available and/or are confused by the eligibility requirements for specific rides based on the requirements of the particular funding source.

Same Day' Medical and 'Bed to Bed' Medical and Non-medical Trips on Paratransit Not Available

With a few exceptions, resources are not available to provide same day specialized transportation services.

Travel Path to Transit Unsafe or Unavailable

A lack of safe travel paths between senior and/or disabled living areas, or other origins/destinations and bus stops is problematic and though bus stops are ADA accessible, there is a need to ensure safe paths to and from the stops.

B. Monterey County

Door-Through-Door

Some riders may not be able to safely arrive and return from their planned destination without assistance from an able, responsible adult.

Improved Service to Rural Areas

There are many challenged riders who currently live outside the ADA services corridor and do not have access to RIDES or accessible taxi services.

Ability to Use Available Vehicles and Drivers Regardless of Funding Source

When bureaucratic barriers are finally removed, technology solutions will need to be employed for tracking and matching riders to their funding source(s). These technology solutions should provide for inter-county travelers as well.

Priorities

A. San Benito County

San Benito County Maintain Fleet Size

- Fiscal Year 2007/2008 - Ongoing increase Coordination with Other Counties
- Fiscal Year 2007/2008 - Ongoing Before and After School Program
- Fiscal Year 2009-2010 - Agricultural Industries Transportation Services
- Fiscal Year 2008-2009 - Explore the option of an agricultural worker vanpool program.

Pending outcome of agricultural worker vanpool program study and Council of San Benito County Governments Board consideration, begin implementation of agricultural worker vanpool program.

Mobility Management Program

- Fiscal Year 2009-2010

Apply for Community Based Transportation Planning Grant.

- Beyond Fiscal Year 2010-2011

Upon awarding of Community based Transportation Planning Grant, begin plan for itemization of non-profit organizations in San Benito County in need of and/or offer transportation services.

B. Monterey County

LEVEL 1: Immediate need because a reduction of current levels of services are at risk for the following:

- Replacement of Old Vehicles
- Mobility Management Centers and Travel Training
- Social Service Transportation Providers – Capital Expenses
- Accessible Taxi Service

Expand Transit Operations

- Improve frequencies on bus routes.
- Expand services to earlier in the morning and later at night.
- Establish 24-hour a day service on select high-ridership lines and paratransit.
- Offer bus pass subsidies for job seekers and employees
- Expand services in the redeveloping areas of the former Fort Ord.

LEVEL 2: Enable more efficient use of limited resources and expansion into other areas of identified need, including:

- Ability to Use Available Vehicles and Drivers Regardless of Funding Source
- One-Stop Information (511) Service (bi-lingual)
- Expanded Taxi “Scrip” programs
- Improved Coordination between Local and Regional Transit Services
- Vanpool Programs

Senior Community Special Transportation

LEVEL 3: Enable improvement and expansion of current services into other areas of identified need, including:

- Same Day RIDES Service
- Door-Through-Door RIDES Services
- Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH)
- Increased Frequency
- Improve Service to Rural Areas
- Emergency Response Plan for Transportation-Challenged Consumers

Recommendations

A. Regional

One-Stop Information (511) Service

One telephone number (toll free) and an accompanying website equipped with trip-planning features will inform travelers about their travel choices including what to expect on the roadway and what choices are available.

(211) Social Service Information Line

The 211 system is a nationwide phone service envisioned to assist the public with a comprehensive and specialized information and referral service for state and local community information.

Paratransit and Accessible Transportation Connections

Coordinate between regionally planning partners and public transit operators to plan and implement direct paratransit and accessible transit connections between San Benito, Santa Cruz and Monterey counties to meet the needs of those traveling between counties or living close to county borders.

Expand Existing Transportation Opportunities at a Low Cost Option

B. San Benito County

Maintain Fleet Size

As of November 2007, there are two orders of replacement vehicles to bring the fleet back to full capacity with two spare vehicles to allow for maintenance rotation.

Mobility Management Program

Qualified and dedicated mobility trainers will be the key to the success of such a program, educating each on how to use County Express Fixed-Routes through trip planning exercises and riding with the individual on the system.

Agency Coordination

The coordination should include government transportation agencies from the local level to metropolitan level as well as all non-profits that have an interest in transportation.

Public Transportation Coordination

In addition to increasing the coordination between different agencies and organizations, coordination between public transportation services in the Associated Monterey Bay Area Governments need to be improve to provide greater mobility for its residents and visitors.

Non-Profit Organization Coordination

The Authority will provide any non-profit organization information about vehicle acquisitions and leasing information for public transportation.

C. Santa Cruz County

Expand Publicity about Existing Specialized Transportation Services

- Coordinate with the Mobility Outreach and Education Program to provide outreach and input about specialized transportation services and needs include ADA paratransit, non-ADA paratransit, Medi-Cal rides
- Seek New Freedom funds to develop a web-based "Find-A-Ride" system to guide riders to the most efficient and appropriate transportation service provider

Transition Services

- Seek New Freedom funds to expand the mobility training for people to use regular fixed-route buses.
- Coordinate Senior Safe Driver programs and encourage use of alternatives to establish patterns while there are mobility choices
- Seek Jobs Access/Reverse Commute funding to ensure seniors continue to be productive members of the community (example Foster Grandparent program)

Specialized Transportation for Eligible Riders that do not meet ADA-Mandated Paratransit Service Criteria

- Identify priority origins and destinations outside the ADA service area
- Determine whether existing services can be expanded to serve these locations
- Identify transportation needs of low income riders that cannot afford ADA-Mandated Paratransit Service
- Identify transportation needs for people who do not qualify for ADA-Mandated paratransit Service due to the size of their wheelchair
- Identify transportation needs for people needing specialized transportation services outside the hours of ADA-Mandated Paratransit Service
- Seek New Freedom or JARC funds to provide this service

Expand Transit Operations

- Seek Jobs Access/Reverse Commute (JARC) funds to provide extra express bus service between south-county and the Highway 17 Express bus
- Seek JARC funds to expand transit in the south county/Watsonville area
- Seek JARC funds to provide extra express bus service between Watsonville and Downtown Santa Cruz and the University of California - Santa Cruz campus
- Seek JARC funds for additional express bus service between Santa Clara County and the city of Santa Cruz
- Seek JARC funds to offer bus pass subsidies for low-income individuals to/from jobs and activities related to their employment
- Seek New Freedom funds to provide a fare free program for seniors over 75 years old during off peak periods (10:00 am to 2:00 pm)
- Seek JARC funds to provide feeder service from areas not serviced by transit or ADA mandated paratransit into the service areas
- Seek funding to procure new equipment to assist with real-time operations, security and scheduling
- Add transit service for commuters from South County to employers in North County
- Add voucher programs to assist fare payment by low-income workers and low-income seniors.

Coordinate a seamless system of specialized transportation with a Mobility Management Center

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- Coordinate with the Mobility Outreach and Education program (currently underway by Community Bridges) to understand the specialized transportation needs
- Seek funding from the local sales tax measure for this program
- Seek Section 5310 funds for development and start up of the center in FY 2008-09
- Assess entities already providing information and referral services to determine low cost opportunities to provide mobility management.
- *'Same Day' Medical and Non-Medical Trips*
- Secure funding for this critical transportation need.
- Seek New Freedom funds to implement an automated reminder call system to contact riders the day before a scheduled ride (upgrade to the Trapeze scheduling software)
- Construct web-based paratransit reservation system allowing an eligible rider to make reservations electronically
- Improve paratransit vehicles with updated equipment such as Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) for improved manifest display, immediate additions/deletions/confirmations to trips, improved communication and tracking
- Complete the MetroBase Facility Phase 1 and Phase 2, including Operations Building and Parking Structure
- Support Metro in endeavors to cut operations costs and provide more service

Agricultural Worker Transportation Service

- Assess whether coordinated transportation services in place in the central valley would be beneficial in the Monterey Bay area

24-Hour Traveler Information

- Consolidating transportation information and making it easily accessible to travelers 24 hours a day through the 511 phone number and related website will assist travelers in making the most effective travel and mode choice for their needs
- *Construct or Repair Travel Paths to Transit*
- Identify access impairments to bus stops and repair or construct safe travel paths so seniors and people with disabilities can easily use transit
- Seek New Freedom funds for safe paths of travel, providing greater access to existing and future transit Transportation Services to Support Foster Youth and Court Ordered Supervised

Visitation Insufficient

- Identify and seek funding for safe and reliable services for transporting children to school and supervised visitation settings for dependents and wards in foster care.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION (MTC)

Transportation Needs

Enhanced Fixed Route Services: For persons who can and do use the fixed route system, there is a need for additional service in rural and suburban areas, and for more direct service to key activity centers needing to be accessed by older adults and persons with disabilities. Customers would also like increased frequency to avoid long waits, and service longer into the evening and on weekends.

Enhanced Paratransit Services: Paratransit users sometimes need a level of service above and beyond what is required by the ADA, such as service provided on the same day it is requested (e.g. taxis), where and when the fixed route service does not operate, or the ability to accommodate “uncommon” wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

Connectivity: The need for better connectivity was expressed, both for inter and intra-county travel, whether using paratransit or fixed route service. To promote more seamless travel, customers mentioned the need for better shelters and bus stops as well as other amenities at transfer sites. Some persons with wheelchairs have difficulty making effective use of the system and referred to the need to enhance accessibility of vehicles and the related infrastructure, such as shelters and stops.

Information and Other Assistance: There is a need for education so that older adults and persons with disabilities can learn how to use public transit and their accessible features. There is also a need to provide information in a variety of formats. Likewise, there is a need to ensure that drivers, dispatchers and other transit personnel are sensitive to passenger needs, and know how to provide assistance on-board the vehicle.

Pedestrian Access and Land Use Coordination: Improving accessibility to and from bus stops and transfer centers (sidewalks, curb cuts, curb ramps, crosswalks) was widely voiced throughout the outreach meetings. Meeting attendees also mentioned the need to better coordinate land use development with the provision of transit service, especially in lower-density communities.

Transportation Resources

Public Transportation

Over twenty public transit operators provide bus and rail service throughout the region. Since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, all public transit operators operate vehicles that are wheelchair accessible. Other accommodations are also required to ensure the system’s full accessibility by persons with disabilities. For persons whose disability prevents use of public transit even if that system is accessible, complementary paratransit service is provided. Paratransit is required to be provided along the same routes and during the same hours that the fixed route operates.

Human Service Transportation Programs

Varieties of human service agencies directly provide, arrange, or otherwise sponsor transportation for their clients.

Gaps

- *Spatial Gaps:* transit does not always serve destinations that people need to reach, i.e. schools, employment, medical care or grocery stores. Service not available in some rural areas.
- *Temporal Gaps:* need to increase service frequency to avoid long trips, expand hours of operation to run earlier in the morning, later in the evening, or on weekends.
- *Inconsistent reliability:* some transit routes do not stay on-schedule
- *Difficult inter-jurisdictional travel:* transit routes do not always transfer or connect with other services
- *Lack of adequate driver training:* Specifically, how to use accessible features, disability and cultural awareness training.
- *Fares:* Inconsistent fare and transfer policies
- *Accessibility:* Not enough wheelchair spaces on buses need to accommodate larger wheelchairs. Few or no wheelchair accessible taxis are available outside San Francisco. Often, a higher level of support is needed on paratransit than what is minimally required.
- *Transit Amenities:* Need for bus shelters, benches, and lighting at bus stops or transit centers
- *Public Information about Transportation Services:* Need to improve information via 511, websites and other methods about transit routes and schedules to make sure they are current and accurate
- *Language Barriers:* Transit information needs to be provided in languages other than English, and in multiple formats
- *Travel Training:* Need to provide training to educate people, especially new riders, how to use transit
- *Transportation for Youth and Children:* Additional bus service is needed before and after school hours. Transportation services are needed to drop children off at school or daycare.
- *Access to Autos:* Strategies and incentives are needed to promote access to autos and to maintain them in safe operating order.
- *Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues:* Traffic speed regulations are not always enforced in areas frequented by pedestrians. There is the need to provide more crosswalks in

intersections. Sidewalks are often in poor condition, or nonexistent, in unincorporated or rural areas. There are not enough bike lanes or securement areas for bicycles.

- *Affordability:* The cost of using public transit or paratransit is a problem, especially when multiple family members are transit dependent, and for youth. Taxis can also be unaffordable for low-income population.
- *Other:* Unique transportation barriers exist for migrant farm workers.
- *Land-use and transportation policies:* Policies are often not coordinated, and do not support proximity to transit.
- *Environmental factors:* (BART and/or traffic noise, diesel fumes from trucks) may pose health risks.

Barriers

Human Service Transportation Programs

Varieties of human service agencies directly provide, arrange, or otherwise sponsor transportation for their clients. Often, these programs are not well coordinated with public transit systems and, in fact, may duplicate services or overlap with them. Funding provided for transportation services are usually dedicated for a specific clientele (i.e. veterans, Medicaid eligible persons, seniors attending meal programs, etc.) and cannot easily be co-mingled with other funding sources. For the most part, these social service agencies are not primarily in the transportation business; rather, transportation is an auxiliary and not a core service.

Furthermore, it is often difficult to develop an accurate and comprehensive picture of the full network of service providers, including the sources of fund used to support these services, levels of service provided, and other basic program characteristics.

Priorities

Implementation Steps for Coordination Strategies

Enhanced Land Use and Transportation Coordination

- Engage key stakeholders in the development of a regional strategy; JPC, CMAs
- Build on the regional FOCUS program to incentivize positive locational decisions JPC, CMAs through T-Plus program
- *Promote Alternative Modes of Travel, including Improved Pedestrian Access to Transit:*
- Build upon previous MTC planning work specific to pedestrian safety, and disseminate the results to other partner organizations.

Local Jurisdictions

- Encourage pedestrian-related planning at the community level through community-based transportation plans (CBTPs). MTC, CMAs
- Encourage the development of countywide taxi ordinances that would enhance the provision of accessible taxi programs Counties, CMAs

Distribute and Share the Results of the Recently Completed Marin County

- Enhanced Taxi Services Project with EDAC, transit and paratransit program staff and other interested stakeholders

Marin County, PTCC Accessibility Committee, EDAC, Counties and Cities

- Promote Coordinated Advocacy and Improve Efforts to Coordinate Funding with Human Service Agencies:
- Develop a comprehensive legislative platform to address improved human service transportation coordination MTC, Bay Area Partnership, transit agencies and other local stakeholders
- Re-initiate previous MTC legislative efforts to promote human service transportation in California. MTC, Advisory Committees, Bay Area Partnership, human service agencies, other local stakeholders
- Identify a legislator willing to sponsor statewide legislation intended to address the platform defined above. MTC, elected official(s)
- Actively seek the support of partner organizations such as National Council of Independent Living (NCIL), The World Institute on Disability (WID), the Transportation and Land Use Coalition (TALC) and others to place greater emphasis on elderly and disabled transportation needs in their advocacy efforts.

Local advocacy organizations, MTC Advisory Committees

Improved Inter-jurisdictional Travel:

- Prioritize connectivity improvements at transit hubs MTC, MTC Advisory Committees, transit agencies, human service agencies
- Prior to full implementation, test key connectivity improvements such as improved way finding signage, or 511 improvements to ensure their accessibility for senior and disabled populations.

MTC, MTC Advisory Committees, transit agencies, human service agencies

- Review the status of the SB 1474 Plan (MTC Resolution 3055) to ensure respective coordination policies, such as the paratransit interagency guidelines, are accurate and

being implemented. MTC, MTC advisory committees, transit operators, PTCC Accessibility Committee, human service agencies

Mobility Management:

- Encourage the development of Mobility Managers TBD Research and share examples of mobility manager models of excellence established elsewhere. MTC, human service agencies,
- *Transit and Paratransit Operators, PCCs*
- Test and implement technology that could track individual client activity on a vehicle supported with multiple fund sources. MTC, local stakeholders

Recommendations

The next steps in completing this planning process include the following:

Adopt the Coordinated Plan

In November 2006, the Commission adopted MTC Resolution 3787, which documented the transportation needs and strategies specific to low-income persons. The plan built upon previous planning efforts undertaken by MTC in support of improving transportation in Bay Area communities of concern. As a first step, MTC staff will seek amendment of MTC Resolution 3787 to include the results of this planning effort. Together, they will comprise MTC's Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan.

Inform SAFETEA-LU Funding Decisions

As the designated recipient of JARC and New Freedom funds for the San Francisco Bay Area Urbanized Area, MTC is required to select projects with these funds that are (1) derived from this plan, and (2) selected through a competitive procurement process. The State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will continue to administer and be responsible to select projects for use of Section 5310 funds. Chapter 1 of this report discusses eligible uses for and recipients of these funds. In addition, local entities can develop the transportation solutions proposed in the plan to respond to SAFETEA-LU, as well as other funding opportunities.

Plan Update

Federal guidelines indicate that at a minimum, the coordinated plan should follow the update cycles for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). MTC will next update its RTP in 2009, which would provide an opportunity to directly link the development of the coordinated plan with the RTP. Because projects must be derived from the plan, it may also be necessary to update or amend the list of projects to coincide with the Lifeline Transportation funding cycles, or other funding cycles specific to fund sources subject to this Plan.

ORANGE COUNTY

Transportation Needs

1. Enhanced Transportation Information and Coordination

Seven strategy areas considered gatekeeper training, information updates, resource guides, input to service planning decisions, consumer trip planning assistance, mobility training and buddy travel and getting transit information to mono-lingual or isolated communities.

2. Enhancements to Human Services Transportation

Fifteen strategy areas detailed such topics as driver training, volunteer retention and insurance, bilingual drivers, rising fuel costs, enhanced passenger information, accessible vehicles and vehicle replacement, coordinated trip scheduling, vehicle and driver back-ups or shared use, assistance with transit contracting and full cost accounting, operations manager training, services at capacity and Mobility Managers.

3. New/Expanded Services to Meet Specific Needs

Five strategy areas addressed same-day non-emergency medical transportation, transportation appropriate for frail elderly and for medical trips, specialized shuttles or van pools for particular purposes or consumer groups, need for reduced fares.

4. Enhancements to OCTA Services

For fixed-route services, six strategy areas identified included limited weekend and evening services, overcrowding on selective routes, driver training for fixed-route, pockets of unserved needs, express bus needs, and bus stop signage and amenities.

For ACCESS services, nine strategy areas identified included topics of telephone contact after 5 p.m., call-ahead notification, addressing no-shows, same-day service, ride times supplemental taxi services, 6400 series vehicles, ADA eligibility processes, and reservation center needs.

There was agreement on the top-ranked need across public transit, human services and private sector organizations – non-emergency medical trips ranked as the highest need by 45 percent of all responding agencies. Among exclusively the 41 human service transportation providers currently providing trips, the next ranked needs were medical trips (76 percent); counseling or mental health treatment (71 percent); shopping with multiple errand trips (54 percent); and training and education (39 percent).

Transportation Resources

OCTA services consist of a traditional local surface bus network that provides service to most residential and employment areas throughout the county.

This network includes:

- Community routes that are shorter in length and provide service to select communities;
- Inter-county express routes that connect commuters to Los Angeles and Riverside.
- Intra-county express routes connecting commuters to high density locations;

- Stationlink routes that connect commuters to Amtrak and Metrolink train stations; and
- Shuttles that carry riders to special locations and events.

Additionally, a municipal fixed route service is operated by the City of Laguna Beach. Laguna Beach Transit fixed-route services include an intra-city system that serves as a feeder service to the OCTA bus system; Festival Service, which is offered during the ten-week summer festival season; and Charter Service, which allows private parties to schedule private service during non-festival months (September through June.)

OCTA Express Service

The OCTA Express routes offer three different routes for commuters. Route 757 travels between Pomona or Diamond Bar and Santa Ana, with stops in Brea, Anaheim and Orange. Route 758 travels between Chino or Diamond Bar and the Irvine Spectrum, with stops in Brea. And Route 794 travels between Riverside and Corona, and to the South Coast Metro area.

OCTA Bus Rapid Transit

A new bus service is being implemented by OCTA, called Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), to be identified as Bravo! Bravo! service is designed to decrease travel time for customers and improve travel speed within high ridership corridors. Bravo! buses will offer frequent service weekdays only from approximately 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. and will have a distinct identity separate from standard OCTA buses. Traffic signal synchronization will increase traffic flow through the corridors and will allow Bravo! buses to better serve new bus shelters with enhanced identity.

Metrolink Rail Service

Metrolink is Southern California's rail system linking residential communities with employment and activity centers. Metrolink is operated by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA), a joint powers authority of five member agencies representing the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura. As one of five member agencies, OCTA administers all of Orange County's Metrolink rail corridor service.

ADA Complementary Paratransit

ACCESS is OCTA's shared-ride service for people who are unable to use the fixed-route bus service because of functional limitations caused by a disability (Figure 3-5). A person is eligible for ACCESS service if they are unable to board or exit a fixed-route bus, get to or from a bus stop due to physical and/or environmental barriers, or do not understand how to ride the bus. These passengers must be certified by OCTA to use the ACCESS system by meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) eligibility criteria.

Orange County's Metrolink commuter rail service serves 11 stations in Orange County and provides a total of 44 round trips every weekday on three lines:

- Orange County (OC) Line: with daily service between Los Angeles Union Station and Oceanside
- Inland Empire-Orange County (IEOC) Line: with daily service between San Bernardino and Oceanside

- 91 Line: service between Riverside and Los Angeles Union Station, via Fullerton and Buena Park

OCTA's OCTAP Program

The Orange County Taxi Administration Program (OCTAP) is a regulatory program operated by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA). As of May 2008, OCTAP had permitted 23 taxicab companies, 817 taxicab vehicles and 1,236 taxicab drivers.

OCTA Subsidy to Specialized Transportation Programs

There are several programs that receive varying levels of support from OCTA but are operated by and are the day-to-day responsibility of other jurisdictions or organizations.

Senior Mobility Program

OCTA's Senior Mobility Program (SMP) is designed to fill the gap between local fixed route buses and ADA paratransit or ACCESS service by providing local transportation services to seniors with a transit program that best fits the needs of older adults in local communities. Participating cities include: Anaheim, Brea, Buena Park, Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, La Habra, Lake Forest, Newport Beach, Placentia, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Clemente, Santa Ana, Seal Beach, Westminster and Yorba Linda. In addition, Abrazar, the Vietnamese Senior Center and the Korean American Senior Association of Orange County have chosen to participate in the Senior Mobility Program.

OCTA Special Programs

Additionally, OCTA provides a modest subsidy to selected adult day health care and adult day care programs that manage their own transportation services. These include such programs as Orange County ARC, Acacia Adult Day Services and the Alzheimer's' Family Services. Also within this program OCTA provides some support to senior nutrition programs through contracts with senior centers.

Office on Aging Senior Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

The Office on Aging administers the Senior Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (SNEMT) Program, funded largely by Tobacco Settlement Revenues. The SNEMT program provides transportation to older adults who are in need of cost-free transportation to and from medical appointments, dentists, therapies, exercise programs, testing and other health related trips.

- Orange County Senior Mobility Programs have 21 agencies providing a total of 232,130 trips or 0.3 percent of the total trips reported.
- Orange County Coordinated Transportation Programs reported over 69,000 trips or 0.1 percent of the total trips reported. The providers of these trips include the Office on Aging senior non-emergency medical transportation providers: Saint Anselm's, South County Senior Services, and Saint Jude's Hospital.

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- Stakeholder survey respondents reported additional trips provided that are not otherwise accounted for in the above numbers.
- Public fixed-route transit reports over 65.6 million trips provided by OCTA and Laguna Beach Transit, representing almost 98 percent of the total trips reported on Table 3-1.
- Public demand response programs provided were just over 1 million trips or just under 2 percent of the total trips reported. These trips were provided by Orange County Transportation Authority's ACCESS.

Gaps

Limited Weekend and Evening Service

A frequent complaint about fixed route service is that it does not serve evening and weekend workers well. There are pockets of unserved need and key destinations without adequate public transportation. There are pockets of Orange County which lack or have very little fixed route service.

- San Juan Capistrano (behind the Mission)
- San Clemente apartments along railroad track
- Ladera Ranch
- Yorba Linda (east)

Need same day service for a limited number of trips ACCESS riders, like many other groups, expressed the need for same day trips, primarily for medical visits that could not be anticipated.

ACCESS service enhancement strategies are identified as well, as an outgrowth of stakeholder comments. Two areas related to improved communications with riders after 5 p.m. and a call ahead capability. ACCESS riders are asking also for clearly defined pickup locations, such as at Saddleback Community College or in larger apartment complexes where buses and riders often do not connect.

A second limitation was expressed by seniors who currently use the Senior Mobility programs for medical trips. This was the inability of these programs to take riders to medical appointments which are outside of the local jurisdictions in which they operate.

During the outreach component of this project various suggestions were made for addressing this need.

- Expanded hours of service on OCTA routes
- Network of express buses to better serve long distance commutes (something OCTA is working towards)
- Increased levels of service in more remote areas such as South County

Barriers

Top-ranked barriers to accessing needed transportation identified by responding agencies included:

- Difficulty in working with public transit in terms of its reliability, and its rules and requirements that sometimes conflict with the individualized needs of consumers.
- Consumers' individualized needs make it difficult to use available public transit. These needs include assistance in finding and planning trips on existing service, interpreting information about transit, booking trips, special help for individuals on dialysis or with behavioral health needs.
- Funding challenges for directly operating or contracting for transportation.
- Agency restrictions, structures or organizational limits impacting provision of transportation.

Priorities

Five Priority Project Areas:

Funding Source: 5317 New Freedoms for Persons with Disabilities

Orange County has quite a high level of transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities, provided by ACCESS, the Senior Mobility Programs (funded through OCTA) and the Senior Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Program (funded through tobacco settlement funds). However, both consumers and stakeholders felt that there was a distinct need for enhancement of these programs to accommodate three specific limitations.

Human service organizations are encouraged to develop proposals for new or enhanced transportation services to meet these needs. Possible approaches to such service might include, but are not limited to:

- Expansion of current programs (i.e. senior mobility programs or senior non-emergency medical transportation) to address same day and cross jurisdictional trips for persons with disabilities.
- A subsidized taxi program which specifically addresses same day medical transportation for persons with disabilities.

Project Area #2: Enhancements to Human Services Transportation Funding Source: 5316 Jobs Access Reverse Commute or 5317 New Freedoms

Transportation-providing agencies identified a number of support functions and enhancements that they need to increase their capacity, improve efficiencies and cost-effectiveness, and to advise more consumers of the availability of their services. Human services organizations are managing a reported \$ 6.6 million in direct operations of vehicles and describe numerous issues around this function which they readily acknowledge as neither part of their core mission nor one for which they are well-equipped.

Both OCTA and human service organizations can be encouraged to develop programs supporting the management and operational capabilities of small providers within Orange County.

Project Area #3: Subsidized Work and Training-Oriented Transportation for Persons of Low-Income Funding Source: §5316 Jobs Access Reverse Commute

Lack of transportation keeps many such workers from securing or maintaining regular employment. During the outreach component of this project various suggestions were made for addressing this need.

- Expanded hours of service on OCTA routes
- Network of express buses to better serve long distance commutes (something OCTA is working towards)
- Increased levels of service in more remote areas such as South County

However, the suggestion which appears to be the most targeted and achievable within the available funding is the establishment of subsidized van-pools for low income workers and students traveling to key destinations, such as major worksites (hotels, hospitals, industrial parks) and community colleges. Students traveling to key destinations such as major worksites (hotels, hospitals, industrial parks) and community colleges

The objective of this strategy would be to use 5316 Jobs Access Reverse Commute funding to establish subsidized vanpools which would address the need for affordable transportation for low income workers and job seekers. Such vanpools could be sponsored by OCTA (through the provision of vans, maintenance, driver training and support) but would need to be operated in partnership with human-service organizations such as CalWORKs and/or Goodwill that work with low income workers and job seekers.

Project Area #4: Human Services Vehicle Replacement and Expansion Funding Source: §5310 Senior's and Persons with Disabilities, §5316 or §5317

Human service organizations report in excess of 400 vehicles operating within Orange County. Most of these are in need of replacement within the next two years. Of those reported in the project survey, only 22% were wheelchair lift equipped. Hence there is significant need to replace existing older vehicles with new, lift equipped vehicles.

Project Area #5: Mobility Managers to Coordinate Information and Support Services Funding Sources: §5310, §5316 or §5317

Among the needs identified in the outreach effort, was the need for enhanced information and support services for human service agencies attempting to provide transportation to or assist their clients with accessing transportation. All three of the funding sources addressed by this plan allow funding for Mobility Managers.

Recommendations

Vision: To improve mobility in Orange County through coordinated partnerships and projects on behalf of seniors, persons with disabilities and persons of low-income.

Coordinated Plan Implementing Goals:

Goal #1 Information and Communication strategies identify a number of tools by which to improve the availability of information. Many of these focus on improving the quality of information in the hands of the individual – usually a caseworker – at the time when a consumer needs that information. Such consumers may be frail seniors, mono-lingual individuals or those needing to travel between cities or between counties. Such assistance may be through gatekeeper training, provision of additional informational tools oriented to the breadth of transportation resources available, or enhancing existing transportation resources to promote more “destination-oriented” information. Importantly, this goal includes building a strategy that enhances and improves communication between OCTA and human services agencies. While OCTA does staff existing advisory committees that invite such exchange, inclusion of agency representatives of the JARC target population is indicated. Historically, the focus has been on advocates of the Americans with Disabilities Act riders or of seniors but not with the human service network working with Orange County’s low-income populations. Many of the Goal #1 strategies can be implemented or guided by a mobility manager, potentially at the direct service, agency system or regional levels within Orange County.

Goal #2 Enhancements to Human Services Transportation strategies identify a breadth of activities geared towards increasing the capacity and improving the quality and responsiveness of the transportation services these agencies provide. Almost 100 human service agencies, 67 percent of the survey returns, reported some type of transportation function, a substantial number of organizations. These agencies are critical partners to OCTA in meeting increasing transportation demand by the target populations and in providing the tailored services that will truly meet some of these hard-to-meet needs. The strategies in this goal include attention to driver training of various types, fuel costs, insurance, and full cost-accounting to ensure recovery of costs; vehicle replacement and vehicle back-up; strategies for meeting episodic need or over-capacity services. Projects responsive to this goal will strengthen and build the capacity of the human services transportation network of providers.

Goal #3 New/Expanded Services to Meet Specific Needs speaks to developing selected services that may not be currently in place but were identified as solutions to needs. Some of these may be met, in time, by the traditional fixed-route service network as it expands its service area and span of coverage. Late evening and early morning service, as well as expanded weekend service will assist the low-income, service-oriented travelers with their third-shift work schedules. Modifications to non-emergency medical transportation services are described to be responsive to consumers’ needs. And various purpose or trip-specific shuttles are suggested. A final strategy area involves vouchers and user-side subsidy support for lowest income riders.

Goal #4 Enhancements to OCTA Services, both fixed-route and ACCESS, are identified as they relate to the Plan’s findings, some of which can be funded with JARC or New Freedom. With regard to fixed-route service, as noted previously, any enhancements that support the 3rd shift and non-traditional hours that low-income workers commonly work will assist these individuals. Increased weekend service will also meet this need. Issues to address with some focused driver training were highlighted in Chapter 4 and are likely to improve the quality of the ride for target group members. Unserved areas were identified by community name in the Plan and are not uncommonly areas where target group members live. Express needs may well be met with the upcoming start of the Bravo! Bus services - Bus stop amenities were requested by all target groups, to ease the wait for the vehicle.

ACCESS service enhancement strategies are identified as well, as an outgrowth of stakeholder comments. Two areas related to improved communications with riders after 5 p.m. and a call ahead capability. ACCESS riders are asking also for clearly defined pickup locations, such as at Saddleback Community College or in larger apartment complexes where buses and riders often do not connect. A final strategy area is for same-day service capabilities, a service enhancement that can potentially be funded with New Freedom monies.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Transportation Needs

Reported client trip needs that are poorly served differed somewhat between public transit operators and human services agencies but with overlap. Both public transit operators and human services agencies saw medical trips as the highest priority, by 86 percent and 77 percent respectively.

- Public operators' second ranked needs were: kids to daycare and school (86 percent), followed by a group of four tied trip-types: training and education, work between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., shopping and multiple errands, and recreational trips (71% each).
- Human service agencies second tier trip needs – but reported with much less frequency – were training and education (38 percent), work between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., and shopping and multiple errands (34 percent each).

Seniors, Able- Bodied Needs:

- Lack of knowledge about resources.
- Concern about safety and security
- Awareness that time when driving might be limited. Seniors, Frail and Persons Chronically Ill
- Assistance to and through the door.
- Assistance with making trip arrangements
- On-time performance and reliability critical to frail users.
- Assistance in trip planning needed.
- Need for shelters
- Need for “hand-off” for terribly frail

Persons with Disabilities Needs:

- Service quality and reliability
- Driver sensitivity and appropriate passenger handling procedure
- Concerns about wheelchair capacity on vehicles/ pass-bys
- Need for shelters
- Sometimes door through door or issues of “hand-off”

Persons of Low Income and Homeless Persons Needs:

- Easy access to trip planning information
- Fare subsidies (bus tokens or passes) that can be provided in a medium that is not cash

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- Breaking down the culture of poverty that uses transportation as the difficulty for not moving about the community.
- Difficulties of mothers with multiple children
- Need to bring along shopping carts
- Difficulties with transfers within and between systems; long trips.

Persons with Sensory Impairments Needs:

- Difficulty in accessing visual or auditory information.
- Possible door-to-door for visually impaired
- Driver sensitivity

Persons with Behavioral Disabilities Needs:

- Medications make individuals sun-sensitive and waiting in the sun is not an option.
- Medications cause thirstiness; long hour waits in the heat can lead to dehydration.
- Mental illnesses can make it frightening to be in public spaces.
- Impaired judgment and memory

PALO VERDE VALLEY - BLYTHE

- Long distance trips between Blythe and Indio for medical, and social service appointments; limited medical services in Blythe.
- Greyhound service only twice daily and it no longer stops in Palm Springs.
- Trips needed into Blythe from surrounding communities of Ripley, Mesa Verde, others.
- Need for continuity of communication with public human services where turnover of agency staff limits institutional knowledge and understanding of public transit.

COACHELLA VALLEY

- Insufficient information readily available about existing resources and desire for coordinated information about transportation resources
- More transit alternatives needed including privately operated and taxi, special shuttles, van pool and rideshare options.
- Increased Sun Line frequency and service area coverage although limited by resources and state efficiency requirements related to farebox recovery.
- Improved SunDial service quality re reliability.
- Special shuttles targeted to special needs groups or trips or geographic areas
- More transit amenities of bus shelters with protection from the sun and wind.

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY PASS AREA

- Extended operating hours beyond 6 p.m.
- Increased capacity of dial-a-ride service.
- Expanded service to area's larger employers, e.g. casinos and Cabazon.

RIVERSIDE CITY AREA

- Door-through-door service

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- Improved scheduling for dialysis patients
- Improved information capabilities about existing services
- Need for information to reflect “quality” of service, particularly in relation to taxis

NORCO/CORONA AREA

- Bus pass reciprocity between RTA and Corona.
- Service quality concerns for the Corona Cruiser.
- Pockets of need in South Corona, Mira Loma and adjacent unincorporated areas with no bus service.
- Connections to Ontario.

CENTRAL WESTERN RIVERSIDE

- Long travel times on existing fixed-route; connections difficult for target population; need improved travel times.
- Service quality concerns: demand response reliability.
- Pockets of Need: Homeland, Nuevo, Gallvalin Hills, south of Lake Matthews, northern Perris, Quail Valley, Ortega Hwy.
- Improved connections fixed-route selected public facilities, such as DPSS/ GAIN office in Lake Elsinore.
- Extended RTA fixed-route operating hours.
- Improved timing of RTA connections in Lake Elsinore to south-county.
- Alternatives options for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren.

SOUTH WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

- Health/ medical trips into central Riverside and San Bernardino County locations.
- Youth oriented trip options for latch-key youth
- All public transit operators, including Metrolink.
- All Measure A providers
- County human services agencies, including depts. of Public Health, Behavioral Health, GAIN/ DPSS and others; headquarters staff and sub-area district/clinic staff.
- -VA Medical Center
- Riverside Regional Medical Center
- First Five Riverside
- Private taxi operators
- Private dialysis companies, e.g. DaVita.
- Need to grow alternatives to RTA for special needs trips.

Transportation Resources

PALO VERDE VALLEY - BLYTHE

- Palo Verde Transit
- 8 vehicles providing --- 900 trips weekly on fixed route; 100 trips weekly on demand response
- Public school district.
- TRIP program supports 50 one-way trips weekly

COACHELLA VALLEY

SunLine with 84 vehicles and 58 operating daily provides:

- 65,000 trips weekly on SunBus fixed-route
- 1,600 trips weekly on SunDial’s paratransit.
- TRIP program supports 300 trips per week
- Limited human service providers
- Private taxi operators

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

- Metrolink 52,000 trips/week
- Riverside Transit Agency providing weekly -- 110,000 fixed route trips 4,000 demand responses
- RTA taxi trips 350 weekly

Other Public Operators:

Riverside Special Transit

2,800 weekly trips

Corona Cruiser

1,400 weekly trips

Pass Area

6,000 weekly trips

14 Measure A Providers

1,200 trips weekly

TRIP program

1,200 one-way trips weekly

Volunteer Center

900 trip tickets/ vouchers weekly

Private Taxi Operators

Metrolink

52,000 trips/week

Riverside Transit Agency

110,000 fixed route and 4,000 demand response trips weekly

RTA Taxi Overflow:

350 trips weekly

Gaps

An analysis of gaps in service identified key areas towards which to target projects and strategies:

- Meeting individualized consumer needs
- Expanding public transit
- Inter-jurisdictional transportation
- Service capacity
- Service quantities
- Communication and information at all levels
- Liability concerns and promoting insurance alternatives

Service duplication was not seen to be an issue given the diversity of needs identified the range of responses these require and the considerable geographic expanses of Riverside County. Essentially, more transportation of a variety of targeted types and characteristics is needed.

Barriers

Barriers to coordination cited were:

- Funding for directly operated or contracted transportation
- Difficulties in working with public transit in relation to reliability, and its rules and requirements that can conflict with individualized client needs
- Availability of public transit;
- The geography and long trip distances of Riverside County;
- Medi-Cal reimbursement rates for transportation; and
- Insurance liability concerns.

Priorities

Phase I – Coordination Leadership and Infrastructure (Goal 1)

Riverside County Regional Mobility Manager (RMM)

The establishment and implementation of the Regional Mobility Manager (RMM) function and gradual implementation of sub-regional mobility managers/activities in at least three sub regions in the county are the fundamental recommendations of the coordinated plan. Given the size of Riverside County and the rate of projected growth in the targeted populations over the next few years, the regional mobility manager is envisioned to play a major role in furthering coordination efforts and has been proposed as an important element of RCTC Visioning process. It is recommended that the RMM, including the governance or technical advisory body discussed in the detail following section, be created within one to two years following completion of the coordination plan.

Phase I/II – Capacity Building/Information Portals Strategies (Goals 2, 3 and 4)

Concurrent with and following the full “build out” of transportation coordination activities in Riverside County, including the implementation of the RMM and sub regional counterparts, opportunities to develop coordinated projects that can begin to address the needs of the target populations should be pursued. The project team believes that there are a few “basic” strategies and project concepts that can be developed early, that will work to support and promote the framework of a coordinated transportation environment, and that can be funded in the near-term (i.e. 1-5 years). Therefore, the project team recommends that the RMM and/or other public transit and human services agencies/organizations explore the feasibility of instituting and/or implementing one or more of these strategies/project concepts at the regional and/or sub regional level, as applicable,

Recommendations

The project team approach to development of recommendations is designed to guide public transit and human service agencies/organizations in the creation of a coordinated framework to plan, program and allocate funding and ultimately deploy new transportation initiatives that will address the transportation needs in Riverside County.

To this end, the project team developed four (4) goals, supported by nineteen (19) implementing objectives to accomplish coordination in the county. In addition, a total of fifty-nine (59) implementing actions, strategies and projects are recommended.

Goal 1 – Coordination Leadership and Infrastructure

Given the level and diversity of needs in the county, a regional approach to facilitating coordination is needed, as no one agency or organization has the resources to effectuate the necessary cultural, institutional and operational changes needed to accomplish coordination goals. Coordination in Riverside County cannot be accomplished without dedicated staff and financial resources. Projects funded under this goal should establish and/or further the development of the Regional Mobility Management concept. The objectives proposed under this goal include:

1.1 Establish a Regional Mobility Manager capability to provide coordination leadership within Riverside and adjacent counties.

1.2 Establish the Regional Mobility Manager’s role in developing, “growing” and strengthening projects responsive to coordination goals and objectives.

1.3 Promote sub-regional mobility managers in Western Riverside, Coachella Valley and Palo Verde Valley through the Call for Projects and through outreach by the Regional Mobility Manager.

1.4 Promote human services agency-level mobility managers through the Call Projects and through outreach by Regional Mobility Manager.

1.5 Develop visibility around specialized transportation issues and needs, encouraging high level political and agency leadership.

Goal 2 – Capacity Building

Acknowledging that more transportation capacity is needed to meet the growing population expectations within Riverside County, this goal addresses the idea of providing more trip options for the target populations. In addition, this goal inherently includes the concept of strengthening the ability of human service agencies and organizations to provide trips that public transit cannot, thereby increasing not only capacity but access to services. The objectives proposed include:

2.1 Promote the quantity of public transit, paratransit and specialized transportation provided in each of the three apportionment areas.

2.2 Promote the quality of public transit, paratransit and specialized transportation through strategies to improve services with attention to meeting individualized needs.

2.3 Develop strategies for improving transportation solutions between county sub-areas and between counties.

2.4 Support transportation services provided by human services agencies.

2.5 Promote capital improvements to support safe, comfortable, efficient rides for the target populations.

2.6 Measure the quantities of trips provided in Riverside County, through new and existing procedures.

Goal 3 – Information Portals

Points of access to transportation information must be expanded to allow everyone the opportunity to understand and use the transportation network. The objectives proposed under this goal include:

3.1 Integrate and promote existing information strategies, including 211/511, web-based tools and paper media to get public transit and specialized transportation information to consumers.

3.2 Develop information portal tools for wide distribution of information.

3.3 Promote information opportunities for human services staff and direct service workers and expand training options for consumers.

3.4 Report on project successes and impacts at direct service levels, sub regional level and at county wide levels; pursue opportunities to promote project successes at State and Federal levels.

Goal 4 – Coordination Policy

4.1 Work to establish non-emergency medical transportation policies and more cost effectively meet medically-related trip needs.

4.2 Establish a Universal Call for Projects process sufficiently flexible for applicants to construct and implement projects responsive to identified needs in a broad range of ways.

4.3 Establish processes by which implemented projects are evaluated with successes and failures reported.

SACRAMENTO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (SACOG)

Transportation Needs, Gaps, & Barriers (Combined)

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Reaching medical appointments was considered one of the greatest unmet needs for those who must rely on public transit or demand-responsive services. Issues identified with existing transportation services include:

- Those needing to reach medical facilities in another city or county can encounter difficulties trying to cross geographic boundaries, especially where eligibility requirements differ.
- Most demand-responsive services require advance reservations, making it difficult to reach a doctor for a same-day appointment because of an illness or emergency.
- It is hard to predict how long a medical appointment will last, so it is difficult to schedule a timely pick-up.
- Waits for pick-up can be long and generally difficult for someone in ill health.
- Transit agency demand-responsive programs, which are all curb-to-curb, require clients to wait outside for a pick-up, and if they are late it can be a particular hardship for someone who is frail or ill, especially in hot, cold, or wet weather.
- Some people are too frail to utilize curb-to-curb service, and require greater assistance to and from the vehicle.
- Seniors with dementia can be too confused to successfully reach an appointment without escort
- Van transportation itself can exacerbate certain medical conditions.
- Demand for demand-responsive services especially by dialysis clients keeps growing, decreasing capacity for other users.
- Schedules are not always coordinated between agencies on route connections to reach medical centers.
- *Demand-Responsive Service*

Stakeholders identified the following as issues with Paratransit/Dial-a-Ride systems region wide that inhibit mobility:

- Requirements for advance scheduling

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- Insufficient service in terms of hours, capacity, and geographic areas served
- Long waits for pick-ups
- Difficulty of intercity connections
- Curb-to-curb service that is insufficient for those who need additional help to/from the vehicle or to carry packages.

Fixed-Route Transit

For seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income families who can or do use fixed route transit, stakeholders across the region also identified these issues:

- Insufficient service, especially midday, evenings, weekends, holidays, and in more rural areas
- Lack of fixed-route transit near where people live and serving their destinations
- Ride times that are long, especially if there is a need to transfer
- Bus stops that are far from destinations and/or have poor physical access
- Cost, especially with fare increases and transfers
- Drivers not following rules and training concerning riders who are seniors or have disabilities
- Insufficient transit information reaching the public.
- Lack of system integration across the geographic boundaries of providers, resulting in poor timing and schedule coordination, difficulty for riders to connect for intercity travel, and/or requiring multiple transfers.

El Dorado County

- Many people live outside the Dial-a-Ride boundary and so do not qualify for service.
- Taxi service is expensive.
- There are no supplementary volunteer programs
- Dial-a-Ride subscription service is full with a waiting list, making it hard for working people to rely on the service as it is first-come, first-served for those without a subscription.

Placer County

- Intercity travel is difficult from Auburn, Lincoln and other outlying towns to Roseville for jobs, shopping, programs such as PRIDE, and medical services, and across county lines to destinations in Sacramento County.

- Small print size is difficult to read in transit information
- There are limits on shopping bags/packages
- Sun City senior communities in Roseville or Lincoln do not provide transportation services for residents who, as they age, are no longer able to drive, relying instead on resident volunteers. Most volunteer-provided services cannot transport people who use wheelchairs because of issues with disabled users' limited ability to transfer from a wheelchair to a vehicle.
- Clients with similar profiles may or may not qualify for transportation services because of eligibility requirements.
- Some contracting agencies don't permit CTSA to carry other programs' clients even when going to the same destination.
- Placer County Transit schedules do not necessarily coordinate with the light rail schedule at Watt/I-80.

Sacramento County

- Transfers are sometimes across the street and/or very tight, and if a bus is missed there can be a long wait for the next one given infrequent schedules.
- Riders may not know to ask drivers to communicate when there is a potential to miss a key transfer.
- Seniors have fears of getting lost, of safety at transit stops, and of using transit at hours when many teenagers are present.
- Bus drivers are unable to enforce priority seating for elderly and disabled persons.
- Incorrect information is sometimes provided by customer service agents.
- There is a lack of notice about stop location changes, route diversions, closures, road construction barriers, and the like.
- There is no Braille signage at bus stops for the blind/visually impaired.
- No system or Transportation Management Association is available to help organize accessible taxi services or shuttles in neighborhoods.
- Individuals are sometimes denied a ride on Paratransit due to lack of next-day or same-day space.
- Light rail to/from Folsom does not run late enough to accommodate nontraditional work shifts or college students taking evening classes in Folsom or Sacramento.

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Yolo County

- There is a lack of mobility training for passengers who could be encouraged to use fixed route buses instead of demand-responsive service.
- Dial-a-Ride vehicles are insufficient at peak travel times;
- There is inadequate gap service for wheelchair users and in smaller communities, especially for emergencies and unplanned situations.
- Need more accessible taxis.
- Insufficient service is available for low-income residents of the Yolo housing authority development in Winters to reach employment within and outside Yolo County.
- Drivers not always communicating sufficiently with blind/visually impaired clients that have arrived or that bus is full.

Yuba and Sutter Counties

- There is no fixed-route service on Sundays or holidays
- Buses still have steep steps that can be hard to climb.
- There is insufficient information and training on using the transit system.
- There are some who live outside the Dial-a-Ride boundary in Sutter County and so do not qualify for service.
- Medi-Car runs limited hours and has a large back-log/waiting list for medical appointments.
- It can cost \$40-50 to use taxi service.

Transportation Resources

El Dorado County

Fixed-Route Service

El Dorado Transit provides all public transit services in the county, including:

- Eight fixed routes buses serving Placerville, Pollock Pines/Camino, Diamond Springs, Cameron Park, Folsom Lake College, South County, and Grizzly Flat.
- 11 morning commuter buses to downtown Sacramento and 12 return buses
- A connector to the Iron Point Light Rail Station and Kaiser clinic in Folsom.

Demand-Responsive Service

El Dorado Transit also provides:

- Dial-A-Ride services for seniors and persons with disabilities, and the general public subject to restrictions
- ADA Complementary Paratransit service in Placerville
- Daily service to the Placerville Senior Center
- SAC-MED, shared-ride transportation on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Supplemental/Human Services Transportation

El Dorado County offers a Senior Shuttle, which provides transportation with an advance reservation to seniors 60+ for weekly grocery shopping trips, and monthly outings to a senior nutrition site for lunch. The service is not wheelchair accessible.

Placer County

Fixed-Route Service

- The City of Roseville offers 14 fixed routes in Roseville, along with seven morning commuter buses to downtown Sacramento, and six evening returns.
- The City of Auburn operates two fixed routes in Auburn on weekdays, and one on Saturdays.
- The City of Lincoln operates three fixed routes within the city on weekdays.
- Placer County Transit offers five intercity fixed routes, making connections between Auburn, Sacramento Light Rail, Lincoln, Rocklin, Newcastle, Penryn, Loomis, Sierra College, Colfax, Alta, and Roseville.

Demand-Responsive Service

- Roseville Transit offers city Dial-a-Ride service, including same-day and general public service subject to availability.
- Lincoln Transit offers Dial-a-Ride service to seniors, persons with disabilities and the general public.
- Placer County Transit offers Dial-a-Ride services for Granite Bay, Loomis, Rocklin, and along Highway 49.
- The Consolidated Transportation Service Agency of Placer County (CTSA), operated by PRIDE Industries, offers several specialized transportation services for Western Placer County residents.

Supplemental/Human Services Transportation

Senior Independent Services organizes volunteer drivers to take seniors and disabled adults to local doctor's appointments, the grocery store, bank, and other local errands.

Sacramento County

Fixed-Route Service

The Sacramento Regional Transit District (Sac RT) operates two light rail lines and 77 fixed-route bus services in its 418-square-mile service area, with planning underway for an extension of the South light rail line to Cosumnes River College.

South County Transit (SCT/Link) operates service in the southernmost part of Sacramento County. SCT/Link offers 4 local fixed routes in Galt, one route serving other communities in the Delta, and an express route along Highway 99 connecting Lodi, Galt, Elk Grove and Sacramento.

e-tran is the City of Elk Grove's transit service. It offers mobility training and 17 local bus routes within Elk Grove and Laguna, including special school year and summer school service to middle schools and high schools. e-tran also offers 8 commuter routes to Sacramento, including connections to the Meadowview light rail station, and to SCT/Link's Highway 99 service.

Folsom Stage Line offers two local fixed routes Monday through Friday, including connections to the Iron Point and Glenn light rail stations, downtown, Folsom Lake College, Intel, Kaiser, and retail centers.

Demand-Responsive Service

Paratransit, Inc. is contracted by Sac RT to provide demand-responsive services in Sacramento County (except in the service areas of SCT/Link and e-van.) They operate over 150 vehicles.

SCT/Link provides Dial-a-Ride service within Galt for seniors with disabilities and the general public. SCT/Link also provides service once a week for the general public between Southeast Sacramento County and the City of Galt, and twice a week for seniors and persons with disabilities between Galt and medical facilities in Sacramento.

e-van provides Dial-a-Ride service to Elk Grove residents who are 75+ or qualify for ADA. e-van operates within Elk Grove, and also provides service to medical and other destinations within urbanized Sacramento County.

Folsom Stage provides Dial-a-Ride service within Folsom city limits for persons with disabilities and those 55 and over.

Supplemental/Human Services Transportation

Other transportation providers in Sacramento County include the following:

- The American Cancer Society's Road to Recovery program provides transportation to ambulatory cancer patients without other alternatives to reach cancer-related treatment and medical appointments.

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- The Asian Community Center uses two vans to offer seniors living in zip codes 95831, 95822, 95818, and 95814 transportation from home to classes, social visits, day care, group shuttles to senior housing, field trips, errands, medical appointments, with volunteer escorts for door through- door assistance.
- Cordova Senior Center operates two vans that bring seniors to the center for activities.
- For a donation, Galt Concilio offers Galt seniors and persons with disabilities van or car transportation, provided by volunteer drivers with a week's notice.
- The Society for the Blind offers transportation for those attending classes at its midtown location, as well as for its senior retreat program and Senior Impact Program.
- Stanford Settlement offers transportation to and from the Sister Jeanne Felion Senior Center for lunch using 15-passenger vans, plus door-to-door car transportation and escort for seniors to doctor's appointments using volunteers.
- United Cerebral Palsy offers weekday fixed route, door-to-door service for people with developmental disabilities to various community educational and vocational programs throughout the Greater Sacramento area.
- United Christian Center's Health Reach program is a free service running two vehicles on weekdays to transport seniors and persons with disabilities in South Sacramento to medical appointments.

Yolo County

Fixed-Route Service

The Yolo County Transportation District (YCTD) operates YOLOBUS, which offers two local fixed routes within Woodland, and 19 intercity routes serving Davis, West Sacramento, Winters, Woodland, downtown Sacramento, Sacramento International Airport, Capay, Dunning, Esparto, Madison, Yolo and Knights Landing, Vacaville, and Cache Creek Casino.

Unitrans provides fixed-route transit service in the city of Davis for UCD students and the general public. Unitrans also operates a UCD Med Center and UC Berkeley Shuttle.

Demand-Responsive Service

YCTD also operates the following curb-to-curb Dial-a-Ride services:

- Local service for persons with disabilities in Woodland;
- Local service and to medical appointments in Sacramento for West Sacramento seniors and persons with disabilities;
- Intercity service within or between the communities of Woodland, Davis, West Sacramento, the airport and downtown Sacramento.

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- ADA rural service, which consists of route deviations by fixed-route buses for residents of Winters and other more rural communities. Davis Community Transit operates curb-to-curb Dial-a-Ride service for senior and disabled residents in Davis

Supplemental/Human Services Transportation

Other Yolo County transportation providers include:

- United Christian Centers transports disabled adults to the local adult day health care program, and takes Davis clients to the John H. Jones Clinic for substance abuse or medical treatment.
- Woodland Community Care Car, operating two vans driven by volunteers within Woodland to take ambulatory seniors to and from medical, dental and legal appointments, beauty or barber shops, visits to a spouse or relative in a hospital or nursing home, shopping, banking, Social Security, the Senior Center, Concilio, Employment and Social Services Department, library and post office.
- Yolo Adult Day Health Center in Woodland, which operates four vans/mini-vans to bring clients to their program.
- Yolo County Veterans Service Office which uses two vans driven by volunteers to take local veterans to medical appointments at Veterans' hospitals Yuba and Sutter Counties

Fixed-Route Service

Yuba-Sutter Transit offers six fixed routes serving Yuba City, Marysville, Yuba College, Olivehurst and Linda, and Sacramento commuter services, including five morning and evening buses on Highway 99, two morning and evening commuter buses using Highway 70, and three midday runs.

Demand-Responsive Service

Yuba-Sutter Transit provides Dial-a-Ride service to seniors and persons with disabilities, and the general public under certain guidelines, in the Yuba City, Marysville and Olivehurst areas.

Supplemental/Human Services Transportation

- The American Cancer Society offers its "Road to Recovery" transportation service to ambulatory cancer patients in Yuba and Sutter Counties for cancer-related appointments.
- The Medi-Car program operates one van to transport seniors to non-emergency medical and dental appointments.

Priorities

- The Placer County Transportation Planning Agency has initiated a study on coordination and/or consolidation of the various demand-responsive services offered in Placer

County, as majority of the transit operators now provide some form of demand-responsive transit service of their own and a CTSA operates there as well.

- SACOG is also currently conducting a Universal Fare Card Study to determine the feasibility of a universal transit fare instrument for the transit operators within the greater Sacramento metropolitan region. This study will determine the extent to which new technology in electronic fare collection, such as smart cards, could be used to create a seamless, integrated regional transit network to facilitate multi-jurisdictional transit trips.
- SACOG is planning to conduct a Regional Transit Operators Integration Study that will provide the first phase in the development of an improved integration of the region's transit services. The Study process will facilitate the development of improved inter-operator transfer agreements to improve the accessibility and customer friendliness of the region's transit systems.
- SACOG is also working to identify environmental justice issues throughout the region. These issues include lack of transit services to certain areas where populations of lower income persons are high, as well as transit challenges faced by seniors who live in suburban 'senior communities' that have limited or no access to public transportation. SACOG is bringing together representative stakeholders to give their input on environmental justice related transportation problems that they and those in their communities face.
- In the future, SACOG will be encouraging next steps by stakeholders throughout the Region in prioritizing, planning, and seeking to implement appropriate solutions in each county throughout the region. As a first step, SACOG is organizing a Regional Human Services Transportation Council that will bring together stakeholders, transit providers, human services agencies and other decision-makers from throughout the six counties to review the Coordination Plan.

Recommendations

In order to continue to make Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Coordination a priority, it will also be recommended to the SACOG Board of Directors that a Regional Human Services Transportation Council be formed.

Planning and Funding

1. Work with SACOG on funding resources to expand the availability of fixed-route, demand-responsive and shuttle services.
2. Incorporate issues and recommendations raised in this Plan and SACOG's Senior and Disabled Mobility Study into local transit operator studies, such as Short-Range Transit Plans.
3. Coordinate with SACOG and the county human services departments on mapping that overlays current transit routes with concentrations of CalWORKS recipients, and review transit routes and frequencies of service in those areas for service revisions/expansions to better meet local needs

4. Fixed-Route Transit Connections and Service
5. Review and consider schedule revisions to improve fixed-route connections across geographic boundaries to key destinations, such as major medical facilities
6. Develop a process by which transit agencies routinely provide notice to other transit providers in the region of service cuts, revisions, route changes or expansions under consideration, so that impacts on intercity connections can be considered up front in the planning process on the part of all affected agencies.
7. Seek funding support for local shuttle services from retailers and medical providers, in partnership with transit agencies and/or social service providers.
8. *Transit Stops*
9. Develop community partnerships to implement safety improvements at key bus stops and light rail stations.
10. Work with local governments to increase crossing times at key intersections using federal guidelines for the pace of older and disabled persons, and improve intersections and sidewalks for safe travel to and from key transit stops.
11. Develop volunteer bus stop audit teams composed largely of seniors and/or persons with disabilities to audit conditions at stops and stations.

Demand-Responsive Service

1. Seek funding to offer more door-to-door assistance.
2. Improve coordination between demand-responsive service providers, and seamlessness of the system for the user.
3. Review opportunities with other demand-responsive and nonprofit providers to utilize existing vehicles for multiple program clients, possibly with assistance from SACOG's Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee.
4. Work with facilities and local governments to obtain priority parking for Dial-a-Ride vehicles at common destinations.
5. Work with hospitals and clinics to offer on-site escort services for patients using curb-to-curb transportation services but needing more assistance to reach doctors offices.

Information and Training

1. Improve passenger notice on changes to routes, stops, construction delays, Dial-a-Ride pick-up changes, etc.

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2. Increase and reinforce driver training concerning rules and practices for transporting seniors and persons with various forms of disability.
3. Educate more people about the complex issues around aging and mobility. Better publicize the effects of housing choices on senior and disabled mobility, and the public and personal costs of individual choices to locate away from transportation and other services.
4. Increase outreach and education on alternatives to driving and availability of mobility training programs.
5. Establish mobility training programs in all jurisdictions to make transit and alternatives to driving more accessible and user-friendly to seniors and persons with disabilities, including those who may never have utilized it before. Develop transit ambassador/buddy programs to provide personal assistance to seniors and persons with disabilities who are learning to use fixed-route transit.
6. Partner with blindness organizations to expand and promote cane travel training for people who are blind/visually impaired in independent mobility and how to access fixed-route transit.

Local Government Policies

1. Work with local governments on policies requiring developers to pay for bus shelters and transit stop amenities.
2. Work with local governments to require developers of “active” senior communities to provide transportation or to contribute funds to mitigate the costs of local transportation services that will be needed as residence age, through development agreements, developer fees, or other mechanisms.

New Programs

1. Collaborate on a program of “transit scrip” to enable seniors and low-income persons with disabilities to reach fixed-route transit services via a connection by taxi, volunteer driver, or community organization.
2. Catalyze shared driver cooperatives, in which a full-time driver provides service to a regular group of seniors and/or persons with disabilities who share the monthly cost of the driver and receive personalized transportation service when desired.
3. Increase availability of regulated, accessible, subsidized local and intercity taxi services (Yolo, Placer, and Sacramento)
4. Establish a community-coordinated volunteer driver program (El Dorado)

El Dorado County

Lower Cost Strategies/Activities

- Strengthen design review to enable better transit access in new developments.
- Offer increased information on transit options
- Provide assistance with climbing bus stairs if “kneeling” buses are not physically feasible for certain areas.
- Provide more mobility training on using fixed route transit and alternatives to driving.

Higher-cost options

- Improve pedestrian crossings
- Provide community shuttles to connect riders to bus stops on fixed routes
- Develop a community-coordinated volunteer program to fill transportation gaps
- Expand demand-responsive service
- Expand the Senior Center Shuttle’s service area.
- Placer County
- *Lower Cost Strategies/Activities*
- Improve coordination of local fixed-route services
- Improve transit stops
- Improve Dial-a-Ride dispatching to insure correct and timely pick-ups at
- Increase driver sensitivity training.
- Make more available information on alternatives to driving
- *Higher-cost options*
- Develop more shuttle services
- Increase door-to-door assistance.
- Increase availability of accessible, subsidized, local and intercity taxi services.

Sacramento County

Lower Cost Strategies/Activities

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- Include greater emphasis on universal design and transit-oriented development in city and county planning processes.
- Require any project listed in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan to demonstrate that the project will work for all possible users.
- Develop guidelines and funding criteria that support better design for high speed roads and pedestrian and bicycle access
- Increase public participation through greater public outreach and information on transportation and planning meetings, including those of SACOG.
- Form a SACOG ADA committee to insure senior and disabled concerns are heard and incorporated.
- Increase sensitivity and ADA communication, training, supervision, and accountability for drivers and customer service staff.
- Develop customer appreciation systems to recognize good drivers.
- Provide more management support for drivers to remove problem riders.

Higher Cost Options

- Increase funding for transit.
- Focus transit funds on more frequent midday, evening, weekend, and Neighborhood Ride service.
- Improve bus stop amenities such as shelters and benches
- Increase low-floor buses
- Undertake upgrades to wheelchair restraints
- Expand usage of real-time transit information technology.
- Provide incentive pay to recognize good drivers.
- Undertake safety improvements at bus stops and on buses
- Offer smaller vehicle and jitney services.
- Expand demand-responsive and community/volunteer transportation programs.
- Offer more taxis that are regulated, insured, supervised, offer a variety of passenger payment options and accessible vehicles, and include discounts/sliding scales/subsidies for low-income seniors/persons with disabilities.

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- Look at distance-based pricing.
- Look at priority for rides based on medical need.

Yolo County

Lower Cost Strategies/Activities

- Enforce driver stop announcements.
- Provide sensitivity training for all drivers on smooth driving of large buses or Dial-a-Ride vehicles, and including simulations to understand varied impairments.
- Develop a centralized list, managed by a transportation broker or coordinator, of groups or agencies with accessible vehicles who could transport disabled persons during unplanned situations
- Provide more information and training on using alternatives to driving
- *Higher-cost options*
- Increase bus service, including nights and weekends
- Develop supplemental, subsidized, accessible (ramp-equipped) taxi service.
- Expand demand-responsive service hours and wheelchair space.
- Provide greater same-day flexibility for adding riders seeking destinations similar to those with advance reservations.
- Develop shuttles to high-demand destinations Yuba and Sutter Counties

Lower Cost Strategies/Activities

- Provide more complete travel planning information.
- Provide more mobility training.

Higher Cost Options

- Provide more frequent and Sunday bus service.
- Provide shuttles to key shopping and service locations.
- Develop a local volunteer driving program.

SAN BERNARDINO ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS (SANBAG)

Transportation Needs, Gaps, & Barriers (Combined)

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY

- Assistance for frail seniors
- Service to regional medical facilities
- Reasonable travel times on vehicle
- Span of service that accommodates medical, shopping and recreational travel
- Accommodation for wheelchairs and walkers
- Vehicles large enough to allow easy access (mini-buses rather than vans)

Low Income Individuals:

The sprawling development in the area means that bus trips are often long and time consuming. While able-bodied riders can get to most places they need to go, some destinations “aren’t worth the trip.”

- Non-emergency medical transportation services are extremely limited.
- Job Access Transportation
- Senior Transportation

Mobility Management Additional Unmet Needs:

- While no transportation brokerage services are currently available, all but a few respondents indicated an interest in this service. Nine of these agencies said they had funding to pay for their clients participating in a brokerage effort
- Seniors 60+ request transportation to doctor appointments, grocery stores, etc. but are not able to find transportation they can afford. The West End of San Bernardino County has a huge senior population that fall into this category. Several cities emphasized the need for providing local transportation for seniors, and a sustainable funding source.
- Recognizing, that transit service cannot meet all needs, a major county agency requested low income vehicle assistance
- Improved linkages between eastern and western San Bernardino Valley was stressed.
- The need for better local transit circulation connecting the grocery stores, banks, library, etc. was mentioned several times.

VICTOR VALLEY

Seniors and Persons with Disabilities:

Need for service “intercity transportation” for medical appointments at Loma Linda, Arrowhead Medical Center and Colton Eye Clinic. There is a desire for General Public Dial-a-Ride service to provide transportation to local medical and other appointments.

Persons with Disabilities:

Paratransit Certification can be difficult to acquire even for individuals for whom fixed route service is very hard to use. Many bus stops are not accessible, and individuals in wheelchairs often have to travel on the roadway to get to the bus stop. Consumers report that fixed route drivers are insensitive to disabled riders, make rude comments and sometimes pass them up.

Low Income Individuals and Persons with Disabilities:

Need local transit service to be more functional for travel to/from work and training programs. Currently, it can take 2-3 hours to make short trips due to route structure and low frequency of service. Service hours are too short for many jobs and there is no Sunday service.

All Groups:

There is a need for “immediate needs transportation,” both locally and “intercity transportation,” to get social service agency clients to employment interviews, social service agency eligibility screening, non-emergency medical transportation, etc.

Need for Medical Intercity Transportation:

- Job Access Transportation
- Enhanced Local Transportation Service
- Immediate Needs Transportation
- Mobility Training

MOUNTAINS (CRESTLINE, BIG BEAR LAKE)

All Groups:

There are a variety of reasons for which residents need transportation “off the mountain” to the San Bernardino Valley. These include medical appointments, social service appointments and court dates. However, making the connection between MARTA and Omnitrans to travel to the key destinations (medical facilities, TAD offices, Social Security, Courts) is seen as too difficult for many seniors, persons with disabilities and low income individuals.

Low Income Individuals: A large number of individuals need to go to Rim Family Services regularly for a variety of counseling services. It is difficult to get there on either the fixed route (no stop) or Dial-a-Ride services (limited hours).

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Intercity Transportation:

- Need for Transportation to RIM
- Need for Transportation Between Crestline/Lake Arrowhead and Big Bear Lake

Other Unmet Needs:

- “Need transportation to the clinic here for medical care, more transit service especially on weekends; service to low income Spanish speaking individuals”
- “Most of RMHL clients are disabled, seniors, or low-income families, many of which have young children. They need transportation to government agencies, hospitals, doctor appointments, day care, shopping (food & clothes) and general transportation.”

HIGH DESERT (BARSTOW)

All Groups:

Need for service to Victor Valley and San Bernardino for:

- Medical appointments (Victorville, Apple Valley, Loma Linda, Veterans Hospital, Arrowhead Regional Hospital)
- SSI appointments (Victorville)
- Court dates (Victorville)
- Jury Duty

Low Income Persons:

- Fixed Route span of service is too short for most work trips. (BAT hopes to address this in upcoming service review.)
- *Seniors and Persons with Disabilities:*
- Inability of DAR to meet all demand. Seniors complain of long waits. According to BAT, most of the peak demand is 7-9 p.m. – and they cannot always accommodate all riders.
- Need for Intercity Transportation to San Bernardino Valley Transit Service to Victor Valley

Other Unmet Needs:

- There are significant waiting periods to access the dial-a-ride services
- Need for evening and weekend services for developmentally disabled clients

MORONGO BASIN (JOSHUA TREE)

College Students:

Copper Mountain College has expressed a need for improved transit service to the college in the evenings (after 4:30 p.m.) and on Saturdays. Growth in affordable housing in Landers and Wonder Valley is increasing transit needs in those communities. Better links with the college are desired.

Persons with Disabilities:

Hi-Desert Industries client population is growing, expected to reach 100 within 10 years. They are unable to accommodate the increased need for door-to-door transportation to their work vocational center.

Seniors and General Public:

Consumers feel that Read-Rides service needs to be expanded to provide more service in the afternoons and on weekends. In addition, the population is growing and expanding, (particularly in the Wonder Valley area), resulting in a need to expand the service area for Read-Rides.

Transportation Resources

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY

Omnitrans is the public transit provider for the San Bernardino Valley area. They provide both fixed route service and Access paratransit services throughout the San Bernardino Valley. Omnitrans provides 33 fixed bus routes including 18 routes in the East Valley, 14 routes in the West Valley and 1 regional express route. The fixed routes included 15 base routes in the main travel corridors, 16 local routes in the various communities, and one peak hour tripper. Several Cities within the San Bernardino Valley have implemented special transportation services for seniors.

- Rancho Cucamonga & Fontana Family YMCA provides transportation to Rancho Cucamonga seniors (60+) within the Rancho Cucamonga area and to the Kaiser facility in Fontana
- The City of Fontana's Senior Center provides transportation to seniors (55+) and persons with disabilities who reside in Fontana
- The Redlands Police Department operates a demand response service for Redland seniors who are 55+
- The City of Chino Hills also provides senior transportation to the Senior Center. There are a limited number of private companies which contract to provide transportation to the Inland Regional Center, Inland Empire Health Plan and other organizations.

VICTOR VALLEY

VVTA provides both fixed route and ADA paratransit service within the Victor Valley area. Their services include:

- 10 local routes within the Victorville/Apple Valley area
- 3 County Routes including service to Helendale, Lucerne Valley, Baldy Mesa, Phelan and Wrightwood.
- Direct Access ADA paratransit service - Greyhound service connects Victorville with San Bernardino and Barstow.

Superior Shuttle is a private door-to-door transportation service, primarily providing trips to Ontario and Los Angeles airports. Superior also contracts with the County to transport foster care youth and with the Department of Aging for seniors. (\$70-\$80 for trips “down the hill”) Client only transportation is provided by Head Start, Hand to Hand Outreach and Precious Cargo.

MOUNTAINS (CRESTLINE, BIG BEAR LAKE)

Transit services within the Mountain area are provided by MARTA.

- MARTA provides six round trips daily from Crestline/Arrowhead and from Big Bear Lake to the San Bernardino Valley. There are plans to expand this service.
- There is one very long local route that serves from East of Crestline, along the Rim to Running Springs. The route makes five round trips per day...but not every community is served on every trip. Service is from about 6:15 a.m. to 6:15 p.m.
- Big Bear Valley has two shorter routes – a local and an express with service from 6:15 a.m. to 6:15 p.m.
- Trips between Crestline area and BBL can be made by transferring at Running Springs from the Crestline Arrowhead Route to the twice a day BBL-San Bernardino Route.
- General Public Dial-A-Ride service is operated in BBL, Crestline, Arrowhead and Running Springs and does advance and same day reservations.

HIGH DESERT (BARSTOW)

BAT provides fixed route and demand response services in the City of Barstow and the surrounding areas of the County. Services include:

- Five fixed routes: two in central Barstow, two in west Barstow and one on Hwy 58
- All-Ride general public demand response service in the city
- City DAR serves seniors and disabled persons

- County general public DAR serves the rest of the service area

All demand response services take same day reservations with an estimated 40 minute response time (90%). They also take reservations up to 2 weeks ahead, but 99% of trips are same day requests

- Best Opportunities transports their clients (adults with developmental and other disabilities) between home and job sites. They use a fleet of 10 vehicles to provide over 4000 trips per month to 55 clients.
- Greyhound provides 5 outbound and 6 inbound trips per day, between Barstow and San Bernardino. Round trip fare is \$38.00. The City of Barstow offers a subsidy.

Other private transportation services provided in area include:

- Rim Rock Convalescent Home has a van with a lift.
- Mountain View Senior Living has a van.
- Veterans Home Bus (does local and out of area trips for its residents).

MORONGO BASIN (JOSHUA TREE)

Morongo Basis Transit Authority (MBTA) provides a variety of fixed route and demand response services including:

- Inter-city service along the Twenty-nine Palms Highway Corridor
- Local routes in Twenty-nine Palms, Yucca Valley and Landers
- Commuter service from Morongo Basin to Palm Springs
- Read Ride general public dial-a-ride service

Hi-Desert Industries uses a fleet of 3 vehicles to provide transportation to approximately 50 of its own clients, primarily persons with developmental disabilities.

Reach Out Morongo Basin provides medical transportation for seniors using a 6-passenger mini-van (non-accessible) and staff driver. Once a week they provide service to medical facilities in the San Bernardino area.

NEEDLES

Needles Area Transit provides deviated fixed route service on a single route within Needles. The service operates hourly, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday and for 4 hours on Saturday. NAT serves most of the area within the City, with the exception of some trailer parks on the north end of the city. Dial-a-Ride operates 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and is run by the Needles Senior Center. It provides curb to- curb service within the Needles city limits. The service is for seniors (55+) and persons with disabilities, but is used only by seniors.

Priorities

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY

In the San Bernardino Valley, there is a need to develop an institutional structure that will provide leadership in coordinating community. The creation of a CTSA with a hybrid Board of Directors would provide a needed forum to move the above strategies to reality. The functions of the CTSA that would have the most impact on the target populations:

- Brokerage for non-emergency transportation service
- Support the growing senior transportation service needs by providing support in funding, coordinated dispatching, joint procurement, and collective pool of backup vehicles.
- Build capacity of additional non-public transportation providers in the San Bernardino Valley
- Partner with 211 to disseminate information about available services
- Development of a comprehensive mobility training program that would include training on how to utilize local community circulators and Omnitrans fixed route services. Sensitivity training would also be provided to both fixed route and paratransit drivers

VICTOR VALLEY

Implementation of a weekday general public fixed route service to key medical and social service agencies is a critical unmet need from the Victor Valley. Public and private non-profit agencies should document the actual number of one-way monthly trips, whether or not the client could use fixed route or needs paratransit service, origins and destinations of trips during a sample month.

SANBAG staff can utilize this information to determine if the service meets reasonable to meet criteria. Public and social service agencies should be willing to guarantee a local contribution for the farebox recovery. Once Vista Guidance service receives its van, it will play an important role in providing paratransit service to clients who need curb-to-curb or in some cases door-to-door service for public and private social service agency clients.

MOUNTAINS (CRESTLINE, BIG BEAR LAKE)

Implementation of the recommendations of the Operations Analysis to expand the route, add stops, and increase the number of runs to two round trips a day from both Crestline/Lake Arrowhead and Big Bear Lake would have the most significant impact on the target populations. Acquisition of an accessible mini-van for use by Rebuilding Mountain Hearts and Lives in conjunction with RIM and other non-profits in the Mountains to fill “hard to serve” transportation needs is also a very high priority for serving the needs of the target populations.

MARTA has plans to improve the connections between Crestline/Lake Arrowhead and Big Bear Lake, which will close a gap in the existing transit network and provide a significant number of trips to the target populations.

HIGH DESERT (BARSTOW)

There is a significant demand for intercity service between Barstow and the Victor Valley and Barstow and the San Bernardino Valley to key medical and social service agency destinations. All of the strategies identified in the action planning workshops would help to fill this critical gap in service delivery. The strategy that would have the greatest impact on the target populations is general public fixed route intercity service among Barstow, Victor Valley, and the key San Bernardino Valley destinations.

MORONGO BASIN (JOSHUA TREE)

There is a need to expand the capacity of social service agency transportation in the Morongo Basin. Reach Out Morongo Basin has the leadership and skills required to expand their transportation role in the community. Applying for funds for a Mobility Manager to facilitate an expansion of the Reach Out Morongo Basin transportation services to meet the increasing transportation needs of seniors, disabled individuals and low income individuals would significantly improve the quality of life of those individuals. This is a very high priority. The role that Reach Out Morongo Basin would play is to fill the gaps in transportation service that MBTA cannot fill with public transportation services. The Inland Regional Center needs to be an important funding partner in expanding services for the developmentally disabled population.

NEEDLES

Providing transportation service two days a week to Ft. Mojave and Bullhead City to serve medical appointments is a critical priority. SANBAG staff and the City of Needles developed a workable funding and operations plan to utilize the senior van for this purpose. In October 2007, the City of Needles decided against moving forward with implementation because of the pending San Bernardino County takeover of the medical complex in Needles. It is the County Department representatives who participated in this study who told the consulting team that the current situation is a crises situation. Removing these institutional barriers to provide lifeline transportation is a critical priority that needs to be resolved immediately. Providing a one-day a week intercity service from Needles to Barstow, Victor Valley and San Bernardino Valley medical facilities is also a critical priority. County TDA funds should be provided to implement this service immediately.

Recommendations

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY

Identified Coordination Opportunity #1:

There is a potential to improve community transportation for seniors by providing support for and coordination of local senior transportation services. Cities of Fontana, Rancho Cucamonga and Redlands currently operate senior transportation services. Montclair has a general public dial-a-ride used mostly by seniors. They would like assistance with how to handle cross jurisdictional trips, operations funding and information distribution.

Identified Coordination Opportunity #2:

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Potential to increase usage of Omnitrans fixed route services by persons with disabilities by broadening the availability of mobility for disabled individuals, including Inland Regional Center clients. Simultaneously enhance sensitivity training for Omnitrans personnel to encourage usage of Omnitrans by disabled riders. Need a mobility training program that is sustainable/on-going and that addresses attitude (drivers), physical access to buses and communications (between users and Omnitrans). Mobility training could enhance usage for some groups, but not for all.

Identified Coordination Opportunity #3:

Establish a transportation brokerage to assist agencies in purchasing coordinated transportation services for non-emergency medical and other trip purposes.

Identified Coordination Opportunity #4:

Improve information access and market of available public and human service agency transportation

Identified Coordination Opportunity #5:

Improve the availability of public transportation, especially for low income workers.

VICTOR VALLEY

Identified Coordination Opportunity #1:

There are a variety of opportunities for providing intercity medical transportation to Loma Linda, Veteran's Hospital, Arrowhead Medical Center and Colton Eye Clinic, and to other immediate needs destinations.

Identified Coordination Opportunity #2:

Improved mobility training provides the opportunity to increase access to VVTA transit services by disabled individuals. There is the potential to marshal available mobility training resources from VVTA, California Department of Rehabilitation, the Inland Regional Center and other organizations to formulate an integrated and comprehensive mobility training program in the Victor Valley.

Other Identified Opportunities:

A number of strategies were also developed to improve the coordination of public and private transportation in the Victor Valley sub-area:

MOUNTAINS (CRESTLINE, BIG BEAR LAKE)

Coordination Opportunity #1:

Intercity service to the San Bernardino Valley for medical and social service agency trips Transferring from MARTA to Omnitrans and figuring out how to get to their destination is beyond the capabilities of many seniors and social service clients. When added trips are implemented, extend service in San Bernardino to circulate among key destinations – TAD offices, Court,

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medical facilities. Implementation details are critical in meeting needs of clients of Mountain Area social service agencies. The participants at the action planning workshop agreed that the routing and schedule proposed in the MARTA Comprehensive Operations Analysis would greatly enhance the off the mount service.

Coordination Opportunity #2:

Enhanced transportation within the Crestline and Rim areas, as well as the need for more direct transportation between Crestline and Big Bear Lake.

HIGH DESERT (BARSTOW)

Identified Coordination Opportunity #1:

Potential for intercity service to accommodate medical and social service appointments in Victorville and the San Bernardino Valley Three possible options were identified during the key informant interview process:

1. Coordinate with Vista
2. Provide subsidized Greyhound tickets,
3. A 5311(f) intercity transit service between Needles, Barstow, Victorville, and San Bernardino perhaps two days a week. Key destinations include Loma Linda, Arrowhead and Veterans Hospitals and government offices in San Bernardino. This is the primary coordination opportunity identified for Barstow.

MORONGO BASIN (JOSHUA TREE)

Identified Coordination Opportunity #1:

To address the needs of Hi-Desert Industry clients and others, there is the potential to develop a subscription service policy to provide a limited number of trips to social service agencies on Read Ride services.

Coordination Opportunity #2:

To enhance job and career training opportunities for existing and potential disabled students at CMCC, there is the potential for evening Read Ride services or a vanpool program, to serve evening classes.

NEEDLES

Coordination Opportunity #1:

Improve medical transportation to hospital and medical facilities in Ft. Mojave, Bullhead, and the San Bernardino Valley.

Coordination Opportunity #2:

Provide jobs transportation between Needles and Laughlin.

SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (SANDAG)

Transportation Needs

Public Transportation Service Needs:

- Gaps in transportation options for the general public
- Gaps in transportation services serving individuals with limited means
- Gaps in mobility options serving individuals with disabilities
- Gaps in transportation options serving seniors
- Limited amenities at existing transit stations
- Decreased independence available to disabled riders restricted to using ADA paratransit services
- Costliness of using ADA paratransit services

Supplemental Transportation Program (STP) Needs:

- STP's vehicle fleets inadequate to meet existing demand
- Lack of resources to provide enough services to meet STPs' clientele's demand
- Decreased independence and isolation issues with transportation disadvantaged clients
- Difficulties for CalWORKS clients to obtain and retain employment due to transportation issues

Public Information About Transportation Services:

- Lack of public knowledge about existing transportation services
- Lack of public knowledge about public transportation routes and schedules
- Lack of public knowledge about available STP's and which are appropriate for the individual
- Lack of public knowledge about the benefits of coordinated services
- Difficulty with riders navigating the ADA certification process efficiently
- Inefficiency and decreased independence of riders using paratransit who could potentially use fixed-route services

Safety:

- Safe pedestrian mobility at COASTER stations
- Improved security at park-and-ride lots and transit stations
- Improved security on transit

Accessibility:

- Accessible taxicabs
- Accessible bus stops and transit stations
- Accessible paths of travel to public transit stops
- External announcements on the buses
- More transportation services that can accommodate larger wheelchairs
- Improve vehicles to enhance accessibility

Coordination:

- Existing resources can be used more efficiently
- Coordination efforts should result in a user friendly system that is available and accessible to all populations
- Limited connections between health and human service transportation and public transit
- Existing system could take advantage of new technologies
- School districts may face additional coordination hurdles because of different vehicle standards and state requirements precluding other vehicles to access school sites
- Some agencies may not be able to share their vehicles because their vehicles are at 100 percent capacity all day

Trip Needs:

- Most common trips needs are medical trips and shopping trips
- Trips for church, shopping, social visits, and entertainment are needed weekly
- Trips during off-peak hours, particularly midday weekday timeframes are needed

Transportation Resources

The major initiative of SANDAG to improve transportation coordination among health and human service transportation providers has been the creation and funding of the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA). In 2006, SANDAG designated Full Access & Coordinated Transportation (FACT) of Oceanside to be the CTSA for San Diego County.

Public transit service in the San Diego region is provided by two agencies, the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and the North County Transit District (NCTD).

These two agencies provide services through a variety of directly operated and contracted services, including three fixed-route bus operators; San Diego Trolley Incorporated, NCTD COASTER commuter train service, Coronado Ferry service, general demand responsive operators, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit operators.

These operators provide service in SANDAG'S area of jurisdiction covering 4,261 square miles and encompassing 18 incorporated cities and the County of San Diego. Of the 42 school districts in San Diego County, 30 offer yellow bus transportation while six offer transportation to their special needs students only.

On a daily basis, approximately 54,000 students and 11,700 special needs students are transported to and from school by yellow school buses. University of California San Diego (UCSD) operates an extensive network of eleven shuttle routes around the UCSD campus and to major offsite landmarks such as the Old Town Transit Center, the Sorrento Valley COASTER Station, University Towne Center, Hillcrest and the airport on major holidays. Access to the shuttles is limited to USCD students, faculty, and staff.

The services operate various schedules, but some service is available seven days per week, and as late as 12:15 a.m. The service is free of charge for currently registered UCSD students, faculty, and staff. Cal State San Marcos Parking and Transportation Services provide a free shuttle between the Cal State San Marcos SPRINTER Station and the campus. Shuttle services operate from 6:45 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The shuttle runs on a continuous 15 to 20-minute loop through campus stopping at University Village Apartments, Craven Circle, Chavez Circle, and back to the SPRINTER station in conjunction with the University semester schedule for fall, spring, and summer sessions. A lunch time service from Craven Circle to the Ralph's shopping center is also available from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The San Diego region also has a number of privately funded transportation services that cater to the public or large groups of select users. These services do not necessarily receive public funds but in some cases have emerged due to the inability of publicly financed systems to meet demands because of funding, cross boundary issues, or the limited size of the market.

The Old Town Trolley is a tourist-oriented service that operates themed buses year-round. There are currently no joint fares or reciprocity arrangements between the Old Town Trolley and the public transit system.

Greyhound is a nationwide inter-city bus operator. Within San Diego County, Greyhound offers services from Oceanside, Escondido, El Cajon, and San Ysidro to Downtown San Diego. Greyhound services operate express via the Freeway system. In the suburbs, Greyhound operates from public transit centers in Oceanside, Escondido, El Cajon, and San Ysidro. However, in Downtown San Diego, Greyhound uses its own terminal.

Greyhound operates seven days per week. In the past NCTD and Greyhound had a joint ticketing scheme that allowed Greyhound passengers to ride on NCTD between Escondido and Oceanside.

Indian casinos in the rural areas of San Diego County have become major attractions for residents and visitors, creating a significant demand for bus services. Some casinos, such as Pala, Harrah, and Viejas, are located on existing rural bus routes, while others are not. The casino industry has responded with special bus services for casino visitors and employees. Barona Valley Ranch Resort and Casino, Sycuan Resort and Casino, Valley View Casino, and Viejas Casino now operate shuttle service to selected areas throughout the County to help fill in the missing links in MTS and NCTD service networks.

The Palomar Limousine Company operates a shuttle service during the summer tourist season to transport passengers from rail stations at Poinsettia, Oceanside, and Downtown Carlsbad to Legoland. The service has a limited schedule, but fills a missing gap in the NCTD route network.

California Paratransit Services

California Paratransit Services provides transportation service for seniors and persons with disabilities. Transportation is contracted out through various taxi companies. Wheelchair accessible vehicles are available, but scheduling is suggested one-week in advance.

Golden State Paratransit

This agency provides direct transportation services to all San Diego County residents, 24 hours per day. The service charges a fee of \$3.50 per mile and travels up to 250 miles. Vehicles are ADA accessible.

A number of agencies provide transportation to hospitals in the San Diego region. The hospitals may fulfill the demand themselves, providing shuttle services to their campuses and to their immediate neighbors. These include shuttles between remote parking areas and hospital sites

for employees (e.g., Palomar Hospital District) and shuttles for staff and patients (e.g., UCSD Hillcrest and Veteran’s Hospital).

Gaps and Barriers (Combined)

In some areas of the county, students are a major source of ridership and revenue for transit operators, but they are also a challenge to serve due to the sharp peak periods created by strict school schedules and federal rules that limit the ability of transit to serve the market. In addition, new schools in some parts of the region are being built in areas beyond existing transit services. Due to the limitations of transit funding and federal rules, creating service extensions to meet the needs of the new schools are not always feasible.

Priorities

Priority – Strategy

- Very High Develop or expand transit and non-agency client transportation services in areas with little or no other transportation options based on identified gaps in transportation services
- Very High Develop or expand transportation solutions in areas with sufficient densities to support shared ride or coordinated services based on identified gaps in transportation services included in Chapters 6 and 7
- High Development of centralized ride scheduling, dispatching, and mobility center
- High Improve transportation services to the rural areas
- High Increase coordination efforts by combining resources such as vehicles, riders, funds for rides, vehicle maintenance, drivers, driver training, insurance coverage, general ride subsidies, dispatching equipment, software, and gas cards for volunteers
- High Increase work-based weekday and weekend service based on identified gaps in service included in Chapters 6 and 7
- High Increase work-based weeknight service based on identified gaps in service included in Chapters 6 and 7
- High Provide travel training to encourage more individuals to ride regular transit
- High Develop or enhance volunteer driver programs
- High Upgrade bus stops to include weather protection
- Mid Expand public information regarding alternative transportation programs
- Mid Extend hours of operation and increase early morning and late night service
- Mid Provide demand responsive transportation for areas not served by fixed-route transit
- Mid Support coalitions of similar programs such as the development of a volunteer driver program coalition
- Low Community outreach and marketing of services
- Low Create feeder to fixed-route service
- Low Develop non-motorized transportation programs (i.e., bicycle, etc.)
- Low Develop or expand car sharing programs
- Low Encourage coordination among school districts
- Low Enhance driver training program to improve passenger information
- Low Enhance existing guaranteed ride home programs
- Low Improve 511 Web site and other transit information sites
- Low Improve bus public address (PA) systems
- Low Improve dissemination of transit service change information
- Low Improve information on routes and schedules for buses and trolley system

- Low Improve real-time travel information on buses and trolleys
- Low Increase COASTER service, including regular weekend service
- Low Increase level of express transit service
- Low Increase officer patrol in transit stations with known criminal activity
- Low Increase SPRINTER service, including weekend and late evening service
- Low Increase the marketing of transportation travel options
- Low Increase weekend hours for fixed-route services
- Low Install and maintain transit station amenities (shelters, seating, trash cans, and lighting) Low Install closed circuit television devices and monitoring personnel at stations (including signage)
- Low Install in-vehicle closed circuit television devices and operator monitoring equipment
- Low Install pedestrian grade separations at COASTER stations
- Low Provide additional feeder services to the Trolley and SPRINTER
- Low Provide commuter services from Southern Riverside County
- Low Provide taxi vouchers
- Low Provide trips during off-peak hours and ensure midday coverage
- Low Purchase and implement technology to promote cohesive use between public and private transportation providers

Prioritized Strategies - Individuals With Disabilities

- Very High Develop or expand transit and non-agency client transportation services in areas with little or no other transportation options based on identified gaps in transportation services included in Chapters 6 and 7
- Very High Develop or expand transportation solutions in areas with sufficient densities to support shared-ride or coordinated services based on identified gaps in transportation services included in Chapters 6 and 7
- High Develop or expand transportation solutions for developmentally disabled individuals based on identified gaps in service included in Chapters 6 and 7
- High Development of centralized ride scheduling, dispatching, and mobility center
- High Improve transportation services to the rural areas
- High Increase coordination efforts by combining resources such as vehicles, riders, funds for rides, vehicle maintenance, drivers, driver training, insurance coverage, general ride subsidies, dispatching equipment, software, and gas cards for volunteers
- High Increase weekday service based on identified gaps included in Chapters 6 and 7
- High Increase weeknight and weekend service based on identified gaps in service included in Chapters 6 and 7
- High Provide door-to-door service (and door-through-door when necessary) for trips such as low-cost non-emergency medical transportation and grocery shopping in areas without paratransit
- High Improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities through:
 - The provision of travel training for paratransit users to encourage more individuals to ride regular fixed-route transit
 - Improved accessible travel paths to transit stops and stations
 - Retrofitting of existing bus stops to ensure accessibility and ADA compliance
- High Develop or enhance volunteer driver programs
- High Upgrade bus stops to include weather protection

- Mid Enhance sensitivity training for drivers particularly for those assisting passengers with developmental disabilities
- Mid Improve accessible travel paths to transit stops and stations
- Mid Increase timeliness, flexibility, and reliability of pickup for ADA paratransit services
- Mid Retrofit existing bus stops to ensure accessibility and ADA compliance
- Mid Shorten ADA trip request windows for pickup times Table 8.3: Prioritized Strategies - Individuals With Disabilities
- Mid Support coalitions of similar programs such as the development of a volunteer driver program coalition
- Low Community outreach and marketing of services
- Low Create feeder to fixed-route service
- Low Enhance driver training program to improve passenger information
- Low Expand paratransit eligibility beyond the 3/4 mile boundary
- Low Improve 511 Web site and other transit information sites
- Low Improve accessible travel information and services for visitors and residents
- Low Improve and maintain the STRIDE Web site
- Low Improve bus public address (PA) systems
- Low Improve dispatch equipment communication system to ensure that passengers will be transported in the most appropriate vehicle
- Low Improve dissemination of transit service change information
- Low Improve information on routes and schedules for buses and trolley system
- Low Improve real time travel information on buses and trolleys
- Low Include vehicles that can accommodate larger chairs in fleet
- Low Increase COASTER service, including regular weekend service
- Low Increase level of express transit service
- Low Increase officer patrol in transit stations with known criminal activity
- Low Increase operating hours of accessible health and human service transportation vehicles
- Low Increase paratransit service hours
- Low Increase SPRINTER service, including weekend and late evening service
- Low Increase the marketing of transportation travel options
- Low Increase the physical in-vehicle space for wheelchair passengers
- Low Increase weekend hours for fixed-route services
- Low Install and maintain transit station amenities (shelters, seating, trash cans, and lighting)
- Low Install closed circuit television devices and monitoring personnel at stations (including signage)
- Low Install in-vehicle closed circuit television devices and operator monitoring equipment
- Low Install pedestrian grade separations at COASTER stations
- Low Provide additional feeder services to the Trolley and SPRINTER
- Low Provide an assistance program for individuals trying to become ADA certified
- Low Provide commuter services from southern Riverside County
- Low Provide taxi vouchers
- Low Provide transportation system guides
- Low Provide trips during off-peak hours and ensure midday coverage
- Low Purchase and implement technology to promote cohesive use between public and private transportation providers
- Low Replace or upgrade older high-floor buses with newer low-floor models

- Low Study impact of further reducing fares for ADA certified on regular transit

Prioritized Strategies – Seniors

- Very High Develop or expand transit and non-agency client transportation services in areas with little or no other transportation options based on identified gaps in transportation services
- Very High Develop or expand transportation solutions in areas with sufficient densities to support shared ride or coordinated services based on identified gaps in transportation services
- High Development of centralized ride scheduling, dispatching, and mobility center
- High Improve transportation services to the rural areas
- High Increase coordination efforts by combining resources such as vehicles, riders, funds for rides, vehicle maintenance, drivers, driver training, insurance coverage, general ride subsidies, dispatching equipment, software, and gas cards for volunteers
- High Increase weekday and weekend service based on identified gaps in service included in Chapters
- High Provide door-to-door service (and door-through-door when necessary) for trips such as low-cost non-emergency medical transportation and grocery shopping in areas without paratransit
- High Provide travel training to encourage more individuals to ride regular transit
- High Develop or enhance volunteer driver programs
- High Upgrade bus stops to include weather protection
- Mid Expand public information regarding alternative transportation programs
- Mid Provide demand responsive transportation for areas not served by fixed-route transit
- Mid Support coalitions of similar programs such as the development of a volunteer driver program coalition
- Low Community outreach and marketing of services
- Low Create feeder to fixed-route service
- Low Enhance driver training program to improve passenger information
- Low Improve 511 Web site and other transit information sites
- Low Improve bus public address (PA) systems
- Low Improve dissemination of transit service change information
- Low Improve information on routes and schedules for buses and trolley system
- Low Improve real-time travel information on buses and trolleys
- Low Increase COASTER service, including regular weekend service
- Low Increase level of express transit service
- Low Increase officer patrol in transit stations with known criminal activity
- Low Increase operating hours of accessible health and human service transportation vehicles
- Low Increase SPRINTER service, including weekend and late evening service
- Low Increase the marketing of transportation travel options
- Low Install and maintain transit station amenities (shelters, seating, trash cans, and lighting)
- Low Install closed circuit television devices and monitoring personnel at stations (including signage)
- Low Install in-vehicle closed circuit television devices and operator monitoring equipment
- Low Install pedestrian grade separations at COASTER stations
- Low Provide additional feeder services to the Trolley and SPRINTER

- Low Provide taxi vouchers
- Low Provide transportation system guides Low Provide trips during off-peak hours and ensure midday coverage
- Low Purchase and implement technology to promote cohesive use between public and private transportation providers
- Low Replace or upgrade older high-floor buses with newer low-floor models

Recommendations

In order to present the basis for evaluating transit and human service transportation in the San Diego region, a series of nine goals for the coordinated transportation network in San Diego was developed. These goals were based on the visions of the four agencies (MTS, NCTD, CTSA, and SANDAG) involved in planning and operation of the transportation system along with the overarching goals of the RTP.

The Coordinated Transportation Goals are:

- To provide an accessible transit network in the urban areas that offers frequency and span of service to support spontaneous use for a wide range of needs;
- To provide an accessible transit network in the suburban areas that offers direct service along commute corridors with critical mass featuring rapid, frequent service during peaks with seamless coordinated transfers, and local service focused on smart growth areas and lifeline needs;
- To provide accessible lifeline public and human service transportation in rural areas,
- To maximize the farebox recovery rate and ensure that operation of the transit system is fiscally responsible;
- To offer accessible public and human service transportation services that are productive, coordinated, convenient, and appropriate for the markets being served;
- To offer accessible public and human service transportation services in San Diego that are reliable and offer competitive travel times to major destinations;
- To offer accessible public and human service transportation services that support the smart growth policies as outlined in the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP);
- To offer accessible public and human service transportation services in San Diego without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or disability; and
- To enhance the mobility choices of the transportation disadvantaged by improving coordination and developing alternative models of transportation.

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

Transportation Needs/Gaps (Combined)

- Service to Modesto Junior College
- A need for seamless routes and greater frequency
- A need for more service to transit hubs
- Service times often do not match with what they need for jobs, appointments, training, etc.
- Better connectivity between transportation options, connecting to cities outside of San Joaquin County including: Merced, Modesto, Oakdale, and Sacramento.
- Transit in rural parts of the county is a problem.

- Need for accessible taxis
- More flexibility, frequency, service hours, user-friendly times
- Online trip planning
- Routes running as scheduled
- Training Programs
- A number to get help; information
- Lowering the rates for low-income and homeless people
- Transportation to appointments, doctor's, employment centers, grocery stores, shopping centers, hospital

Transportation Resources

- RTD --- provides fixed route service within the Stockton Metropolitan Area (SMA) and on intercity routes that connect Stockton with Lodi, Manteca, Tracy, Escalon, Lathrop, and Ripon. RTD also provides interregional commuter service to the Bay Area and Sacramento. RTD operates rural and deviated fixed route service within the unincorporated areas of San Joaquin County. RTD's SMA ADA Dial-A-Ride (DAR) provides Stockton residents with curb-to-curb paratransit service. The SMA ADA DAR provides trips for consumers of many local human service agencies
- City of Lodi --- offers DAR and fixed route service (GrapeLine).
- City of Manteca--- implemented city-administered fixed route and demand-response transit services.
- City of Tracy --- offers a combination of local fixed route and Paratransit/DAR service called TRACER. The TRACER paratransit service is available to seniors (60+) and ADA-certified passengers, who, because of their disability or health-related condition, cannot independently board, ride and/or disembark from an accessible fixed route transit bus or cannot get to or from a boarding or disembarking location.
- City of Escalon --- RTD operates Escalon DAR to provide general public demand response within the city limits and unincorporated areas surrounding the city and a deviated fixed route between Modesto and Escalon. Escalon DAR also connects with the Riverbank-Oakdale Transit Authority (ROTA), the Modesto Area Express (MAX), and Stanislaus Regional Transit (StaRT).
- City of Ripon --- demand response transit system consists of a single, lift-equipped, nine-passenger van with two wheelchair tie-downs operated by a volunteer transit coordinator and several volunteer drivers.

Key Social Service Providers in San Joaquin County

- The San Joaquin County Human Services Agency (HSA) --- Their programs serve a diverse clientele including adults, children, the elderly, the disabled, and the under-employed. HSA is committed to delivering services to those who qualify.
- El Concilio --- They aim to create self-sufficiency through counseling, referrals, education, and in the belief that persons empowered to help themselves will become significant assets to the community at large.

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- San Joaquin General Hospital --- In 2006, the hospital distributed 78,100 RTD bus passes.
- Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC) --- VMRC purchases services such as respite, out of home placement, adult day programs, transportation, behavior intervention, infant development services, clinical, and diagnostic services for people with developmental disabilities.

VEHICLE TALLY BY AGENCY

Total Vehicles	Agency/Organization
6	ARC -San Joaquin
28	City of Lodi/ GrapeLine and Dial-A-Ride
3	Community Center for the Blind
5	Doltom Transportation
9	HSA
5	Mary Graham Children's Shelter Foundation
5	Manteca, City of (MV owned and operated)
1	City of Ripon
4	Salvation Army, Lodi Corps
140	San Joaquin RTD
2	Seniors First
1	Stockton VA Clinic Towers
13	Tracy, City of
<u>6</u>	UCP
228	Total Vehicles Identified

Barriers

While certain agencies offer their own transportation service, many agencies pointed out barriers to public transportation. Barriers included:

- Needing to know what services are available
- Cost of public transportation
- Time associated with taking the bus
- Need for longer service hours
- Need for expanded service area

Priorities

The Working Group decided on the following four main goals:

- Putting People First
- Moving People Efficiently
- Move More People
- Empower People with Technology.

The Working Group will work as a unit to flesh out a project scope and budget for each of the priorities identified below.

Consumer Input Mechanism

The Consumer Input Mechanism obtains feedback from consumers of transit and other social service agencies for transportation purposes. Although there are currently means for riders to formally file comments and complaints with local transit and government agencies, the group felt that an independent entity could be more proactive in receiving passenger information and would be less intimidating for consumers. Feedback from consumers will provide a means of keeping up with changing demographic needs and monitoring gaps and redundancies in the County.

Travel Training

Travel Training is a proactive means to ensure riders are aware of and know how to use all mobility options that are appropriate for them.

One-Stop-Shop

The group discussed the need for a central location where riders can access information about transportation services. Currently, San Joaquin County does not have a central information source for residents similar to the 511 Travel Guide found in the Bay Area. Workgroup discussions revealed that a “One-Stop-Shop” and staff training project is a need currently not being met in the county.

Public-Private Partnerships

These partnerships will cover many aspects of coordinating transportation service, and act as central locations for agencies to ensure reductions in service and operational gaps. Improved ITS Systems The group discussed the need for these systems to enhance transportation services to the community.

Recommendations

The Working Group came up with the following strategies for closing gaps:

Information and better communication:

- Outreach programs
- Passengers
- Social service agencies
- Transit agencies
- Marketing materials
- One-Stop-Shop for transportation information
- One-on-one program
- Website
- Method for consumers to communicate needs to transportation providers
- Programs to teach potential riders how to use existing services

Transportation to basic needs, including:

- Employment, Medical appointments (out of county area), Grocery shopping, Schools – local junior colleges
- Transportation needs between counties

Method to better utilize existing resources including:

- Vehicles
- Centralized operator training
- Centralized vehicle and equipment inventory, maintenance and storage of vehicles
- Centralized vehicle licensing and insurance, trip brokerage, and scheduling
- ITS Systems
- Automated dispatching, Centralized ADA dispatching
- Upgraded radio equipment
- Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL)
- Mobile Data Terminal (MDT)
- Vehicles (new and replacement)

The Working Group felt that using these general ideas would close the gaps quickly and efficiently while still reaching out to the large demographic groups of seniors, disabled, and the low-income population attempting to get to work.

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Transportation Needs

Some differences emerge when reported needs are examined by type of agency, whether human services organization or general public transit. Both groups agree that medically-related trips are top ranked needs.

There is less agreement on the second and third ranked positions with public transit viewing these as shopping and morning errands, tied with getting kids to daycare. The human services organizations agreed on the shopping and morning errands but ranked training and education classes as the third-most area of need. There were notes about service to and from Cuesta College in relation to training needs.

Human service respondents saw long-distance trips in the fourth ranked need position while this didn't register as a need by the public transit operators. Daytime work trips were the fourth-ranked area of need for public transit.

Trip Types Needed: Organizations surveyed were well aware of selective consumer needs and both public transit and human services agencies spoke to the need for medical transportation and the cross jurisdictional, long-distance trips that typify non-emergency medical trips. This is despite Ride-On's ability to provide Medi-Cal transportation as a Medi-Cal vendor. Stakeholders also spoke about the consumers' need for trip chaining. For example, upon leaving the doctor's office the need to stop at the pharmacy; once out for a medical appointment, the need to stop at the grocery store because this is the first and possibly only outing of the week.

Case managers talked of providing these trips themselves because the kind of escorted assistance that is needed cannot readily be provided. However, agency staff can provide this type of trip support only on a very limited basis. In some instances, these are trips out-of-the county.

Escort trips are a significant need for many of the programs operating adult day health care, which includes Alzheimer's clinics. Challenges typically arise in cases where agency staff wants to allow a respite day for the family member who is the consumers' care-provider.

Senior Mobility

There were discussions of the transportation needs of specific demographic groups, but particularly seniors and persons with disabilities.

1. The needs of seniors were discussed in terms of a few issues: the need for transportation serving specific senior housing areas, the transportation needs of senior who are not eligible for ADA-paratransit service, seniors' needs for transportation to medical and other destinations (often in other communities), and the need for travel training from the recently started senior mobility training program.

2. Transportation needs of persons with disabilities focused on the need for access to certain destinations, and desires for improved signage and information for persons with vision disabilities. One discussion of the specialized transportation needs of different groups focused on improvements which could integrate different types of trips, serving seniors, people with disabilities, parents needing transportation between child care and work, etc. Agencies indicating funding concerns itemized the expense of liability insurance, limited staffing resources to drive vehicles and the "hidden" costs of coordination, presumably also a reference to staff time. Staff issues came up as well in relation to drivers – the Senior Nutrition Program noted the problem of getting drivers with current licenses and proof of insurance, while the Central Coast Senior Center indicated they had few to no qualified drivers.

On-Time Performance

The issue of reliability of transportation does surface in discussions about specialized transportation. It is a problematic issue and not easily addressed, but of paramount concern to all involved. Consumers become very anxious about their appointment times and concerned when shared-ride services transport them long distances from their destination. Agencies and organizations expressed numerous concerns about on-time performance relating to the problems of scheduling, deployment and actual arrival times of transportation services.

In the case of dialysis and mental health appointments, the implications of transportation services that are late can be severe. As noted, the dialysis unit cannot easily juggle consumers from one transfusion chair to another, as these appointments are typically tightly scheduled in "waves" of service over the course of the day. Similarly, mental health medication appointments are usually very short in duration, ten minutes or less. If an individual misses his or her appointment, it may require either rescheduling or waiting many hours until there is another open ten-minute slot. Other healthcare appointments are equally unforgiving about late arrivals and generally must be rescheduled.

There are also financial impacts to late or no-show service. Attendance-based programs, such as training and education programs for re-entry workers, workshops and day programs for

persons with developmental disabilities, or adult day health care activities often lose income when vehicles are late. Income is lost when consumers can attend only partial days, below the threshold of what is an approved or authorized day of service.

Expanded Span of Hours and Days of Service

Both public transit and human service agency representatives raised issues related to the need for increased evening and weekend services. In some cases this involved the difficulty of traveling between communities, often for very early or very late work shifts. In other cases, they cited the problems of connecting between services during mid-day periods when only limited service was operating. Representatives from both public transit and human and social service agencies were aware of and concerned about the limited weekend and evening service and the travel challenges this posed for members of the target populations.

Many specific requests for inter-community transportation focus on the North County area, including Paso Robles, Atascadero, Shandon, and Templeton. Interest was also expressed in the center of the county, including San Luis Obispo, Los Osos, and Morro Bay. A comprehensive South County Transit Study is programmed to assess future improvement

Information Resources and Needs Case managers speak of the need to learn the transportation system in order to be able to help their consumers. They identified problems including personnel turnover and the difficulty of keeping abreast of changes in the public transit environment. Also, staff indicated that they need massive quantities of bus books and ride guides to distribute to consumers.

Agency/organization staff representatives report that many consumers do not have access to the computer or capability of using it. This reinforces the fact that the old-fashioned paper product still has considerable value within the community.

Passenger Amenities and Other Facilities – Safe Transfers, Bus Shelters and Benches, Bathrooms, Bus Curb Cuts and Safe Pull-Outs

Issues were raised about the physical amenities that dependent populations require to travel independently about the community. For single women, women with children, or children themselves, as well as frail elderly or chronically ill individuals, a sense of safety and security is critical. Safety elements, and information about those, are important to these populations and persons working on their behalf.

Arranging Transportation

Riders with multiple health conditions need trip planning assistance. For the most part, human service agency staff does not have the time; the necessary resource information or skills to assist riders in identifying the transportation options that may best serve meet their needs. All possible tools, from maps schedules to persons knowledgeable about available transportation are needed to increase the mobility of these populations.

Transportation Resources

PUBLIC TRANSIT RESOURCES IN THE SAN LUIS OBISPO REGION

Transportation services vary throughout the SLO region. They combine trolleys; general public and specialized dial-a-rides; senior vans and senior shuttles; commuter vans (employer based and multi-employer); local and regional fixed route buses; senior volunteer driver programs.

Most services focus on local travel needs; RTA Regional and Ride-On are the only transportation operators that provide service throughout the county. A summary of key features of these public transportation services follows in Table 5-1. This format provides a working template for presenting unified information about the region's public transit services. It can be improved upon through the coordination process, or when human service personnel and public transit providers communicate with one another about needs and resources. Table 5-2 summarizes the current connections and transfer points among these transit programs.

- Trolley Services - There are currently four trolley services operating out of the cities of San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay, plus the areas of Cambria and Avila Beach.
- RTA Fixed Route Services - This system provides transportation services to the general public throughout the entire region. The operating hours range from 5:50 am to 9:40 pm during weekdays and 7am to 7pm on weekends. Weekday frequency between buses ranges from 60 minutes (all routes except 12-B) to as high as 4 hours (North Coast). Fares vary depending on the departure city and destination. The zone-based fare ranges from \$1.00 to \$2.50. Seniors are given a 50% discount. Three of the routes provide a transfer point to a local Dial-a-Ride service while the other route provides a transfer point with SMAT and SLO Transit. All of the RTA buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts to accommodate passengers with disabilities as well as seniors.
- RTA SCAT Services - Service is provided to the general public within the 5-Cities area which includes Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Pismo Beach, Shell Beach, and Oceano. Service hours range from 6am to 8:30 pm during weekdays and 7am to 8:30 pm on weekends. The frequency between buses is 1 hour. Daily and monthly passes are available and the base fare is \$1.00 and goes up to \$3.00 for a daily pass.
- Senior Shuttle Services Ride-on, as RTA's operator, is providing Senior Shuttles throughout the region. There are six systems providing services for seniors only, from 8am to 5 pm during the week. There is no service on Sundays and shuttles operate only on specific days of the week outside of the San Luis Obispo city. All of the shuttles offer door-to-door service but require a 2-24 hour prior reservation. The base fare is \$2.00 one way. The Ride-On Senior Shuttles and Runabout are the main two Dial-A-Ride services between cities.
- Smaller Shuttles - There are small scale shuttles with limited days of service and by reservations only. These include: Cambria Community Bus (senior and disabled) with weekly trips to San Luis Obispo and monthly trips to Paso Robles; Templeton Shandon Shuttle (low-income seniors in Templeton and general public in Shandon for access to Paso Robles); and Nipomo-Mesa Shuttle (general public for access to SCAT).

- **Dial-A-Ride General Public Services** - There are seven systems throughout the county operated primarily by private contractors providing demand response services to general public riders. All of the Dial- A-Ride's offer service Monday through Friday with a few offering service on Saturday (Morro Bay) or Sunday (Paso Robles). The operating hours range from 6am to 7:30pm. The base fare and senior discounts vary among the different areas. All of the services which are open to the general public, offer door-to-door services.
- **Local Public Transit Fixed-Route** - SLO Transit, Paso Robles City Area Transit System, North County Shuttle, Santa Maria Area Transit are local providers of public transit for the general public. All systems operate from Monday through Saturday, with Sunday service on SLO Transit, SMAT and SCAT. See Table 5-1 for schedule and base fare information.
- **Runabout Service** - This program is the ADA complementary paratransit service to all fixed route in the region (regional bus, local bus, trolley). Hours of service vary by area within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the bus corridor.

Ride-On Transportation, established as a division of the San Luis Obispo County United Cerebral Palsy organization in 1988, is providing a range of services throughout the county. This operator offers a mix of services to the public: Transportation Management Association (TMA), Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA), and Guaranteed Ride Home, other specialized services and commuter van pools. The June 2006 Short Range Transit Plan (S RTP) reports the operation of 37 cutaway buses and vans plus another 27 vans for commuter vanpool services.

Services provided in its role as the CTSA (Consolidated Transportation Services Agency) include senior shuttles operated in various parts of the County, namely North County, North Coast, San Luis Obispo, and South County with connections from outlying areas to SLO several days a week. Ride-On is currently operating pilot shuttle services in North and South County less densely populated areas and also provides other shuttles for special events, or to supplement the gaps not met by regular public transit.

Regional Rideshare - This is an information education program, oriented primarily but not exclusively, to commuters. Regional Rideshare is responsible for promoting use of public transit, through information dissemination, campaigns, and a variety of other alternative transportation strategies, throughout the region.

Ride-On provides Medi-Cal transportation, having secured Medi-Cal vendor status, an achievement which very few other public transit operators in the State of California have achieved but which is increasingly coveted. Ride-On operates various contracted services, including a significant contract on behalf of the Tri-Counties Regional Center, serving consumers with developmental disabilities. Ride-On oversees a substantial commuter vanpool program.

And, through its Transportation Management Association (TMA), it provides information about available transportation services to employers and consumers in coordination with Regional Rideshare (Transportation Choices Program). Some of those TMA activities tap into the same drivers' pool, administrative resources and maintenance capabilities as the regular CTSA program. Ride-On has built an organization that provides almost 25,000 units of service each month, including all of its transit trips (contract operations

with public sector), its vanpool trips and TMA contracts. Annual trips under the aegis of the CTSA-only numbered 132,771 during FY 2005/2006.

Gaps

This subsection reviews the identified gaps in transportation services within the San Luis Obispo region, including temporal and geographic areas, where trips may be needed.

Institutional Communication Gaps

Coordination of the transportation services operated by public transit and human and social services agencies/organizations is impacted by the challenges of working between two very distinct service systems. For public transit, operating service is its' core business, around which significant infrastructure has been built. For the human services agencies, transportation is a support service, and is viewed as a distraction from the agencies' primary purpose.

Although both serve the public, cultural differences are clearly evident at the institutional level. Human service organizations are closer to the client, have a better understanding of individual needs and requirements, and focus their day-to-day efforts on addressing and resolving issues on behalf of the individual, as characterized in Chapter 4's Stakeholder Outreach findings.

Public transit is more attentive to "mass" needs only in relation to providing service, with considerably less awareness of the individual. Since the day-to-day business objectives of these two public service industries differ, it is logical to find that they speak different "languages", interpret, process and respond to things differently.

These disparities reflect different value systems, consistent with the different core missions of each industry. These issues must gradually be addressed in the development of coordination projects that will work effectively between systems. At a minimum, it is important to establish a "translator" who can work with these two systems, understanding each sufficiently to navigate in both and to design responsive, cost-effective coordinated transportation programs.

Barriers

There was much discussion of inter-community transportation from two viewpoints:

1. Transportation options between and among specific communities and
2. Inconsistent fares and transfer rules when traveling on different transportation systems to make these trips from one community to another.

In addition to specific community-to-community transportation, issues were raised involving more general policies affecting inter-community travel. These include different transfer rules among transit systems, lack of uniform fares and fare-discount criteria, and geographic and timing difficulties in transferring between systems. Also mentioned as actions which could improve inter-community transportation were maintenance of information at bus stops and transit centers and a regional ride guide providing up-to-date information on all transit.

Additionally, among the issues affecting inter-community transportation, also addressed were days and times when transportation is not available, and issues affecting specific groups.

Studies commented on the lack of transit service in most areas after 7 p.m. Limited weekend service was also discussed. These issues affect both fixed route and paratransit systems.

Insurance issues were identified in several instances. Agencies spoke of both the costs of obtaining insurance and problems of availability in an environment with multiple agencies. Three school districts responded, San Luis Obispo Coast Unified, Paso Robles Unified and SLO Coastal, indicating that their mission of providing transportation to school children was a barrier to coordinating with others, specifically the times of day and the licensing requirements for drivers. But the Coast Unified School district indicated the potential for transporting non-district students to Cuesta, during the non-district served hours. Cal Poly State University noted financial barriers to further participation in coordinated transportation.

The vast geographic area and the remoteness of some consumers were identified as significant barriers. Cayucos Senior Club noted its rural location and small size; Cambria Community Council made a similar comment about distance. The SLO County Public Health Department commented that its clients are spread all over the county but that most services are provided in the City of San Luis Obispo.

The Department of Rehabilitation noted its own regulations as a barrier, although did not detail these. Three public transit operators responded: one indicated there were no barriers and others referenced the political decision-making that can undergird the allocation of resources for public transit.

Service quality issues were referenced in relation to concern about wait times for medically frail individuals, as well as flexibility of providing services to meet one's own consumers' needs without having to accommodate other client groups.

Priorities

Phase I – Establishing Coordination Infrastructure (Goal 1)

San Luis Obispo Region Regional Mobility Manager

The establishment and implementation of the Regional Mobility Manager (RMM) function in the San Luis Obispo Region is the fundamental recommendation of the coordinated plan. It is recommended that a Regional Mobility Manager, including the advisory body discussed in the detail following be put into place within one to two years. As discussed previously, RMM roles and responsibilities can either be designated to an existing agency/organization, or a newly created entity can be formed. The RMM should serve to further the goals outlined in the plan, and focus on efforts to establish relationships between public transit and human and social service agencies, including technical assistance and cooperation for developing coordinated transportation plans, programs and projects.

Phase II – Coordinated Actions, Plans, Projects and Policies (Goals 2 and 3)

Concurrent with the full “build out” of transportation coordination activities in the San Luis Obispo Region, opportunities for coordinated projects that can begin to address the needs of the target populations should be pursued. The project team believes that there are a few “basic” strategies and project concepts that can be developed early; those early projects will support and promote the framework of a coordinated transportation environment and can be funded and implemented over a two to five year timeline.

Project concepts include:

- Implement a Travel Training Program for Agencies/Organizations staff, and their clients.

Create a county-wide Travel Training program to encourage greater use of transit for those in the target populations who can and would use public transportation. Human and social service agencies/organizations' staff desiring to arrange transportation or refer their clients to transit, as well as, new and prospective clients and customers needing to travel to their various destinations would be candidates for training and participating in group training sessions on regularly scheduled fixed-route and/or paratransit services.

- Develop a transit data collection process to assist human and social service agencies and organizations operating transportation (or their contractors). Establish trip counting procedures to ensure accuracy and consistency in tracking seniors, persons with disabilities and low-income trips.

- Assess the potential to implement future coordinated service delivery models that use volunteer labor in a structured, close geographic setting. We recommend review of "The Volunteer Driver TurnKey Kit", a tool for meeting specialized transportation needs. This is an online resource and includes planning, implementation, and evaluation materials for organizations interested in starting volunteer driver programs. The Volunteer Driver TurnKey Kit also includes resources on the Volunteer Friends model – a specialized pilot program for providing volunteer rides for seniors (Appendix D).

- Conduct an annual inventory to build and nurture the coordination environment. This activity will ensure that the data on transportation services, resources and needs is current, and can offer a sound basis for coordinated planning activities. The database can also be modified to serve as the nucleus for tracking and monitoring coordinated plans and projects.

- Develop additional processes and avenues to facilitate bus pass purchase programs for human and social service agencies.

Recommendations

The project team has developed three (3) goals to accomplish coordination of transportation between public transit and human and social service agencies and organizations in the county.

The Coordinated Plan Goals are as follows:

1. Establish a coordination infrastructure to promote coordination within and between public transit agencies and the human services organizations.
2. Build capacity to meet individualized mobility needs.
3. Promote information portals to enable numerous of points of access to transportation information.

These three goals are supported by fifteen (15) implementing objectives and fifty-three (53) implementing actions, strategies and projects. The goals, objectives, implementing actions, strategies and recommended projects are discussed below.

Goal 1 - Coordination Infrastructure

Given the level and diversity of needs in the region, a regional approach to facilitating coordination is needed, as no one agency or organization has the resources to facilitate the necessary cultural, institutional and operational changes needed to accomplish coordination goals. Coordination in the San Luis Obispo region cannot be accomplished without dedicated staff and financial resources. Projects funded under this goal should establish and/or further the development of the regional mobility concept. The specific objectives proposed under this goal include:

- 1.1 Establish a Regional Mobility Manager function to provide leadership on coordination of specialized transportation within the San Luis Obispo region.
- 1.2 Establish the Regional Mobility Manager's role in developing and "growing" projects responsive to regional coordination goals and objectives.
- 1.3 Promote human service agency-level Mobility Manager's capabilities through the Call for Projects and through outreach by Regional Mobility Manager.
- 1.4 Develop visibility around specialized transportation issues and needs, encouraging high level political and agency leadership.
- 1.5 Establish a SLOCOG Call for Projects process sufficiently flexible for applicants to design and implement projects responsive to identified needs.
- 1.6 Report on project performance, promoting project successes to regional partners and at state and federal levels.

Goal 2 – Building Capacity to Meet Individualized Mobility Needs

Acknowledging that more transportation capacity is needed to serve the growing population within San Luis Obispo County, this goal addresses the idea of providing more trip options for the target populations. In addition, this goal inherently includes the concept of strengthening the ability of human and social service agencies and organizations to provide those trips that public transit cannot, thereby increasing not only capacity but access to services. The notions of reliability, quality of service and service monitoring are reflected under this goal. The objectives proposed include:

- 2.1 Promote policies that increase the quantity of public transit, paratransit and specialized transportation provided.
- 2.2 Identify and invest in strategies to improve the quality of specialized transportation, with attention to meeting individualized needs.
- 2.3 Develop strategies for improving transportation solutions in identified corridors of need.
- 2.4 Promote capital improvements to support safe, comfortable, efficient rides for the target populations.

2.5 Establish mechanisms to support transportation services provided by human services agencies.

2.6 Establish procedures to measure the quantities of trips provided, existing and new.

Goal 3 – Information Portals

The need to broaden the reach of information related to transit and specialized transportation services for clients/consumers, as well as stakeholder agencies and organizations is critical. The San Luis Obispo region has a wealth of transportation service resources. Points of access to transportation information must be expanded to allow everyone the opportunity to understand transportation choices and to use the transportation network. The objectives proposed under this goal include:

3.1 Integrate and promote existing information strategies, including 211, 511 and web-based tools to get specialized transportation information to consumers.

3.2 Develop information portal tools for wide distribution.

3.3 Promote information opportunities for human services agency line staff and direct service workers

The project team approach to development of the recommendations is designed to give public transit and human and social service agencies/organizations a coordinated framework. This framework will help the participants to plan, program and allocate funding and ultimately deploy new transportation initiatives that will address the transportation needs in the San Luis Obispo region.

Given this significant history and presence in the region as the primary provider of specialized transportation, it is important to give particular thought to Ride-On's role and responsibilities in this Coordinated Human-Services- Public Transportation Plan. This section considers issues and opportunities surfacing during the development of this Coordinated Human Services Public.

Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG)

Transportation Needs, Gaps, & Barriers (Combined)

The top three selections were for Medical, Social Service Appointments and Education purposes. 'Other' responses included Housing Search, Haircut Appointments, Parenting Classes, Court Appointments, Meetings and All Purposes.

Hours of service needed for public transportation Agencies identified weekdays between 7AM and 5PM as the top priority in terms of clients needing public transportation, followed by Saturday service between 7AM and 5PM and nighttime service on weekdays.

A total of 52 agencies provided a response: 37 agencies or 71% of respondents indicated that their clients need fixed route scheduled bus service, followed by curb-to-curb demand response and door-to-door demand response service.

The following are comments received for new or expanded services through the 2007 Transit Needs Assessment process:

- Sunday service in the City of Lompoc
- Service until midnight in the City of Lompoc
- Expanded Health Service Transportation between Lompoc and Santa Barbara
- New service between Lompoc and the cities of Buellton and Solvang
- Reverse Commute service between the South Coast cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta to Lompoc, Buellton and Santa Maria (Leaving South Coast in the morning and returning from the North County in the afternoon)
- Weekend Service on the Breeze Bus between Santa Maria and Lompoc
- More frequent service between Santa Maria and Guadalupe
- Weekend service on the Clean Air Express

In Lompoc: issues revolved around interregional transit, support for the Breeze with improved connections to local transit, improved access to YMCA and other after school programs and better access to the northern areas of Mission Hills and Vandenberg Village and safety concerns of seniors.

In Solvang: access to after school programs, frequency of SYVT in the Northern communities, quality of bus stops in Buellton, transit access to Lompoc and mid day transit to Santa Barbara for medical appointments and inability of very low income persons to afford bus fare were predominant issues.

In Santa Maria: Inability of very low-income persons to afford bus fare, support for the Breeze with improved connections to local transit, coordinated dispatching for human services trips, enhanced transit service from Cuyama and medical transportation from North County to specialized medical services in Los Angeles.

In Santa Barbara: local transit access to after school Arts programs, improved access to the train station and better interregional transit access between North and South County.

During the workshops, some recurring themes are evident and include the need for improved interregional transit and improved access to after school programs. A new theme is of concern: people of very low income, including fixed income seniors unable to afford bus fare to access senior nutrition and other programs.

Transportation Resources

Public Transportation Providers in Santa Barbara County City of Lompoc Transit (COLT) - COLT provides fixed route and demand response service Monday through Friday, between the hours of 6:30 AM and 8:00 PM and on Saturdays between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

Clean Air Express

In meeting the growing demand for commuter service between the North County (housing) and the South Coast (jobs) and in anticipation of greater ridership through increased outreach efforts, the number of Clean Air Express routes were expanded to ten (from eight) on September 1, 2004.

Coastal Express

The Coastal Express, which is administered by the Ventura County Transportation Commission, provides commuter service that connects the cities of Ventura, Carpinteria, Santa Barbara and Goleta

Cuyama Transit

Cuyama Transit provides demand response service to all Cuyama residents on Tuesday and Thursdays between the hours of 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

Guadalupe Flyer

The Guadalupe Flyer provides service between the cities of Guadalupe and Santa Maria, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 6:15 AM and 6:15 PM and on Saturdays between the hours of 8:15 AM and 5:00 PM.

Los Alamos Transit

This is a pilot program, providing service on Tuesday and Saturday with an 8:00 AM and 11:00 AM pick up from Los Alamos and a pick up from Santa Maria to return to Los Alamos at 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM.

The Breeze

North County intercommunity transit service

Santa Maria Area Transit (SMAT)

SMAT provides fixed route and demand response service Monday through Friday, between the hours of 6:00 AM and 7:30 PM, Saturday between the hours of 7:30 AM and 6:25 PM and Sunday service between the hours of 9:15 AM and 3:45 PM.

Santa Ynez Valley Transit (SYVT)

Santa Ynez Valley Transit provides fixed route and demand response service Monday through Saturday, between the hours of 7:00 AM and 6:30

Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (SBMTD)

SBMTD provides fixed route service Monday through Friday, 5:00 AM through midnight; Saturday, 6:00 AM through 11:00 PM; and Sunday, 6:00 AM through 10:00 PM (limited routes).

Demand response service is provided through Easy Lift Transportation.

Valley Express

SBMTD began the Valley Express commuter service between the Santa Ynez Valley and the South Coast on March 1, 2005. Service includes four routes with stops in Solvang and Buellton, with commuter hour service leaving the Santa Ynez Valley from 6:15 AM to 7:00 AM and leaving the South Coast from 4:40 PM to 5:20 PM.

SBCAG has designated two agencies in Santa Barbara County to be CTSA's; Easy Lift Transportation on the South Coast and Santa Maria Organization of Transportation Helpers (SMOOTH) for the Santa Maria Valley.

SMOOTH provides specialized transportation in Northern Santa Barbara County to various communities and community organizations.

Easy Lift Transportation is the designated CTSA on the Santa Barbara South Coast. Easy Lift Transportation has provided frail elderly and temporarily or permanently disabled individuals with wheelchair-accessible transportation.

Greyhound provides passenger bus service in Santa Barbara County with the opportunity to connect with destinations throughout the country.

Amtrak

Amtrak currently provides passenger service in Santa Barbara County through a coordinated system of rail and bus service. The bus service, making connections to the Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and San Jose stations also serves Santa Maria and Buellton.

Priorities

Short-term service strategies focused on improving regional and inter-county connections in the next five years. They include filling in geographic and temporal gaps in the existing transit network and addressing new and emerging markets as well as the significant population and employment growth in North County.

Transit services being considered are traditional fixed route services and new service types such as general public dial-a-ride, flexible route services (sometimes called deviated fixed route services or flex routes), subscription or vanpool programs and volunteer driver programs.

Plans include expanding the role of the CTSA's, promoting transit coordination between the Lompoc and Santa Ynez Valleys, consolidating the provision of transportation services and streamlining eligibility requirements for any public transit or ADA eligible rider who typically rides the bus in one area so they would automatically qualify for services in another area.

Longer-term service strategies are focused on furthering coordination to provide seamless connectivity throughout North County and to neighboring counties.

The following goals will lead to improved Transportation Connections:

1. Improve the mobility of individuals with disabilities, older adults and people with low incomes in Santa Barbara County by increasing coordination between Social Service Agencies and Transit Operators in Santa Barbara County.
2. Promote efficiency and productivity in the delivery of Human Services Transportation

4.3 Strategies: The following strategies, in priority order, that address improved coordination and expansion of transit services will help address the Goal of improving transportation connections.

4.3.1 Coordination

1. Increase awareness of Social Service Agencies and non-profits about existing transportation services provided by CTSAs and local transit operators in Santa Barbara County. As resources permit, expand the role of CTSAs and transit agencies in coordinating services to include bi-lingual services in Santa Barbara County so they become mobility managers/transportation clearinghouse for social services transportation in their regions.
2. Promote exchange or brokering of client transportation needs between agencies to consolidate the provision of transportation services
3. Develop programs that provide multiple benefits and improve the information flow between transit providers and social service providers

4.3.2 Expansion of Transit Services

1. Improve the access of persons of low income to health care
2. Address interregional transit needs
3. Target low income individuals in job access programs
4. Provide low income seniors and the disabled with new access opportunities
5. Promote use of CTSAs in providing and coordinating social services transportation as resources permit

Recommendations

Coordination

1. Increase awareness of Social Service Agencies and non-profits about existing transportation services provided by CTSAs and local transit operators in Santa Barbara County. As resources permit, expand the role of CTSAs and transit agencies in coordinating services (to include bi-lingual services) in Santa Barbara County so they become mobility managers/transportation clearinghouse for social services transportation in their regions.
2. Promote exchange or brokering of client transportation needs between agencies to consolidate the provision of transportation services
3. Develop programs that provide multiple benefits and improve the information flow between transit providers and social service providers

Expansion of Transit Services

1. Improve the access of persons of low income to health care
2. Address interregional transit needs
3. Target low income individuals in job access programs
4. Provide low income seniors and the disabled with new access opportunities

5. Promote use of CTSA's in providing and coordinating social services transportation as resources permit

SHASTA COUNTY

Transportation Needs and Gaps (Combined)

Rider Needs and Gaps

- Transit services are currently lacking in rural areas. Additionally, there are requests for service to outlying rural areas. In many communities, a lack of transportation stands in the way of receiving adequate medical attention for some citizens.
- There are reoccurring requests for extended evening service and providing service on Sunday.

Ease of Use

- Different transit systems have different fare schedules, which can be confusing and difficult for riders.
- Riders may require help getting on and off a vehicle, but there is often no one available to help them at transfer points.
- Paratransit systems generally do not provide same day service, which means riders must schedule trips in advance.

Operations and Amenities

Responses received during the unmet needs process, were as follows:

- Shorter headways on bus routes. Doubling route frequency would benefit users by decreasing wait times.
- Another operational request is for bus shelters. Shelter is vital to those waiting for buses in harsh weather conditions.

Land-Use

Future land-use patterns will also have a major impact on the mobility of those requiring specialized transportation. . Land-use may also act as a physical barrier to public transportation as a result of disconnected, incomplete, or indirect pedestrian, bicycle, and/or ADA-compliant access to transit services. Existing land-use patterns and regulatory policies often intensify this issue, failing to concentrate critical population mass needed to boost public transportation efficiency.

Lack of Funding

Funding is insufficient to meet needs for expanding fixed-route service and equivalent paratransit service.

Duplication and Redundancy

Various sources of funding restrict different transportation services to specific populations for specific purposes. This results in service duplication and redundancy in multiple areas, including:

- Vehicles from different agencies may be traveling in the same corridor at the same time, but offer different services and may not pick up additional riders.
- Schools, transit systems, and Medi-Cal brokers operate their own training programs for drivers.
- Schools, transit systems, and other transportation providers have their own in-house maintenance programs for vehicles.
- Brokers, transit systems, senior programs, and other agencies each have their own call center for people to call to arrange for transportation.
- Schools, transit systems, and community providers purchase vehicles and equipment individually.
- Each transportation system has different eligibility requirements. A person who may qualify for more than one type of service may need to apply for several different programs with each having different requirements and processes.

Transportation Resources

Transportation Services (Public and Specialized Transit) Fixed-route and Paratransit:

The Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) and Shasta Senior Nutrition Programs (SSNP) provide the majority of public transportation services in Shasta County. These two agencies provided 757,204 transit trips in 2005/2006. In addition, a number of social service agencies and organizations, and the local college operate transportation services for their clients or students. RABA provides fixed-route and complimentary paratransit service within the urban boundaries of Shasta County, and the corridors between the cities of Anderson, Redding, and Shasta Lake (Map 3)

Paratransit service (Demand-Response) is provided within three-quarters of a mile of fixed route service. A person must be certified as eligible to use Demand-Response

Burney Express offers express commuter service to Redding from the outlying community of Burney. Service is funded in part with FTA Section 5311 and TDA funds. Senior Transportation: SSNP provides senior transportation outside of the urban boundaries of the county. This service provides transportation to eligible older-adults and disabled residents outside the RABA'S service area. Transportation capital is funded in part with FTA Section 5310 funds and TDA funds.

Specialized Transit:

Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) is a private, non-profit agency which provides a variety of services, including transportation service, to approximately 5,400 persons with developmental disabilities.

Laidlaw Transit, Inc. offers special needs transportation for non-emergency medical, fixed route, ADA-paratransit, and charter bus rentals in the north state region as well as nationwide.

Northern Valley Catholic Social Service (NVCSS) is a non-profit agency that provides low-cost or free mental health, housing, vocational, and support services to individuals and families in six Northern California counties.

R&M Medi-Trans R&M provides same-day, “door-through-door” service in Shasta County and within a 250 mile radius.

Shascade Community Services (SCS) is a private, non-profit agency that serves persons with disabilities. Vehicles are used to transport individuals to work, work program sites, and community outings.

Shasta County Opportunity Center Approximately 250 clients are served per day, transporting individuals to and/or from their work site, or between work sites when public transit or other forms of transit are not available

Intercity Transportation:

Amtrak offers direct train service and intercity feeder bus connection to the state-supported Capital Corridor Route in Sacramento and San Joaquin Rail Route in Sacramento/Stockton. Greyhound Bus Lines offers northbound and southbound departures five-times daily from the Redding terminal.

Barriers

Barriers to coordination of transportation systems:

Major constraints for transit growth are funding, transit costs, limited ridership, and land-use development patterns. Local area plans must comply with federal and state requirements and also meet local needs. More funding is dependent on coordination at planning and implementation stages of transportation activities. Coordination must occur at the service level and at the planning level.

Demographics:

Shasta County has a higher percentage of older-adults than statewide. As this segment of population ages, it is expected there will be increased demand for specialized services for senior citizens.

Land-Use:

Due to low residential density and a large service area, it is not feasible to expand traditional transit to serve a large service area. New development should incorporate transit-friendly design.

Service Area Boundaries:

Service area boundaries differ between human-service programs and public transportation providers.

Driver Requirements:

Different agencies have different requirements for vehicle safety, driver training, driver licensing, or other standards.

Exchanging Information – Software:

Transportation providers and brokers use different scheduling, dispatching, and reporting software, which makes sharing information difficult.

Exchanging Information – Privacy:

A primary barrier in sharing information has been addressing confidentiality and privacy requirements.

Funding:

Due to limited available operational funding, public transit needs to obtain maximum cost effectiveness.

Liability:

Indemnification issues prohibit agencies from sharing or loaning vehicles.

Regulatory Constraints:

Federal and state transportation funding agencies often make coordination and funding efforts difficult.

Reporting Requirements:

Federal, state, and local agencies that fund special needs transportation have different reporting requirements attached to their funds. Agencies receiving funds from multiple funding sources must set up labor-intensive and costly data collection mechanisms to meet multiple reporting requirements

Priorities

SHORT-RANGE STRATEGIES (1-5 YEAR HORIZON)

Mobility Action Plan (MAP) Phase I Implementation Study

Volume I: Statewide Executive Summary: Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Coordination Plans – Large /Small Urban

- Priority 1: Improve coordination by expanding agency participation in the CTSA
- Priority 2: Shared use of vehicles
- Priority 3: Fast delivery of vehicles
- Priority 4: Reduce operating costs
- Priority 5: Create transit friendly amenities
- Priority 6: Increase the availability of qualified transit drivers
- Priority 7: Increase public awareness of transit through outreach and marketing strategies
- Priority 8: Making easy connections
- Priority 9: Increasing revenue resources
- Priority 10: The growing older-adult population
- Priority 11: Transportation for those who can no longer drive
- Priority 12: Developing volunteer driver programs
- Priority 13: Finding a ride online
- Priority 14: Create “transit-ready” environments
- Priority 15: Resolving inter-jurisdictional transportation

LONG-RANGE STRATEGIES (6-10 YEAR HORIZON)

- Priority 1: A ride for everyone
- Priority 2: Shared maintenance facilities
- Priority 3: Consolidation of operations and service delivery into one system
- Priority 4: Investing in infrastructure

Recommendations

Priority 1: Improve Coordination by Expanding Agency Participation in the CTSA

The CTP recommendation is that the CTSA, SCRTPA, and SSTAC contact local area transit providers and human-service agencies and invite them to participate in monthly CTSA meetings. It is further recommended to continually recruit new CTSA members who are involved in transit-related activities.

Priority 2: Shared Use of Vehicles

It is recommended that the CTSA and other local agencies work in conjunction with transit advocacy groups such as the American Public Transit Association, California Transit Association, CalAct, United We Ride, and the Long Range Strategic Plan on Aging Transportation Task Team to advocate for policies to address legal ramifications for those involved in coordination efforts under the guidance of SAFETEA-LU.

Priority 3: Fast Delivery of Vehicles

It is recommended that the CTSA work with the DOT to ensure that state vehicle procurement contracts and the supply of vehicles is adequate to meet the demand of the 5310 grant process.

Priority 4: Reduce Operating Costs

The CTP recommendation is that the CTSA, and transit providers strive to develop joint purchasing programs for items such as fuel, operating supplies, and other expenses related to vehicle operations.

Priority 5: Create Transit Friendly Amenities

The CTP recommendation is for transit providers to identify special needs and incorporate these needs into capital improvements, and facility upgrades such as benches and bus shelters. Joint use and sponsorship of bus shelters should be considered to increase “user friendly” transit stops throughout the county and reduce costs to individual agencies.

Priority 6: Increase the Availability of Qualified Transit Drivers

It is recommended that the CTSA take the lead in developing a working group to develop consistent driver standards for transit providers in the region.

Priority 7: Increase Public Awareness of Transit through Outreach and Marketing Strategies

The CTP recommendation is that RABA implement marketing strategies addressed in the Short- and Long-Range Transit Plan if deemed feasible to meet, and research the possibility of implementing cooperative marketing strategies with other transit providers in the region. Transit providers should research the feasibility of establishing kiosks with internet capabilities at areas with high public attendance.

It is also recommended that the CTSA, SCRTPA, SSTAC, and non-emergency medical transportation providers establish a committee to inform healthcare providers on mobility options in the community.

Priority 8: Making Easy Connections

The CTP recommendation is for the SCRTPA to examine intercity grants, such as Federal Transit Administration 5313(f) that connect rural areas to regional and local connections.

Priority 9: Increasing Revenue Resources

It is recommended that CTSA and other local agencies enlist assistance from transit advocacy groups such as CalAct, United We Ride, and the American Public Transit Association to advocate for new and expanded resources to fund small urban area grants.

Priority 10: The Growing Older-Adult Population

The CTP recommendation is for the CTSA, SCRTPA, and SSTAC to contact senior advocacy groups, senior centers, and retirement homes regarding sponsoring driver safety and wellness programs for seniors in our region. The SCRTPA should assist agencies or organizations in seeking funding resources to develop local driver and wellness training programs.

Priority 11: Transportation for Those Who Can No Longer Drive

It is recommended that the CTSA, SCRTPA, and SSTAC develop a procedure for distributing information to those who can no longer drive. Senior publications or local media may be utilized to fully inform older-adults about available transportation options. Develop a subcommittee of the SSTAC to attend local senior centers, meetings, organizations, and advocacy groups to provide information about public transit options. Future residents should be informed of limited transportation options in rural areas before they relocate. Include the Shasta County Board of

Realtors, Shasta Builder’s Exchange, and other land-related agencies in receiving information on limited transit options in rural areas.

Priority 12: Developing Volunteer Driver Programs

It is recommended that the CTSA, SCRTPA, and SSTAC research resources available to fund volunteer driver programs, and to seek potential agencies to administer a volunteer driver program.

Priority 13: Finding a Ride Online

The CTP recommendation is for SCRTPA to research the feasibility of implementing a web based trip planning program. Trip-planning software will require funding resources to purchase and an agency or organization to host a local trip planning website.

Priority 14: Create “Transit-Ready” Environments

The CTP recommendation is that the SCRTPA should encourage local agencies to include Regional Blueprint strategies such as transit-oriented development in their plans.

Priority 15: Resolving Inter-Jurisdictional Transportation

It is recommended that the SCRTPA actively participate in planning processes of the region to ensure planning efforts are coordinated.

LONG-RANGE STRATEGIES (6-10 YEAR HORIZON)

Priority 1: A Ride for Everyone

It is recommended that the CTSA, SCRTPA, SSTAC, and service providers enlist the aid of CalAct or similar transit advocacy agencies to convey this information to transportation leaders.

Priority 2: Shared Maintenance Facilities

It is recommended that the CTSA, SCRTPA, SSTAC, and transit providers research the feasibility of RABA providing routine maintenance and repairs on vehicles from other transit fleets. This would require expansion of RABA’s maintenance facility to accommodate additional vehicles.

Priority 3: Consolidation of Operations and Service Delivery into One System

The CTP recommends that the CTSA, SCRTPA, SSTAC, transit providers, human-service providers, and human service agencies research the feasibility of developing a centralized dispatch system that will reduce duplication of scheduling, dispatching, and reporting requirements. Implementation will require transportation providers to develop a system that meets the approval of all agencies involved.

Priority 4: Investing in Infrastructure

The CTP recommendation is for the SCRTPA to review the implementation of the Shasta Area Blueprint Plan for project delivery and infrastructure changes that address growing needs.

STANISLAUS COUNTY

Transportation Needs

Stakeholders, specifically those from human services agencies, voiced concerns that they do not have sufficient monies to operate transportation services (i.e., driver training, salaries, and fuel costs).

Agencies mentioned:

- They did not have any vehicles and would like to purchase,
- The vehicles they have need to be replaced, and/or
- The agency would like to expand their fleet.

Stakeholders then voiced concerns addressing the need to improve coordination (i.e., transfer opportunities, efforts between smaller services), outreach/training, and expanded service efforts.

In addition, participants established there is a critical need for capital and operational improvement monies.

Significant Actions Identified:

- Access to transportation-Off-peak
- Target transportation - Special Needs (elderly/frail/patient)
- Mobility training - Persons with special needs
- Health Care providers/Outreach, Education
- Frequency of service, connectivity
- Mobility coordination (211)
- Capital investment (Public/Private)
- Volunteer Recruitment
- Operational monies

Transportation Resources

The County of Stanislaus operates the Stanislaus Regional Transit (StaRT) Fixed-Route, Runabout, Shuttle, and Dial-A-Ride services. There are six fixed-route services, which offer trips between Modesto and eight other cities and between Turlock and two western county cities. Seven unincorporated communities are also served. In addition, two other demand-response services are offered to the general public. The StaRT Shuttle services offer curb-to-curb trips that link communities and cities. StaRT Dial-A-Ride services provide curb-to-curb trips within communities and cities.

Demand Response

StART Shuttle and Dial-A-Ride services offer the most extensive demand response coverage throughout the county. Services offered by other agencies within the county all overlap with StART services. We do not believe there are significant temporal gaps within the service areas as StART services operate throughout the day.

Existing Private/Non-Profit Transit Services

Twenty-eight social services agencies – identified through a survey process, which will further be covered in the next chapter – cited they provide transportation services to their clients. Survey respondents from medical service facilities have very restricted eligibility requirements. Transportation clients must have specific disabilities and/or meet other requirements (i.e., age, income). The following exhibit lists those medical agencies, which maintains eligibility requirements.

A third of the responding agencies cater primarily to the senior demographic. As expected, transportation services offered by these agencies require the rider meet an age requirement (i.e., 60 years or older). Most agencies require the rider meet other eligibility standards (i.e., disability, income) as well. The remaining respondents who cited eligibility standards accommodate the low-income and youth populations. These agencies are unique from one another as riders must live within a specific district, have a specific disability, or simply meet income requirements. Four of the agencies specifically noted they provide rides to medical appointments, two agencies offer rides for recreational/shopping purposes, and one organization transports residents to their worship center.

Gaps & Barriers (Combined)

Although StART services may operate sporadically, city agencies provide service to fill the gaps. The City of Waterford Dial-A-Ride, for example, operates from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., filling in the gap when StART does not provide service in the area. We do not believe there are significant temporal gaps within the service areas as StART services operate throughout the day.

Duplication of Public Transit Services - Fixed-Route

Further spatial analysis of the preceding transit options illustrates some level of inter-system fixed-route overlap between at least two services. All areas with fixed-route coverage have service throughout the day from approximately 6:00 a.m. (or earlier) through 7:30 p.m. (or later).

When asked to provide a primary reason why they do not use public, private, or non-profit transportation more often, most respondents saw the service as unnecessary (43.6%). Other reasons included it is not convenient (28.3%), does not provide service where I need to travel (20.4%), and does not operate when I need it to travel (17.0%).

Priorities

During the Stakeholder Workshop, participants agreed the first step was to identify the strengths of transportation services within the county. The second step was to identify the areas in which transportation service options need to improve. As part of the final step, the stakeholders determined the top six items that require immediate attention.

- Operating monies
- Capital monies
- Mobility training (Bilingual travel buddies)
- Mobility coordination
- Dedicated staffer CRTPA
- Information sharing

Recommendations

Minor routing modifications on public fixed-route systems would reduce overlapping service, which would produce an overall streamlined fixed-route system for the county. The eliminated segments could be reallocated to areas that do not yet offer services.

All city operated demand-response services overlap with County-operated StaRT demand-response services. Based on the information acquired from participating human services agencies, the opportunity for coordination and/or consolidation exists between those agencies that provide medical demand-response trips.

Some system's service areas (i.e., MAX Dial-A-Ride and ROTA Dial-A-Ride) operate slightly outside the StaRT service area. It is recommended that StaRT collaborate with these agencies to reduce the duplication of demand response services. Mobility training efforts would shift those more able-bodied riders from demand response services to fixed-route services.

It is recommended the agencies begin an outreach campaign aimed at educating residents about the places to which the fixed-routes travel. Participating agencies could offer incentives or education services for demand-response riders to increase fixed-route ridership and decrease the cost of the demand-response service.

The following are some examples of different strategies the Local Transportation Authority may implement:

1. *Free Rides:* Agencies could offer free rides on fixed-route services for all paratransit-eligible persons.
2. *Mobility Training:* Other transit agencies have decided rider education is an effective way of shifting paratransit riders onto fixed-route services. Riders are taught how to ride to and from specific locations or basic trip training. By providing mobility training, seniors and persons with disabilities are more independent and may feel more connected to the community. Funding is available for similar programs through SAFETEA-LU.

Agencies providing transportation services within Stanislaus County may consider the benefits of a centralized call center. The implementation of such a program would begin with the adoption of a single, toll-free phone number for all County services.

It would be of value to the future of Stanislaus County transit services to hire a Transportation Planner whose chief responsibilities would be to oversee the County's transit coordination efforts. An experienced, full-time coordination manager would streamline the complicated process of coordinating all components of the coordination efforts (i.e., implementation of the call center, funding allocation).

Information Sharing

To identify service gaps and reduce incidence of duplication of services, the stakeholders would like a countywide information portal that would provide information existing transportation options. A centralized call center would also permit on-going surveys, as comments, complaints, and origin-destination pairings would be recorded. Doing so would assist in the identification of temporal or spatial service gaps, such as areas that are "under-served".

TAHOE (PLACER COUNTY)

Needs, Gaps, & Barriers (Combined)

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Reaching medical appointments was considered one of the greatest unmet needs for those who must rely on public transit or demand-responsive services.

- Those needing to reach medical facilities in another city or county can encounter difficulties trying to cross geographic boundaries, especially where eligibility requirements differ
- Most demand-responsive services require advance reservations, making it difficult to reach a doctor for a same-day appointment because of an illness or emergency
- It is hard to predict how long a medical appointment will last, so it is difficult to schedule a timely pick-up
- Waits for pick-up can be long and generally difficult for someone in ill health
- Some people are too frail to utilize curb-to-curb service, and require greater assistance to and from the vehicle
- Van transportation itself can exacerbate certain medical conditions
- Demand for demand-responsive services especially by dialysis clients keeps growing, decreasing capacity for other users
- Schedules are not always coordinated between agencies on route connections to reach medical centers; and
- The need for a transportation provider for transporting Medi-Cal clients.

Demand-Responsive Service

- Insufficient hours, capacity, and geographic areas served
- Long waits for pick-ups
- Difficulty of intercity connections

- Curb-to-curb service that is insufficient for those who need additional help to/from the vehicle or to carry packages.

Fixed-Route Transit

For seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income families who can or do use fixed route transit, besides the concerns raised above,

Insufficient service, especially midday, evenings, weekends, holidays, and in more rural areas

- Lack of fixed-route transit near where people live and serving their destinations
- Ride times that are long, especially if there is a need to transfer
- Bus stops that are far from destinations and/or have poor physical access
- Cost, especially with fare increases and transfers
- Drivers not following rules and training concerning riders who are seniors or have disabilities
- Insufficient transit information reaching the public
- Lack of system integration across the geographic boundaries of providers, resulting in poor timing and schedule coordination, difficulty for riders to connect for intercity travel, and/or requiring multiple transfers.

Transit Issues in the Tahoe Basin

Transit issues were also identified through stakeholder interviews, workshops and unmet needs hearings, as listed below:

- Many people live outside the demand-responsive service boundary
- Taxi service is expensive
- There are no supplementary volunteer programs
- Curb-to-Curb service can get booked in advance, making it hard for working people to rely on the service as it is first-come, first-served for those without a reservation
- Limited hours of service on transit
- Intercity travel is difficult from Tahoe City to South Lake Tahoe and other outlying areas along the west shore for jobs, shopping, programs such as Choices, and medical services, and across county lines to destinations in Sacramento County, Carson City, Reno and Gardenville
- Small print size is difficult to read in transit information
- There are limits on shopping bags/packages
- Lack of volunteer transportation services
- Clients with similar profiles may or may not qualify for transportation services because of eligibility requirements
- TART schedules do not necessarily coordinate with Greyhound, Amtrak or Amtrak California schedules
- Transfers need to be made on the other side of the street sometimes and/or is very tight time wise, and if a bus is missed there can be a long wait for the next one given infrequent schedules
- Seniors have expressed having fears of getting lost, of safety at transit stops, and of using transit at hours when many teenagers are present
- Incorrect information is sometimes provided by customer service agents

- There is a lack of notice about stop location changes, route diversions, closures, road construction barriers, and the like
- There is no Braille signage at bus stops for the blind/visually impaired
- Individuals are sometimes denied a ride on BlueGO Curb to Curb due to lack of next-day or same-day space
- Buses do not run late enough to accommodate nontraditional work shifts or college students taking evening classes at the community colleges
- There is a lack of mobility training for passengers who could be encouraged to use fixed route buses instead of demand-responsive service
- Dial-A-Ride vehicles are insufficient at peak travel times;
- There is inadequate gap service for wheelchair users and in smaller communities, especially for emergencies and unplanned situations.
- Drivers not always communicating sufficiently with blind/visually impaired clients that have arrived or that bus are full
- Buses have steep steps that can be hard to climb
- There is insufficient information and training on using the transit system on both the North and South shores

Transportation Resources

Serving the resident and visitor populations are public and private fixed route transit, shuttles, trolleys, demand-responsive services, local and regional highway networks, as well as air transportation via South Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Reno-Tahoe International and Sacramento Airports. The Reno-Tahoe International and Sacramento airports are the only area airports that provide commercial service. There are seven access points to the Basin from outside the region. Portions of the Region are served by bicycle facilities and waterborne excursion services.

Public transit is provided on the north shore by Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART), operated by the County of Placer, Department of Public Works. (Due to TART providing service within a portion of Washoe County, the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC) assists with funding.)

Transit service on the south shore is provided by BlueGO operated under the Coordinated Transit System Management Company (CTS-MCO) and its partners, which has incorporated a variety of public and private services including fixed route and demand responsive service as well as casino and ski area shuttle services. Both the North and South Shores are served by visitor trolley, ski shuttle services, special event shuttles.

Priorities

There is a need to implement an automated trip planning (ATP) system. The ATP will allow transit riders to plan regional trips using multiple operators. The itinerary provided by the ATP includes approximate walking distances, transit travel times, and fares.

TMPO could develop a Universal Fare Card Study to determine the feasibility of a universal transit fare instrument for the transit operators within the Tahoe Basin. This study will determine the extent to which new technology in electronic fare collection, such as smart cards, could be used to create a seamless, integrated regional transit network to facilitate multi-jurisdictional transit trips.

Additionally, TMPO is planning to conduct a BlueGO Systems Plan that will provide the first phase in the development of an improved integration of the south shore's transit services. The Systems Plan process will facilitate the development of improved inter-operator transfer agreements to improve the accessibility and customer friendliness of the BlueGO transit system and guide the future of the system for the next five years.

TMPO is also working to identify environmental justice issues throughout the Tahoe Basin. These issues include lack of transit services to certain areas where populations of lower income persons are high, as well as transit challenges faced by seniors who live in senior communities that have limited or no access to public transportation. TMPO is bringing together representative stakeholders to give their input on environmental justice related transportation problems that they and those in their communities face.

Recommendations

In order to continue to make public transit and human services transportation coordination a priority, it is recommended that the TMPO Governing Board utilize the existing SSTAC to research and develop recommendations towards improving coordination between public, private and non-profit transportation providers and human services organizations.

Planning and Funding

- Work with TMPO on funding resources to expand the availability of fixed-route, demand-responsive and shuttle services
- Incorporate issues and recommendations raised in this Plan and TMPO's Determination of Unmet Transit Needs into local transit operator studies, such as Systems Plans (Short-Range Transit Plans)
- Coordinate with TMPO and the county human services departments on mapping that overlays current transit routes with concentrations of CalWORKS recipients, and review transit routes and frequencies of service in those areas for service revisions/expansions to better meet local needs.

Fixed-Route Transit Connections and Service

- Review and consider schedule revisions to improve fixed-route connections across geographic boundaries to key destinations, such as major medical facilities.
- Develop a process by which transit agencies routinely provide notice to other transit providers in the region of service cuts, revisions, route changes or expansions under consideration.
- Seek funding support for local shuttle services from retailers and medical providers, in partnership with transit agencies and/or social service providers.
- Work with businesses to provide discounts/incentives to use public transit.

Transit Stops

- Develop community partnerships to implement safety improvements at key bus stops.
- Work with local governments to increase crossing times at key intersections using federal guidelines for the pace of older and disabled persons, and improve intersections and sidewalks for safe travel to and from key transit stops.

Mobility Action Plan (MAP) Phase I Implementation Study

Volume I: Statewide Executive Summary: Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Coordination Plans – Large /Small Urban

- Develop volunteer bus stop audit teams composed largely of seniors and/or persons with disabilities to audit conditions at stops and stations.
- Demand-Responsive Service
- Seek funding to offer more door-to-door or door through door assistance to users
- Improve coordination between demand-responsive service providers, and seamlessness of the system for the user, regardless of which program a client is eligible for
- Review opportunities with other demand-responsive and nonprofit providers to utilize existing vehicles for multiple program clients, possibly with assistance from TMPO's Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee.
- Work with facilities and local governments to obtain priority parking for Dial-a-Ride vehicles at common destinations
- Work with hospitals and clinics to offer on-site escort services for patients using curb-to-curb transportation services but needing more assistance to reach doctor's offices.

Information and Training

- Establish mobility managers to provide coordination of transit operations, oversee and coordinate taxi scrip and volunteer driver programs, provide trip planning assistance, train seniors and persons with disabilities how to ride fixed route transit, provide information and education regarding transportation services available
- Improve passenger notice on changes to routes, stops, construction delays, Dial-a-Ride pick-up changes, etc
- Increase and reinforce driver training concerning rules and practices for transporting seniors and persons with various forms of disability
- Educate more people about the complex issues around aging and mobility. Better publicize the effects of housing choices on senior and disabled mobility, and the public and personal costs of individual choices to locate away from transportation and other services.
- Increase outreach and education on alternatives to driving and availability of mobility training programs. Increase publicity on public transit services. Improve the readability of transit schedules, including producing large print versions
- Publicize the availability of ride-sharing and matching programs
- Establish mobility training programs in all jurisdictions to make transit and
- Alternatives to driving more accessible and user-friendly to seniors and persons with disabilities, including those who may never have utilized it before
- Develop transit ambassador/buddy programs to provide personal assistance to seniors and persons with disabilities who are learning to use fixed-route transit
- Partner with blindness organizations to expand and promote cane travel training for people who are blind/visually impaired in independent mobility and how to access fixed-route transit.

Local Government Policies

- Work with local governments on policies requiring developers to pay for bus shelters and transit stop amenities
- Work with local governments to require developers of “active” senior communities to provide transportation or to contribute funds to mitigate the costs of local transportation services that will be needed as residents’ age, through development agreements, developer fees, or other mechanisms.

New Programs

- Collaborate on a program of “transit scrip” to enable seniors and low-income persons with disabilities to reach fixed-route transit services via a connection by taxi, volunteer driver, or community organization.
- Catalyze shared driver cooperatives, in which a full-time driver provides service to a regular group of seniors and/or persons with disabilities who share the monthly cost of the driver and receive personalized transportation service when desired
- Increase availability of regulated, accessible, subsidized local and intercity taxi services
- Establish a community-coordinated volunteer driver program.
- The following are also specific strategies and activities, sorted by cost, that were recommended to improve mobility for low-income populations, seniors and those with disabilities.

Lower Cost Strategies/Activities

- Provide more complete travel planning information and mobility training through mobility managers
- Develop a centralized list, managed by a transportation mobility manager, of groups or agencies with accessible vehicles who could transport disabled persons during unplanned situations, such as an illness at work or a vehicle break-down
- Provide more information and training on using alternatives to driving, including transit buddies through mobility managers
- Strengthen design review to enable better transit access in new developments
- Offer increased information on transit options
- Provide assistance with climbing bus stairs if “kneeling” buses are not physically feasible for certain areas
- Provide more mobility training on using fixed route transit
- Improve coordination of local fixed-route services
- Improve transit stops and access to those stops
- Improve Dial-a-Ride dispatching to insure correct and timely pick-ups at home and destinations
- Increase driver sensitivity training
- Make more available information on alternatives to driving through the DMV, community locations and the media
- Include greater emphasis on universal design and transit-oriented development in city and county planning processes

- Require any project listed in the Regional Transportation Plan to demonstrate that the project will work for all possible users. Develop guidelines and funding criteria that support better design for high speed roads and pedestrian and bicycle access, including such items as resting places en route to bus stops
- Increase public participation through greater public outreach and information on transportation and planning meetings
- Form an ADA subcommittee of the SSTAC to insure senior and disabled concerns are heard and incorporated
- Promote 211 and 711 services
- Implement 511 traveler informational services
- Expand demand-responsive and community/volunteer transportation programs
- Offer more taxis that are regulated, insured, supervised, offer a variety of passenger payment options and accessible vehicles, and include discounts/sliding scales/subsidies for low-income seniors/persons with disabilities
- Look at distance-based pricing
- Look at priority for rides based on medical need
- Enforce driver stop announcements
- Provide training for all drivers on smooth driving of large buses or Dial-a- Ride vehicles, and including simulations to understand varied impairments.

Higher-Cost Options

- Improve pedestrian walkways and crossings throughout the Tahoe Basin to ensure accessibility
- Provide community shuttles to connect riders to bus stops on fixed routes
- Develop a community based volunteer program to fill transportation gaps
- Expand demand-responsive service to include door to door or door through door services
- Develop more shuttle services: within shopping centers, to medical centers and other key services, and to special/community events from senior residences
- Increase availability of accessible, subsidized, local and intercity taxi services
- Increase funding for transit
- Provide more frequent bus service
- Provide shuttles to key shopping and service locations
- Increase sensitivity and ADA communication, training, supervision, and
- Accountability for drivers and customer service staff
- Develop customer appreciation systems to recognize good drivers
- Provide more management support for drivers to remove problem riders
- Focus transit funds on more frequent midday, evening, weekend, and deviated flex route service
- Improve bus stop amenities such as shelters and benches. Develop guidelines and funding criteria that support better design for high speed roads and pedestrian and bicycle access, including such items as resting places en route to bus stops
- Increase public participation through greater public outreach and information on transportation and planning meetings
- Form an ADA subcommittee of the SSTAC to insure senior and disabled concerns are heard and incorporated
- Expand demand-responsive and community/volunteer transportation programs

- Offer more taxis that are regulated, insured, supervised, offer a variety of passenger payment options and accessible vehicles, and include discounts/sliding scales/subsidies for low-income seniors/persons with disabilities
- Look at distance-based pricing
- Look at priority for rides based on medical need
- Enforce driver stop announcements
- Provide training for all drivers on smooth driving of large buses or Dial-a- Ride vehicles, and including simulations to understand varied impairments.

TULARE COUNTY

Needs and Gaps (Combined)

Spatial Gaps

The most common transportation need expressed by the stakeholders involved in the development of this Coordinated Plan, was the need for more commuter-oriented transportation service to and from outlying County areas into the four largest cities (Dinuba, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia).

There was an expressed need for additional service in all rural areas of the County, to ensure that rural residents have adequate access to services within the urban areas. Areas with noted gaps in service include the North County areas of London, Traver, Monson and Seville, Central County areas of Poplar, Woodville, Springville and Tipton, and the South County areas of Alpaugh, Richgrove and Terra Bella.

Specific responses included the need for additional/expanded routes in the rural areas to provide more access to jobs and training in the urban areas of the County, and to provide youth and adults access to services and recreational activities not available in the rural areas. One Social Service agency expressed the direct need for service between Alpaugh and their client service programs in Porterville.

Temporal Gaps

Another high priority need expressed by stakeholders was the need for extended service hours between urban and rural communities. The lack of available transportation early in the morning, late in the evening, and on weekends limits public transit users who need to travel during non-traditional hours. This type of service gap tends to preclude low-income individuals from obtaining viable employment options limits extracurricular activities for low-income youth.

Employment service representatives noted that the lack of transportation in the evening hours and on weekends makes it more difficult for their clients to work weekends and late shifts, or accept jobs that where these hours are required.

Transportation Costs

Transportation costs can be a financial burden for individuals living on a fixed income, especially if they need to purchase multiple fares for children or other family members. Many stakeholders noted the need to lower or subsidize fares, especially on County fixed routes which currently

cost \$1.50 per one-way trip. Public transit providers echoed the concern about limiting cost factors, but noted that State farebox ratio requirements limit their ability to provide lower fares.

Service Awareness

Travel training and passenger education was a noted high priority need. Passengers need to be aware of the transportation resources available to them, and human service agencies need a better understanding of the transportation system in order to accomplish coordination objectives. Many human service agencies also expressed an interest in having additional transit information available to their caseworkers and staff to help assist a client in building a trip to and from work or training sites.

Transportation Resources

Transportation Providers

The City of Dinuba provides service to residents of Dinuba and the adjacent area through two fixed routes, a dial-a-ride service and a free Dinuba Connection trolley route. The fixed routes and demand-response services operate Monday through Friday, while the trolley service is available Monday through Saturday. Service is provided to the general public using 3 ADA compliant vehicles traveling an estimated 3,000 miles each month.

The City of Porterville provides local transit services to residents of Porterville and outlying areas. In FY 06/07, approximately 51,000 passengers used the service. This figure includes children, seniors, persons with disabilities and persons in wheelchairs. The City's demand-response system is only available for seniors and persons with disabilities.

The City of Tulare offers two methods of transportation for the disabled, seniors, and the general public. The newly renamed Tulare InterModal Express (TIME) fixed route service operates within the developed areas of Tulare as well as to and from Visalia. The City also offers a dial-a-ride service within the City limits. Service is provided Monday through Saturday. The fixed route service provides approximately 384,000 one-way rides per year.

The City of Visalia provides fixed route, demand-response, and downtown circulation trolley transportation services to residents within the city limits of Visalia, Goshen, Farmersville, and Exeter. Service is provided seven days a week to approximately 1,500,000 passengers each year. The demand-response service gives priority to ADA clients who have special certification that states they are unable to use the fixed route service. The Visalia City Coach fleet consists of 29 buses, 9 demand-response vehicles, and 6 trolleys, which travel a total of 100,364 miles each month.

The City of Woodlake has been providing demand-response service to its residents for 8 years. The bus travels approximately 1,300 miles per month.

The Porterville Sheltered Workshop provides transportation for the developmentally disabled residents of Tulare County. Approximately 360,000 clients are transported each year to and from client services, which include medical appointments and school/educational training programs.

Tulare County Area Transit (TCaT) contracts with MV Transportation to provide services countywide through both fixed route and demand-response services. In early August of 2007

service hours were extended to Monday through Friday from 5:25am to 7:25pm, and Saturday from 9:30am to 3:25pm. Approximately 105,000 passengers use TCaT services annually.

Transportation Purchasers

The Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) provides health and human services to Tulare County residents. They provide transportation reimbursement to eligible clients.

The Tulare County HHSA – Kings/Tulare Area Agency on Aging (KTAAA) is a Tulare County HHSA program designed to empower seniors. KTAAA purchases public transportation services for their clients, and provides transportation reimbursements.

The Tulare County HHSA – Department of Mental Health provides mental health services for Tulare County residents. They purchase transportation services for their clients and encourage them to use public transportation.

The Tulare County HHSA – TulareWORKS provides services for CalWORKS participants within Tulare County. Transportation reimbursement is provided to low income, the homeless, youth, and persons with disabilities to access services designed to help support themselves and their health care needs.

Barriers

The lack of affordable transportation between the urban and rural areas of the County was perceived as one of the greatest transportation barriers for the senior, low-income, and disabled populations of Tulare County.

Priorities

Strategy Priority Level

1 - High

Provide rural commuter-oriented transportation service to and from outlying County areas into the urban areas – through new service, additional service/increased frequency, and/or expansion of service area.

2 - High

Provide continued or improved mobility services designed specifically for the disabled (i.e. wheelchair routes).

3 – Medium

Expand or enhance service within the Exeter, Farmersville, Tulare, Visalia Metroplex.

4 - Medium

Extend service hours for rural commuter-oriented transportation service to and from outlying County areas into the urban areas – through extension of morning, evening, and/or weekend service.

5 – Medium

Develop a fare reduction program where possible to reduce fares for seniors, individuals with a handicap, and/or low-income individuals – through subsidies and/or pass systems.

6 – Medium

Implement a transit training and awareness program to assist clients in determining their transit needs and to help them build their transit trips – including mobility training for agency personnel.

7 – Medium

Develop user-friendly information systems that illustrate available services and trip options, including guides/brochures, kiosks, automated routing services, etc.

Recommendations

Spatial Gaps

Strategy 1: Provide rural commuter-oriented transportation service to and from outlying County areas into the urban areas – through new service, additional service/increased frequency, and/or expansion of service area.

Strategy 2: Provide continued or improved mobility services designed specifically for the disabled (i.e. wheelchair routes).

Strategy 3: Expand or enhance service within the Exeter, Farmersville, Tulare, Visalia Metroplex.

Temporal Gaps

Strategy 4: Extend service hours for rural commuter-oriented transportation service to and from outlying County areas into the urban areas – through extension of morning, evening, and/or weekend service.

Transportation Costs

Strategy 5: Develop a fare reduction program where possible to reduce fares for seniors, individuals with a handicap, and/or low-income individuals – through subsidies and/or pass systems.

Service Awareness

Strategy 6: Implement a transit training and awareness program to assist clients in determining their transit needs and to help them build their transit trips – including mobility training for agency personnel.

Strategy 7: Develop user-friendly information systems that illustrate available services and trip options, including guides/brochures, kiosks, automated routing services, etc.

VENTURA COUNTY

Transportation Needs

Seniors, Able- Bodied Needs

- Lack of knowledge about resources.
- Concern about safety and security
- Awareness of time when driving might be limited. Seniors, Frail and Persons Chronically Ill
- Assistance to and through the door.
- On-time performance and reliability critical to frail users.
- Assistance in trip planning needed.
- Need for shelters
- Need for hand-off for terribly frail Persons with Disabilities
- Service quality and reliability
- Driver sensitivity and appropriate passenger handling procedure
- Concerns about wheelchair pass-bys
- Need for shelters

Persons of Low Income Needs

- Easy access to trip planning information
- Fare medium options (what does this mean?) that support accountability
- Availability of tokens or passes
- Breaking down the culture of poverty (not sure about this needs clarification)

Persons with Sensory Impairments Needs

- Difficulty in accessing information that is visual or auditory.

Persons with Behavioral Disabilities Needs

- Medications make individuals sun-sensitive and waiting in the sun is not an option.
- Medications make for thirstiness; long hour waits in the heat can lead to dehydration.
- Mental illnesses can make it frightening to be in the public spaces such as public bus stops.
- Impaired judgment and memory makes for poor decision-making.

Transportation Resources

Ventura County is served by seven, public fixed-route operators, four general public dial-a-ride operators, six publicly-operated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) systems and numerous non-profit and for-profit paratransit operators.

Over the years VCTC and the public transit operators have implemented successful coordination strategies to improve services for riders county-wide. Specifically, the Go Ventura Smart Card, an electronic monthly pass/e-purse that allows seamless travel on all of the county's fixed-route systems is an example of the transit operators' commitment to coordination.

In addition, NextBus a real-time vehicle location system was installed on all fixed-route and general purpose DAR vehicles in the county. This system enables riders to know when the next bus will be arriving. This real time information is provided to riders at key bus stops and can be accessed over the Internet. Working together the transit operators and one of the larger public healthcare transportation providers also established a network of transfers enabling ADA paratransit travel across the county from east to west. Centralized ADA certification provided by VCTC is another coordination solution that has ensured standardized eligibility processing county-wide for ADA and negating the need for each operator to devote resources to duplicative certification processes.

Service-Related Findings and Results

- A total of 5,267,026 one-way passenger trips on both ADA paratransit, DAR and fixed-route services are provided annually by stakeholder agencies and organizations. The level of transportation reported to be operated in the project area is significant and offers tremendous potential for coordination activities.
- The total number of vehicles reported to be used in service by all agencies/organizations operating transportation is 217 (excluding vehicles reported by 4 private operators and 84 school district vehicles) with 196 vehicles reported as being accessible.

Gaps

- Start and end times for publicly operated services vary widely between 5am – 8am and 4:30 p.m. -10 p.m. ADA riders needing to make inter-city trips particularly in the late afternoon on some systems may have difficulty in making connections between systems and scheduling appointments during these hours.
- Reservations timeframes for service on public systems varies, from same day to 24 hours in advance. Scheduling trips for those needing to make transfers to other systems for same day reservations may be challenging and prevent and/or delay riders from making necessary trips.
- Public programs currently allow transfers for ADA clients which extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries. However, wait times for riders at transfer/"meet" points and overall travel time may vary greatly and create challenges for the rider and transit providers.
- Public paratransit services are impacted by for profit Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) organizations and senior/disabled housing facilities. There are actions which local agencies can take to modify land use permitting and trip scheduling/reservations policies.

Barriers

- Lack of funding, liability issues and program/funding restrictions were at the top of the list of barriers/limitations to coordination cited by stakeholders. Age requirements used to determine rider eligibility for paratransit services varies throughout the county.
- Only two of the public transit systems responding to the survey indicated that they currently use automated scheduling systems.
- Two-thirds of the agencies/organizations participating in the survey effort indicated that they have excess capacity on their services during some periods of the day.
- Human and social service agencies and many of their clients/customers do not fully understand how the public paratransit systems operate, especially the service operated between communities.
- Variance in service reservation requirements

Priorities

The overall objective should be to incrementally improve services, and to provide as many travel options as possible to the target populations based upon their individual needs. This objective can be accomplished by gradually building the capacity of public transit and human and social service agencies/organizations to develop and implement coordinated projects, plans and programs. Both public transit and human and social service agencies/organizations must be active partners in this capacity building process.

Priorities relative to the development and funding of coordinated transportation projects identified through the locally developed plan should:

1. Adequately address the unmet or underserved transportation needs of the targeted population;
2. Maintain consistency with current Federal and State funding regulations and requirements;
3. Be financially sustainable;
4. Include measurable goals and objectives;
5. Build and/or increase overall system capacity and service quality; and
6. Leverage and maximize existing transportation funding and capital resources.

The single most important element in the process to prioritize and select coordinated projects and programs is the ability to address the special transportation needs of the target populations. Moreover, the need to build the capacity and reliability of human and social service transportation providers to complement public transportation services is critical, since the overall mission of these agencies/organizations is to serve individualized need, including providing transportation services that public transportation cannot (e.g., non-emergency medical, door

through-door, etc.). For this reason, project opportunities designed to strengthen their ability to continue to provide the hard-to-serve trip needs of seniors and the disabled should be encouraged.

Recommendations

Recommendations are focused upon modifications to current service-related policies and practices that can limit mobility options for the target populations, and continuing to strengthen ties between public transit and human and social service agencies and organizations, as follows:

1. Implement a standard age eligibility policy for seniors of 65 years of age, for publicly-operated paratransit systems in Ventura County. This change will have limited to no impact on existing riders of transit systems, as the few individuals impacted by the change will be accommodated by the operators.
2. Implement a coordinated approach to automated dispatching and scheduling of trips on publicly-operated paratransit systems in the County. If implemented, this strategy will effectively improve the quality of transportation in a number of ways, particularly for those individuals needing to make inter-jurisdictional trips. Wait times for riders at transfer points will also be minimized, and their ability to travel throughout the county will be maximized.
3. Establish core operating hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays for publicly operated paratransit systems to improve travel for riders making inter-jurisdictional trips and traveling in late afternoon hours. The study Ad Hoc committee had numerous discussions on this issue and almost all publicly operated systems were able to reach consensus, contingent upon Board and City Council approval.
4. Expand implementation of a Travel Training Program for Agencies/Organizations and their clients similar to the existing program provided by ARC Ventura. It is recommended that VCTC explore the potential to create a county-wide Travel Training program similar to the program that is currently operated by ARC Ventura. The ARC Ventura program has been successful, and can be expanded for county-wide application.
5. Implement Sunday Service on all public paratransit systems. Responses to the survey and the GIS analysis indicate that scheduled Sunday service is limited and is likely insufficient to meet the actual needs of those who do not have access to fixed-route services.
6. Formulate common criteria and guidance for Adult Day Health Care Centers (ADHC) which specify requirements for these organizations relative to reserving trips on public paratransit services. Based upon Ad Hoc committee discussion, we recommend using the model developed by SCAT as a starting point in the development of a coordinated approach to this important issue.
7. Develop a data collection process designed to assist human and social service agencies and organizations operating transportation and their contractors not using Trapeze. Establish trip counting procedures to ensure accuracy in accounting for senior, disabled and low-income trips provided in the county.

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8. Continue working with the Ad Hoc Committee on transportation issues on an as needed basis.
9. The County of Ventura and the City of Thousand Oaks should consolidate their separate paratransit services into one system to provide seamless coordinated service in Conejo Valley. This action will ensure that services operated are easy to use and convenient for riders.