



Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310) Public Listening Sessions Notes

Project Call FY 2020-2021

Public Transportation Division

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Introduction

This document compiles notes from public workshops held by the Public Transportation Division and the Public Involvement Section in December 2018 and January 2019 as part of the FY 2020-2021 call for projects for the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program. The outlines for the discussions were drawn from the Regional Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plans represented for each of the TxDOT districts. In most cases where more than one regional plan covered a district, the outlines reflect both plans.

The notes are a record of the meeting conversation and do not reflect the opinion of TxDOT, the Public Transportation Division, or the Public Involvement Section. Every effort was made to accurately represent the comments made at the meetings, however omissions or errors may have occurred.

1. San Antonio District Public Workshop, December 4, 2018

Attendance: 11 in person, 1 online

1.1 Goal: Enhance travel experience quality, customer service, and safety. Make convenient and at a reasonable cost.

- (a) **Issue:** ART dispatch difficult and untimely.

Workshop response: Significant progress. Implemented a new software scheduling program systemwide.

Expansion anticipating coming up. Where's My Ride? 60 percent of calls verifying is my ride coming up. VIA has reminder call the night before, plus automated call when the van is in the area, still get a lot of "unnecessary calls," such as booking several rides and then canceling some of them. If people don't like pickup time, they may call back to try for a time closer to the time requested. There needs to be improved communication to make the system run more smoothly and reassure people they will get what they're asking for. Branding and going back to our grass roots.

- (b) **Issue:** Rural residents have a difficult time scheduling trips if they are not on Medicaid

Workshop response: Long term need to start thinking that way. VIA did a study a couple of years ago, if we were able to take people to the dialysis clinic closest to their homes, mileage could be reduced by 2/3. Redistribute trips. Need to start thinking differently. Medical trips, dialysis in Pearsall from Uvalde because doctor has contracts with certain dialysis clinics. Travel training for customer to ask, is there a specialist or a better time closer to me?

1.2 Goal: Expand services to those who are unserved/underserved – A full range of public transit services should be offered to all residents and visitors.

- (a) **Issue:** Need regularly scheduled service from small cities and rural areas into San Antonio for commuters and medical

Workshop response: Worked together to maximize our resources. With loss of SWART no longer providing non-emergency medical services, back to grass roots solutions. Right in the middle of Eagle Ford shale. Getting to SA, San Angelo and Del Rio, seeing issues with longer road times and deteriorating roads. Poses a problem with our vehicles and maintenance. Longer wait times. Used to take 1.5 hours, now takes 3. Uvalde to SA, we don't even go down 90 because of the construction. Hard to explain to our elderly why we have to go an additional 40 miles and why they have to get up an hour earlier than before. Partnership is to maximize those local, regional hospitals and get some of the specialists to our area. New Braunfels, TxDOT and VIA have approved survey for mixed route in New Braunfels. Trying to get more of our specialists to come to New Braunfels, so we don't have to travel so much to SA. Austin turns out to be an all day trip. ADA regulations allow us to do trip-by-trip eligibility. Ask them to use bus service whenever possible. Complicated system and there

are few transit systems that have made it work. Cost and demand standpoint, we may have to be a little less accommodating.

- (b) **Issue:** Need regularly scheduled service in major locations such as Kerrville, Fredericksburg, Boerne, Floresville, Pleasanton, and New Braunfels

Workshop response: Work with VIA, provide public transportation in New Braunfels itself. Park and rides from Kerrville into the P&R at 1604/UTSA. Will have temporary commuter service with legislative session coming up, going to CART's multimodal facility. Talking with Bandera for something. Right now the ridership doesn't constitute it yet. Alamo Regional Transit investing \$300,000 for Bandera, Kirby regional.

1.3 **Goal: Mobility management and coordination in rural areas**

- (a) **Issue:** Need a one-stop information center for transportation services and options

Workshop response: What are we as organizations doing to connect the rider to the service? What are we doing to interact with each other? What are we doing to create a standardized service? There doesn't seem to be that cohesiveness. Successfully Aging and Living in SA (SALSA) to enhance the quality of life for seniors. Transportation is a part of that. One-call, one click centralized source of information and referral, even booking. Again, still in the talking stage, would love to make it happen in the next few years. Electronic fare card. Discounted voucher system (40 percent) 30 one-way trips. From paper to electronic fare card has worked well. Lose paper vouchers. Dispatch tablet wide for drivers makes it much easier for dispatch to handle same-day service calls. One-day advance notice can be hard for our clients. One thing that didn't work is the automated calling system. Mainly because phone numbers had changed or temporary cell phones had run out of minutes. 76 percent of the calls were not going through. IT new module, driver direct. Drivers have a better screen, not just dispatch. Rural areas, sometimes closest dispatch is 2 hours from their garage. It has helped. No Internet or towers in Uvalde presented a great problem. We need to be working toward social media for scheduling, etc. Our population gains the information from these sites.

- (b) **Issue:** Mentoring/education – with human service transportation providers

Workshop response: Mobility management. Different definition for health and human services. Majority of the smaller providers don't have proper vehicle insurance so it's hard to contract with them. Training? Kind of a free-for-all. Each community is starting to look at city ordinances so they can police that kind of thing. No other providers available. If we do invite them, cost them a lot of money for proper insurance, etc. For us, smaller steps, how to get people to utilize our services and how do they know about our services. Being a small system, it is the manpower and the funding for that manpower to do the outreach, training. Different in Uvalde County. I don't think our area is there yet. Within each other, we do well. It's all the other providers in the area (mom & pop) bringing them to the table. I'm going to be leery of putting Ms. Lopez on a van that doesn't have the proper insurance. Where are we sending clientele to next point?

- (c) **Issue:** Coordinating training

Workshop response: VIA tried to launch travel training service. Just haven't gotten the response. Some interest in the senior community to learn about what you can and cannot do with the VIA bus system. Virtually no luck

shifting routes from paratransit to fixed route bus service. Travel training program through Easter Seals. Had a little problem developing clientele for the service. VIA was funding it, can't keep doing it without seeing some results. Travel training necessary to help people have a better trip and use the service. Important factor for people to understand what they're doing. Travel training for customer to ask, is there a specialist or a better time closer to me?

(d) **Issue:** Coordinating/consolidating transportation resources

Workshop response: No "Travelocity" for transit services. No standardization and coordination or universal umbrella to coordinate this. Hard for people to ask is there another service. We, as a service, need to do more interconnection with each other.

Additional comments

- How to hold smaller providers accountable?
- HEB grocery deliveries impacting the number of trips, travel patterns change
- Our biggest issue with mobility is those coming across from Mexico. Flex route in Eagle Pass and we used to see, on average, coming across 60. Now we're seeing 280. Blood banks, get a gift card and shop in Eagle Pass. Doubled on that flex route. People are coming to San Antonio from SWART area.
- Challenge is to change the behavior of the riders.
- Concern about how census impacts demographics and service

2. Houston and Beaumont Districts Public Workshop, December 5, 2018

Attendance: 30 in person, 5 online.

1.1 Goal: Improve the quality of transit infrastructure

- (a) **Issue:** Accessible access to local bus routes

Workshop response: There are some sidewalks in Dickinson but it's by a stop sign and a ditch. There is no coverage. There is a huge concern with the safety piece and the rain. When it rains the customers drown. There is no signage so individuals do not know where to catch the bus. The passenger needs to know where to catch the bus.

1.2 Goal: New service for areas with no or very limited transit

- (a) **Issue:** Alvin, Pasadena, Channelview, Chambers County, Liberty County, Waller County (Hempstead and Prairie View) and Walker County/Huntsville

Workshop response: Hitchcock rider - there are four stops but then they found Mount Horizons. Mount Horizon and Connect are the only services we use. Ms McCloud called regarding her husband - he almost died again because no one could come here to take him to the hospital. Mount Horizon was the one agency that would come and get him. Connect will follow-up with this customer with concerns about her husband. A customer asked Connect if they still have the taxi cab service and they replied no.

1.3 Goal: New service for areas of growth and demographic change

- (a) **Issue:** League City, Webster and other Bay Area communities straddling Harris and Galveston Counties; Mission Bend, Four Corners, Missouri City and Stafford in northern and eastern Fort Bend County; Liberty County, and communities in western Harris County, specifically the Highway 6 corridor north of the Barker/Cypress Reservoir.

Workshop response: Concern was transportation for her mother who is on dialysis. the program needs to continue in Hitchcock. She needs transportation to get to her doctor appointments; she travels from Hitchcock to Dickinson. A question was asked what does an individual do when a whole route is dropped or when a driver is off and the customer cannot get to school. Another person lived in Hitchcock and there use to be service through Connect. Some students are being charged a large amount to use the service. We are thankful we have Mount Horizon but there are times when they are off. Hitchcock - they use Mount Horizon for their senior citizen but they need an alternate when Mount Horizon is off. We need help. Connect said they should be providing services in the Galveston area. They are fully staffed now. Another customers who lives in Dickinson - why is there not a clear route from Clear Lake to Galveston- why there is not a main bus route. Another customer works on Sundays in Webster-he lives in League City. He needs assistance in getting to work. a customer is looking for service from Dickinson to Alvin. Mount Horizon is assisting us now. Both parents work

and it is difficult getting their daughter to the pick up location. I want my voice to be heard about funding. Once daughter graduates she wants to make sure transportation is more reliable and improves.

1.4 Goal: Address funding shortfalls in revenue in existing transit agencies through existing and alternative revenue sources.

(a) **Issue:** Development of additional revenue sources for transit

Workshop response: Local counties need to get involved. Speak with their local providers to let them know your needs. Work locally with your providers and officials. Funds are limited to a budget. It takes a partnership with different companies and partners. Local match monies can come from anyone. Opportunities for input: the coordinated plan meetings, Regional Planning have meetings. A customer mentioned you have to invest in what you want a return out of. Another customer asked how much does it cost to run these services and is it possible to get additional funding. Is there not room in the city budgets?

Additional comments

- An individual has a handicap son and he works. Years ago the transportation was good and it worked but funding went away. Now the service is worse. They had a taxi cab service for a while. Now he can only work part time at Whataburger. He lives in Texas City. The transportation has gotten worse for that population. There is something wrong. Every area is having the same problems. It needs to go back to something like Connect Plus.

3. Tyler Public Workshop, December 6, 2018

Attendance: 12 in person

1.1 Issue: Expand GoBus service linking Jacksonville and Tyler.

Workshop response: Communication and partnerships among providers. Work and school related trips, plus mid-day trips M-F. Some service on Saturdays, but may not be on Sunday for rural areas. Interest in expanding hours and coverage areas. Kicking around maybe Saturday (going to movies, going to events, more leisure), maybe two days per month or four days per month.

1.2 Issue: Establish service from communities outside Marshall to connect with Amtrak/GoBus service to/from VA Hospital (SHV).

Workshop response: Discussion at state level to address the areas that are more suburban, quasi rural and possibly losing service due to census changes. Small urban providers can't just add routes to accommodate that. Small urban and rural areas are "fighting" for 40 percent of the federal funding. It's not perfect, but we haven't left anybody stranded. Once they lose that service, may be other ways of getting funds (contribution on the local level, for example). Ways to reach out vary by individuals needing the service. Here is an anomaly that has a service that can reach small urban and rural. Private, for profit services available. How do we get in contact with them to see who's interested, how are they going to get paid? Coordination with county included in a plan. Connections between Amtrak and GoBus to get to the VA hospital, reaching out with veterans and homeless veterans with history of missed appointments. Challenges with using volunteers to drive as their vehicles may not be ADA adapted. Texas Veterans Initiative. Second largest VA hospital in the US and we're not able to provide service. DAV goes point to point, like a shuttle. Another opportunity to partner if someone can help get them from the vehicle to the door. ~ First and last mile...a fare is a fare is a fare...this group has met with the DFW Metroplex to look at their plan (Denton).

1.3 Issue: Establish intercity service between Palestine et al and Tyler.

Workshop response: Seasonal service in Palestine for Salvation Army trucks

1.4 Issue: Reduce "pick-up windows" for paratransit service for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Workshop response: Availability of PASS training is an issue. Getting qualified drivers is a major problem. We don't have a program to pre-certify. All of this costs money for a job they may or may not get. Coordinate with Chariot. Still a huge issue with delays in getting CDL tested and getting the equipment to the testing site in Kilgore). What about a uniform application, so that if you were part time, you could be on-call for another provider in the area? Interesting to see how deal with drug and alcohol requirements

1.5 Issue: Implement/expand regional travel training program to support both paratransit and fixed-route services

Workshop response: Want to see public systems offer the same amenities as private systems. Willing to share that with other providers. Have to catch up with the trending technologies.

1.6 Issue: Introduce non-cash fare options for GoBus (e.g., multi-ride passes).

Workshop response: Ability to buy online in advance one month at a time

1.7 Issue: Introduce same-day paratransit reservation scheduling for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Workshop response: We don't encourage it because it's hard to do. Nine times out of 10, the manifest is already packed. Can do next day.

1.8 Issue: Leverage local taxi companies and the emerging Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) to facilitate access to the traditional transit network (Longview, Tyler, GoBus).

Workshop response: Want to see public systems offer the same amenities as private systems. Willing to share that with other providers. Have to catch up with the trending technologies.

Additional comments

- Perception that services more limited than actually is. Giving away free rides. High schools have a transition program. Ride a school bus for all of these years and not able to drive themselves once they graduate. High schools good to partner. Make a deviated route to get to the school directly; introduce elementary, middle and high school students, to and from to register for school.

4. Bryan and Lufkin Districts Public Workshop, December 10, 2018

Attendance: 7 in person, 3 online

1.1 Goal: Improve demand response service

- (a) **Issue:** Shorten timing and scheduling

Workshop response: Brazos Transit (BTD) is checking on average queue time. Riders can schedule trips after hours/on weekends for service during regular hours. BTD is the first option for service, then Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living (BVCIL). BVCIL does night and weekend service. BTD can only book rides 7 days in advance even if it's for a regular work/school schedule. BTD subscription service is limited to 25% of trips. Paratransit not running the same hours as A&M shuttles, limits accessibility to school functions. There is a possible issue with getting confirmation with online booking.

- (b) **Issue:** weekend and after hours service

Workshop response: BVCIL as needed on call, BTD 6-6 M-F excluding holidays. Request for BTD evening and weekend service is common, people are referred to other services. A&M fixed route operates 7-midnight during the school year. Ride hailing services and local taxi companies could use BVCIL accessible vehicle if they complete the MOU. BVCIL has done outreach with local taxi. Alliance ambulance and Ground Shuttle are not accessible. Issues with transporting a service dog on a lift: dogs not allowed on lifts. Are A&M buses accessible? Coordinating communication on different services with the public for different trip locations/destinations.

1.2 Goal: Improve connectivity to interregional destinations for medical and other trips

- (a) **Issue:** health and human service transportation services difficult in places including (but not limited to): Palestine, Crockett, Huntsville, Houston, Giddings, Austin and Temple

Workshop response: Burlson, Madison, Grimes Health resource centers. BVCIL connects with Houston County, City of Calvert brings people in (Robertson Co). Leon County doesn't coordinate (BVT vehicle size is greater than they need, only volunteer driver); they have 5310 vehicles and funding from COG. Giddings and Palestine don't have connections. Leon County people go to Waco, Palestine, because that's closer. All of this is for dialysis. Not typically taking people to Austin. Service options for medical access declining in Crockett due to small hospital and doctors' office closures. BTD has Thursday trip from Crockett to Lufkin. No accessible airport access to Austin or Houston via Ground Shuttle.

1.3 Goal: Improve dialysis transportation

- (a) **Issue:** consistent and dependable dialysis appointment transportation is not feasible at any center

Workshop response: BTD and BVCIL coordinate service. Health and human services agencies provide their own transportation; case managers call BTD.

1.4 Goal: More volunteer drivers

- (a) **Issue:** concerns about handling passenger medical needs, limited funding, and the age of the driver population in relation to safety.

Workshop response: No agencies using volunteer drivers in attendance

1.5 Goal: Improve veteran transportation

- (a) **Issue:** If a patient is unable to enter the vehicle on their own ability, they are often unable to use the VA shuttle service

Workshop response: Tried to reach out to VA here to give them accessible vehicle, no response. Temple is closest VA.

1.6 Goal: Improve local funding support

- (a) **Issue:** The need for local funding of transit and transportation services will increase within the next five years, and will drastically increase in the next 25-50 years

Workshop response: Bryan-College Station will become large urban in the next census. Some counties do provide additional transportation funding support to these health resource and senior centers, on top of Brazos Valley Transportation Partnership (BVTP)-provided funds. MPO making this an issue; Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities has grant program that could fund projects. BTD could coordinate.

1.7 Goal: Promotion and public education

- (a) **Issue:** many services within the region go underutilized due to lack of promotion or lack of education of use.

Workshop response: Transit currently uses postcards, attending health fairs, chamber of commerce events, public functions, job fairs, student fairs, print advertising increased, website, mobile app, social media (facebook, twitter, snapchat).

- (b) **Issue:** Enhanced camaraderie between local planning entities, transportation and health providers, local government, and residents is a vital need within the region.

Workshop response: COG, MPO, TTI, outreach to residents. Scott & White have reached out to get training on the system. Senior centers also buy tickets.

1.8 Goal: Travel training

Workshop response: people have to call BVCIL to request a mobility assessment.

1.9 Goal: Create a coordinated partnership of transportation providers

- (a) **Issue:** Continue to promote and pursue funding for travel training and disability awareness classes for transportation drivers and riders.

Workshop response: Want to get taxi services on board

- (b) **Issue:** Identify and pursue funding mechanisms for paid skilled drivers for various services including health resource centers and veterans.

Workshop response: BTD can't compete with other industries for driver wages, can't recruit, trouble with driver retention. Not enough operational funding, CDL needs a challenge.

1.10 Goal: Promote and maximize utilization of available transportation resources

- (a) **Issue:** Establish a single source that would allow any organization with a client needing transportation services to book the use of the services of any organization providing transportation services, in addition to continuing the transportation resource guide

Workshop response: BVCIL and MPO working on this coordination plan. Software funded through 5310; coalition and meetings set up to begin this process. Issues with organizational missions not allowing service for different individual needs.

- (b) **Issue:** Coordinate with other regional councils regarding their Coordinated Transportation Plans to identify services of priority outside of the Brazos Valley of significance to local residents

Workshop response: COG not present to comment.

1.11 Goal: Eliminate gaps in transportation services

- (a) **Issue:** Developing new and sustainable workforce transportation programs and identify funding sources to continue these services past the initial start-up.

Workshop response: Sanderson Farms 200 employees short; would need to fund 100% to make it viable. Popular when gas prices are high, fine line with not being charter service.

- (b) **Issue:** Work with Brazos Transit, other transportation providers and community leaders to encourage and develop the possible enhancements of services in the Brazos Valley Region.

Workshop response: Just launched 2 new routes, express on Texas Ave every 30 minutes. New HEB, Lowes, hospitals in south College Station.

- (c) **Issue:** Develop enhancement of service for users with frequent medical treatment related transportation needs.

Workshop response: Discussion about getting to Houston medical center. Services for children available (Houston/Dallas). If you don't qualify for Medicaid you're stuck.

Additional comments

- Potential for drivers to provide umbrellas so that motorized chair users can get to bus when it's raining?

5. Waco District Public Workshop, December 11, 2018

Attendance: 19 in person, 2 online

- 1.1 Goal: Encourage coordination and collaboration by seeking innovative models in planning and delivery of transportation services**

Workshop response: Need more coordination: HOTCOG. No representatives of adult day centers, medical centers in the room right now to collaborate? Connecting between service areas? Set between transit districts.

- 1.2 Goal: Maximize connectivity and use of resources between various transportation agencies, public service agencies, and stakeholders**

Workshop response: Bell County: Scott & White tried to partner with different agencies. HOCTILC (Belton) working with transportation, Uber and Lyft. The HOP paratransit in Temple-Belton had to restrict to 3/4 mile rule (funding issue). Groups are communicating, lack of funding. HOP used to have ADA service citywide. Between 3/4 mile and edge of city limits is the new gap. Also gap for those who do not qualify for medical transportation assistance. As cities expand limits, transit service area can't expand at the same time. HOTCOG: "no man's land" in urbanized area outside small urban service area, not funded for rural service to cover. Falls County: Medicaid available. Accessible formats for visually impaired consumers. A way for automated calls for trip notices? How about trip delays?

- 1.3 Goal: Support multimodal transportation (Bell, Coryell, and Hamilton)**

Workshop response: Need but not a priority.

- 1.4 Goal: Expand the public transit network utilizing both fixed route and demand response services, maximize network efficiency through the use of intelligent transportation systems and travel demand management strategies.**

Workshop response: Assistive technology, no trip coordination between outlying counties and HOTCOG exists now.

- 1.5 Goal: Eliminate duplication of services (Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone, and McLennan)**

Workshop response: Nursing homes have their own service in some cases, DAV vans in Waco area (not accessible). VA transports from Waco to Temple. Hospitals will arrange transportation (CTCOG area). Bosque to VA, bus to Temple. Increased need for more accessible transportation.

- 1.6 Goal: Enhancement of safety and security measures which impact the public transportation network. (Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone, and McLennan)**

Workshop response: Safe passenger conduct (individual rider behavior). A lot of driver training. System rules enforced. Disruptive animals. Training dogs to ride on Saturdays (Hill Country). Eligibility: service animals have to show ID. Emotional support animals don't require certification.

1.7 Goal: Enhance public awareness (Bell, Coryell, and Hamilton)

Workshop response: Falls Co: looking for more resources on how to communicate. Website and phone are best sources of information for the HOP for scheduling department, customer service. People with various issues communicating over phone/website need resources (people can be intimidated or overwhelmed). Screen readers/speech to text issues. 211 has transportation information and can get the person directed to services.

6. Laredo District Public Workshop, December 12, 2018

Goals and Issues directly from the 2015 SWART Regional Coordination Plan.

Attendance: 4 in person, 3 online

1.1 Goal: Increase coordination

- (a) **Objective:** Expand weekend service; Continue coordination with local area nutrition centers involving recreational weekend trips

Workshop response: Consistent, services for dialysis and those traveling to work. Small rural areas shut down on weekend. Saturday services in Eagle Pass. Coordination with nutrition centers continues.

- (b) **Objective:** Establish regularly scheduled intercity services, particularly into Uvalde for college students and into Kerrville for veterans. Coordinate with Greyhound, and continue publicity efforts to the general public about existing services

Workshop response: Greyhound services are minimal. Have an agreement with Southwest Texas Jr. College to transport students to the junior college. Access students and transport them to a lot of the locational programs. We have reached out to Greyhound. Demand fell by the wayside during the two years there were intercity services. Difficult to gather interest again. Also agreement with Laredo College in Webb County. Best kept secret in every rural community. As much as we put information out there, a lot of people don't realize we're here. Looking into mobility management. This is an avenue we'd like to look at. A person who can be out there and cover the marketing and dissemination of information. Try notice on utility bills (used in Waco). CAA agency, through their other departments, we have flyers of our schedule (fixed and demand response) services are offered. We visited the majority of the medical facilities in town, giving them a copy of applications, and our website. A lot of coordination between Del Rio and facilities in town. Social media, whatever it takes. Attend interagency meetings and talk about events going on and get to know what each other does. Coordinate with our local COG, attend veteran meetings, job fairs, health fairs, national nights out. Community centers located throughout the counties (rural areas).

- (c) **Objective:** Coordinate with Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino, MHDD Centers, Eagle Pass Medical Facilities, Middle Rio Grande Development Council, and EFS Companies

Workshop response: Have reached out to Eagle Ford, but not a lot of luck. Casino actually covering a route. There is a fare the rider pays and the Casino matches it. Rider is given discounts for meals, etc. Our ridership is almost 100 percent seniors or disabled. Working with MHDD to target mental health population. Not a lot of luck with southern counties.

1.2 Goal: Improve training and technology

- (a) **Objective:** Improve Travel Training and Travel Ambassador Program

Workshop response: Travel training, do as much as we can on the webinars. Travel itself, not so much. Train the riders on how to use the service, falls to resources and that's where mobility management piece. Have an ADA riders who sits on the regional committee and serves as the ambassador for riding. We coordinate her transportation. Everyone knows who she is in our area. bachelors and master's by riding SWART (now working on PhD). Having resources to dedicated someone to travel training. Very difficult for us not having that type of resources. 96 percent of my clients are elderly with disabilities. Don't have anyone to encourage to do something like this. Partnering with assisted living on travel training.

(b) **Objective:** Update/Improve bus technology

Workshop response: Like to see 'where's my ride' app. Like to see dashcam. Cameras to protect drivers, cameras to protect riders. But don't have cameras on the front. Technology issue always comes down to cost. Our riders are not going to have a cell phone with an app on it. Have automated calls to remind riders of their upcoming rides. But which language do we do it in?

(c) **Objective:** Improve financial management and recordkeeping

Workshop response: Still falls with technology, being able to tie everything together. Electronic timekeeping for the drivers is tied into financial software. Electronic purchase order helps operationally.

Additional comments

- Best year ever for us to receive local funds. It's a start. They're aware of us and our need for their assistance. Dedicated source of funding is something we've been working on. So many other things that we work on, it's hard to concentrate. Dedicated, alternative source of funding to gather that cash match for our federal dollars.
- Utilize all of our fleet to service. A lot of us don't have vehicles purchased out of the 5310. For us to able to afford maintenance on other vehicles that provide 5310 service. A federal issue, but still a venting issue for us.

7. Dallas and Fort Worth Districts Public Workshop, December 13, 2018

Attendance: 17 in person

1.1 Goal: Fare affordability

Workshop response: Fixed income and families with low income make up a good portion of our ridership.

Sometimes the cost of a two-way trip may be more than is affordable for individuals within the community, Somervell County.

1.2 Goal: Need in areas with no service, need to increase existing service

(a) **Issue:** Medical (especially VA), work, education

Workshop response: We take a lot of people to the VA from all of our service area. We try to make that as much of a priority. An issue of availability. In a good situation that we're helping to solve that issue. Coordination with DeSoto and Hutchins, in their industry areas. Rural areas tried to address employers asking for help. Service times don't address that. Kaufman and Terrell industry areas. With higher education, again, it's that rural area. We had a fixed route to the junior college in Terrell, but it wasn't used. In other areas do well because colleges are in city limits and we are able to access that. We try to be cognizant of that when we're planning those routes. Had several meetings with Navarro College about a fixed route. Right now, trying to figure that part out.

1.3 Goal: Need to simplify regional trips

(a) **Issue:** Across county borders

Workshop response: Service providers coordinate regional trips when needed.

1.4 Goal: Need to centralize provider and resource information

(a) **Issue:** a no-wrong-door approach to accessing transit or information about available transit

Workshop response: We feel like 211 sometimes. We get a call and try to get them to call other areas. We applied for FDA's accessibility grant. One-call, one-click that helps coordinate in the entire region is the ultimate achievement. Hard to keep going from this person to that person.

1.5 Goal: Education on how to use systems

Workshop response: When they call in, we spend five minutes telling them how to ride the bus. ~ Refer to DART travel training if someone needs assistance. Public Transit Services: we have worked with Disability of Southwest Services to educate some of their end users on how to ride public transportation. Work with them one-on-one training to board and disembark.

(a) **Issue:** Limited funding

Workshop response: We changed our business model so that the cities match the portion. We've been in the area for 40 years. They knew they needed to provide transportation. There are different ways of thinking. Four years. Transit system gets funding from Somervell and Hood counties and the cities Granbury. City of Granbury also gets a discount on fuel.

1.6 Goal: Improved access to urban centers

Workshop response: Strategic plan. Us getting out and doing outreach to figure out what the needs are. We've been out and about trying to figure this out. Coordination with organization in Waxahachie (intellectual disabilities), done trial runs. Don't want to step out too far. Huge planning process. Can't just go do.

1.7 Goal: Improve awareness of available services

Workshop response: A lot of times community turns out and we explain, here is what we do. Rotary meetings, town hall meetings (work best). We put vehicles in the parade. We have relationships with county judges in 10 counties, mayors and local officials. Being able to meet with people one on one. We go to a lot of meetings with the vehicles that we drive. For us to get out and explain who we are is very helpful. Speak one-on-one. Grassroots marketing is what is working for us. Social media. Facebook is so inexpensive and we can do a lot of targeted marketing with it. Tried Facebook advertising, but it wasn't very effective. Still have website. Brochures, meetings, presentations. Public outreach, presentations--community health fairs, VA clinics, senior centers, anyone who needs presentations. Starting social media soon.

8. Paris and Atlanta Districts Public Workshop, December 13, 2018

Attendance: 18 in person, 2 online

1.1 Goal: Connectivity between population centers and rural areas

- (a) **Issue:** Medical Appointments

Workshop response: Since launch of fixed route, haven't had to turn anyone down. This includes all of the major medical destinations in the community. Person New to the community: At Walmart two days ago, saw 16 handicapped people together with their bags. A bus pulled up and they were so excited. In my heart, when I'm in that situation I hope someone gives me a ride to Walmart so I can talk and have an avenue to get to what we need. We are blessed to have this in my community.

- (b) **Issue:** Shopping & social services

Workshop response: Issues with having to turn down rides because we're overbooked. Trying to put more hours and drivers out there but there are challenges. A lot of that has been corrected. We do have the problem with overbooking, we're in such demand and we don't have the ability maybe to take them that day, but we try to get them the next day. Working with Meals on Wheels. We just don't have enough manpower to service the demand we have.

- (c) **Issue:** Access from one end of the service area to another

Workshop response: Don't have drivers that go from one service area to another. It's really a coordination of resources. Pull a driver out of service for a day for that one trip is problematic. Also get requests from Texarkana wanting to go to Mt. Pleasant.

1.2 Goal: Expand commuter service

- (a) **Issue:** Job access to major employers in Texarkana, Paris, Sulphur Springs, Mt. Pleasant, and Mount Vernon

Workshop response: Lowes established a partnership with distribution in Mt. Vernon. Contract began in July (pilot through December). They pulled out a little early due to low ridership. It is something that we may revisit in the future. At this time, it didn't take off the way we anticipated. Marketing on their end wasn't as on-point as they thought it would be. They had done surveys. They went into it believing the riders would be there. Everything coordinated very well. Ridership just wasn't there. We had a positive working experience with the distribution center. Maybe lack of marketing. United Way has a request for fixed bus route to Kimberly Clark. Also have two large plants here. Fixed bus gets near there, but not to there. There is definite interest in that service for their workers. Much of the larger employers are on the loop around Paris, while the fixed routes are in the downtown area. This has been a goal of the fixed route here. People take private taxis to the plants here in town. Anyone who has called, we've provided through paratransit, but it has to be during regular working hours. Capital Metro was experiencing similar to what we're having now. Everyone thought a great idea, but no one wanted to ride it. Sociological mindset of Texans, I want control in my car. The other is the complicated bus

system. There's an educational aspect to it. This is too hard, I'd rather call my friend. Set up table at social services fair coming up.

- (b) **Issue:** Commuting for higher education

Workshop response: Discussion about Paris and A&M campus in Commerce? Older people might use the service for continuing education.

1.3 **Goal: Expanded service within rural counties**

- (a) **Issue:** sheltered workshops, medical appointments, senior meal centers, job access (including individuals with disabilities)

Workshop response: Biggest issue is that our clients are physically unable to make it to the stops and from the stops to their homes because of physical disabilities. Added expense for the paratransit service is an issue. Stop close to her house, but she had to walk in rain and bad weather. Perhaps we could reach out to nursing home facilities, and on days when the weather is bad the nursing home bus could meet us there and take the riders back to their facilities. Coordination is tricky with private facilities.

1.4 **Goal: expanded hours of operation**

- (a) **Issue:** weekend service, evening service for fixed routes for job access and school

Workshop response: People able to get to jobs more easily, but finish shifts after buses quit running. Only figure one-way to get to and from work, but be better if run later at night. Extend hours of operation to existing service, versus that "commuter" service timed at shift change and geared more specifically toward that.

1.5 **Goal: access to destinations outside the service area**

- (a) **Issue:** Veterans transportation to Longview/Tyler & Bonham clinics and Shreveport hospital

Workshop response: A real issue with veterans being able to get to Bonham. Once they get to Bonham, there's a shuttle that gets to the facility in Dallas and back. Quandry: do you leave a driver over there since it's outside your service area? How do you meet this demand and fix this need and still do it somewhat efficiently? Just started tracking our veterans. We're working with our transit in Denton to get some of the veterans from Denton area to Bonham VA. Coordinate to get veterans from Paris to Bonham VA. Shreveport VA to address problem of getting the word out that the service is available. Recently announced our service to veterans and active military is free. Any trips they take. Look in to partnership with them so they can share some information with us regarding people they know are coming there from our area and educating schedulers so they can inform the riders. Exploring other ways to get riders to VA. Level of enthusiasm now is something we haven't seen before. In Bonham VA, we try to schedule them all within a day or two and schedule two days. Schedule all together so they can go, maybe once a week and all work together and go together. Coordinate it all so we know exactly who to take. "VA shuttle." A lot of people working together including VA and doctors.

- (b) **Issue:** Greyhound Connect service

Workshop response: Ridership is not what we'd hoped for. We were asked to re-evaluate hours and days, and essentially everything on the program.

(c) **Issue:** Texarkana Housing Authority

Workshop response: Some facilities managed by housing authority asking for better route access.

(d) **Issue:** Pilgrim's Pride

Workshop response: In Mt. Pleasant, overlapping shifts in the different areas, but they do employ high population of Spanish speaking individuals and a lot of them are transit dependent.

1.6 Goals: Barriers

(a) **Issue:** awareness of service

Workshop response: One thing that has helped is replacing vehicles and are being branded and that helps recognition and awareness. Fixed routes, the shelters that have just gone up are making it even more obvious there is something going on here in town will help a lot. United Way working closely with social service agencies so case managers understand the service so they can explain it to the people they're working with.

(b) **Issue:** Education: who can access, how it's funded, where it operates

Workshop response: People are more aware now that we are transporting and building ridership again after service being discontinued. Promotion of services.

9. Austin District Public Workshop, December 17, 2018

Attendance: 11 in person, 2 online

1.1 Goal: Preserve and expand transportation services for public and human service agencies, especially those services that meet the critical needs of the transportation disadvantaged

- (a) **Issue:** Service outside the transit system service area – both the Capital Metro and the CARTS. Still many unserved areas. Round Rock fixed-route, Buda, Pflugerville and Georgetown are planning for service.

Workshop response: Guadalupe County area comes to doctor in San Marcos (Hays County) because it is much closer than San Antonio, Seguin (Guadalupe County). Had a patient who didn't come to dialysis because didn't have transportation. Similar with Lockhart in Caldwell County. CARTS doesn't go to Kyle unless you schedule it. It's not through CARTS. Another company is doing the scheduling and paying. Kyle cancelled its contract with CARTS. It's based on where the point of origin is, not the destination. Contact Alamo Regional Transit in San Antonio for Residences in San Marcos that are Guadalupe County. Kyle opted out of the CARTS program and should be served by CapMetro if they want to be served by CapMetro. On certain dates Caldwell County can transfer to San Marcos. Our doctor (a specialist) is not in the office those days of the week. When doctors limit patient's time, if it doesn't fit the patients' schedule, it creates an issue. Doctors offices contact us and tell us specific openings. A lot of times we don't know about it. Trying to changes our schedules based on the feedback, unfortunately we don't get the feedback. Completion of sidewalks in the city. So many sidewalks in the city that are hard to get through in a wheelchair. Service a lot of clients in senior community where right across the highway is the shopping center. Connectivity to a bus shelter to get to the grocery store. What options available to qualify for? Coordinate with the government body and they would apply. They would need to follow the environmental guidelines. Grants function on a reimbursement basis. Safe Routes to School a possible source of funds in certain areas.

1.2 Goal: Maintain and improve the quality and safety of transportation services for the public.

- (a) **Issue:** concerns about the growing senior population and human service transportation needs in the rural areas of the region.

Workshop response: Safety in transit. Problem when I would ride with a quadriplegic, the mechanism is locking but it's still not that secure. It still moves. Some of my clients have the power chairs, some have the manual chairs. The equipment in the bus to lock and secure is not always compatible with the chairs. The manual wheelchair rim is different from the power chair. No matter how much they tighten it, they still move. Gravity and the equipment is just not safe. If I'm not there to hold her wheelchair, she feared she would fall over. Important part of the maintenance is to have something to secure the wheelchair. CARTS response: True concern. WE make lots of modifications, but it is a concern. Our drivers utilize the equipment as it is intended for the bus. When order the wheelchair, tell them they're taking transit and they may provide yellow hooks.

Public response: chairs are not replaced often. Deters people from taking that service because they don't have someone to accompany them.

1.3 Goal: Secure formal state and local agency agreements and identify and address funding, regulatory, programmatic, attitudinal and geographic barriers to implement coordinated transportation in the Capital Area.

- (a) **Issue:** Sponsorships and partnerships – public-private partnership opportunities on a small scale. large retailers have (and continue to) support specific routes that provide access to their facilities. Examples include the former HEB shuttle operated by Capital Metro one day per week from East Austin (and a large residential tower for seniors) to a large HEB. This was paid for by HEB. In other parts of the country Walmart, United Supermarket and other chains sponsor service.

Workshop response: Would this be a private company to help cover the expense of an additional route, or cover the expense of an additional place for people to catch the bus? Could be either. Who would reach out to H-E-B? Definitely ask the clients to fill out the 5310 survey. Transit service providers coordinate with the private company. Transportation providers apply for the grant. CARTS picks up seniors as financed by the city, 4 apartment complexes participate. Get dropped off at Walmart, H-E-B but waiting 45 minutes for a bus to get back home.

1.4 Goal: Increase public awareness of mobility options and improve access to transportation services for the public.

- (a) **Issues:**
- i. Creating a one-stop information center where people can get information on various services
 - ii. Providing centralized leadership and assisting Regional Transportation Coordination Council with partnerships
 - iii. Assisting non-profit agencies with grant applications, as available
 - iv. Helping to secure sponsorships and partnerships
 - v. Coordinating land use issues and efforts
 - vi. Mentoring/education – with human service transportation providers
 - vii. Coordinating training
 - viii. Coordinating maintenance
 - ix. Coordinating/consolidating transportation resources
 - x. Coordinating volunteer networks
 - xi. Conducting planning efforts

Workshop response: I have a working knowledge of what CARTS can do to meet the needs of my clients. I know who to call at CARTS, "Do you provide this? Can you do this for my client?" Or can you provide me with someone who can provide that service. San Marcos has done a great job with a campaign to launch the buses. A matter of working with the limitations of seniors and individuals with disabilities and work schedules. When I have to use the scheduled buses (regular lines) I always make sure to see what the weather forecast is, I can't use half the bus stops if the weather is bad. Stops are not accessible to the ramps. How do I get there? Two right by the

hospital are that way. City conducts open forum for these issues when update public transportation plan. A lot of bus stops are just bus stops (no benches, shelters or accessibility). We must have accessible bus stops. Period. Daily we get calls asking about bus routes (seniors) and not everyone knows about CARTS.

Additional comments

- Confusion. Too confusing to even get involved in. Too many agencies, too many schedules. I don't want to describe the problem to someone who doesn't understand. There are some places where they have a mandatory, understandable language. Any way to simplify and make more comprehensible. The ideal system would be like an apartment complex. Ideally you would have a medical system, where there was coordination between the medical providers and transportation providers.

10. Wichita Falls and Childress Districts Public Workshop, January 7, 2019

Attendance: 6 in person

1.1 Goal: Increase the membership of human services agencies and providers that serves low income, elderly and disabled participating in and with the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning Committee.

- (a) **Strategy:** Members of the Committee will contact agencies by phone, email and other methods identify and encourage organizations that serve the low income, elderly and disabled membership and participation by agencies throughout the region.

Workshop response: no comments

1.2 Goal: Develop tools or systems by which human services agencies can better guide clients in accessing public transportation services and defining gaps and needs in services.

- (a) **Strategy:** What tools or systems do we need to develop in order that human services agencies have better access to transportation services and a means to communicate needs for service.

Workshop response: Rolling Plains trying to work with VA. Medicaid: 1-800 number in Austin books the trips with Health and human services. Contract with AAA. Randall Wellness daycare in Seymour. Lots of nursing homes, rehab centers, Boys & Girls Club. Wichita Falls (WF): After hours for Work Services Corp: home to job 6pm-1am @ Shepard Airforce Base. Conversation with Work Services and developed a plan. Under contract, WS supplements cost. Open to public in February, \$3 a trip. Send out surveys to agencies, hold public hearings. Demand for late hours service #1.

1.3 Goal: Increase public awareness of the services to the low income, elderly and disabled populations and to be able to more readily respond to gaps and needs in the region.

- (a) **Strategy:** Committee members will review internal methods, processes and procedures used to communicate with transportation providers. An internal assessment of what processes are working and advancements or changes can be made to help improve public awareness primarily to low income, elderly and disabled populations of services while working to address anticipated needs and gaps within the region.

Workshop response: TV spots, early morning (planning every other month). Called drs offices, United Way, VA nurses. WF newspaper expensive and not a big draw. Social media for 5310. Radio ads for Veterans ran for 6 weeks. Word of mouth. In person at congregate meals.

1.4 Goal: Provide user-friendly information in appropriate formats to customers, caregivers, social services, governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations about the programs, both public transit and specialized services, which are available to the citizens of North Texas.

- (a) **Strategy:** The Committee encourages all participating transit providers to make this one of their top priorities when developing annual budgets and programming federal and state funding. All documentation, signage, audio, and video sources of information should be in accessible formats that communicate the mission, goals, and objectives of the transit agency.

Workshop response: Drivers have a language sheet, meeting Title VI requirements. Buses are English & Spanish. No real Spanish media outlets. Accessible website? Nothing in braille.

1.5 Goal: Develop services and programs that improve the reliability of existing public transportation services including those services that have a direct impact to low income, elderly and disabled populations. This strategy emphasizes coordination of services, maintenance of regular schedules, and development of facilities that allows efficient access and transition of services that promote greater personal mobility.

- (a) **Strategy:** The Committee encourages all Nortex area transit providers to research, develop, and implement facility and equipment maintenance plans that will promote the State of Good Repair for all of their public transit capital items. Regular routine maintenance of bus facilities and equipment ensures efficient and productive scheduling of the assets used to serve transit customers primarily, low income, elderly and disabled populations. A properly maintained fleet greatly improves the coordination of services across the Nortex planning area thereby promoting the mobility choices of the individual consumer.

Workshop response: nothing coming out of Ft Worth, some from the west. Calls directly from other providers on a case by case basis. Rolling Plains & WF.

1.6 Goal: Develop and implement new programs and services that provide additional transportation options and meet the needs of all citizens including, low income, elderly and disabled of North Texas. This strategy emphasizes the reduction of barriers to transportation through creative approaches, which will help people access major activity and employment centers. This strategy will work to discover and meet identified needs and gaps in services, and to provide a clearinghouse for development of new and improved services.

- (a) **Strategy:** Committee members will review existing programs and services as well as research other services/methods and submit recommendations to organizations that then can provide additional choices for consumers including, low income, elderly and disabled. These actions will assist in reducing barriers to those choices, will enable people to find jobs, go to work, attend school, visit their doctor, and live better lives all around. The Committee will continue to work with NORTEX, transit providers, and recipients of mobility services to identify needs and gaps within the service area.

Workshop response: Wichita Falls considering mobility management

11. San Angelo District Public Workshop, January 8, 2019

Attendance: 16 in person

1.1 Need: Scheduling - More frequent and convenient stops and destinations with consistent run times.

Workshop response: Need connections/better transfer locations on Rt 2 and Rt 1. Now 6-9 blocks away.

Downtown. Can only change buses at depot. One way loops. Need accessible bus stops: sidewalks, curb cuts, shelter from heat and weather, benches. Safety issues. Nothing in subdivision plans for fixed route or demand response. Nothing at commercial developments.

1.2 Need: Awareness - Increase public information and awareness of transit services

Workshop response: Friend doesn't have the internet. Without online service, it's hard to access options. No label on buses to identify, no ID on routes. No displays of maps and routes in public places at supermarkets, etc. Need to identify which is paratransit, which is VA, so visually impaired can tell.

1.3 Need: Accessibility - More accessibility for transit dependent populations not being served

Workshop response: Person would have to walk 2.5 miles to get to fixed route, areas without a lot of coverage. Rear lifts take more time. Reliability issues. Issues with new steps on buses being too hard to use.

1.4 Need: Seniors - Seek partnerships with human service agencies and improve awareness and access to transit services for the senior population in the region

Workshop response: Regional meeting: agencies need to get info to case managers to consumers. Need brochures of what vehicles look like and which ones provide service. Rider orientation, travel training. MHMR does bus rider training for their clients only. Working with VA now to locate the bus stop closely and safely. No access from VA to mall.

1.5 Need: Capacity - Increase vehicles and services in rural areas; enable more intra-county and intra-city service.

Workshop response: Reverse: not as many riders as before. On routes 4, 5, 1, afternoon runs are crowded. Not enough buses in the city, long waits. Dream: 15 minute runs. Waiting 1 hour now.

1.6 Need: Appointments - Improve appointment procedures and scheduling in demand-response services; resolve issues over scheduling Medicaid and other priority riders.

Workshop response: MHMR sees issue. Needs more flexibility in scheduling. Hap app for scheduling at the doctor's office and dialysis centers can cancel trips. Need off line options for information. Social workers help. Do health care providers give information? Some ask if they need a ride but don't give information on how to access

1.7 Need: Low vehicle access - Improve awareness and access to transit services by regional residents lacking access to vehicles

Workshop response: People not knowing.

1.8 Need: Uninsured - Improve awareness and access to transit services for medical purposes by medically uninsured residents in the region

Workshop response: Need to inform people that they don't need Medicaid to get rides. Need help funding for people who are uninsured/waiting for list.

1.9 Need: Low income - Improve awareness and access to transit services for low income residents of the region

Workshop response: Ways for service providers to pay for trips for those who can't afford.

1.10 Need: Disabilities - Improve awareness and access to transit services for the disabled residents of the region

Workshop response: Getting hospitals involved, having them ask if patients need rides. Need partnerships between city and other providers. Other places use ride hailing systems to transport patients.

1.11 Need: Worker utilization - Increase utilization of transit services for the trip to/from work

Workshop response: Hours are good for regular hours work shifts. Working early or late makes it hard. No service on Sundays. Restaurant workers. Church to restaurant service not an option. Low income workers. 7-7 shift at Shannon, especially with parking issues. Angelo State evening access.

Additional comments

- Safety concerns
- CVT working toward half hour service. City has not increased funding. Need to double or triple funding to cover.

12. Odessa and El Paso Districts Public Workshop, January 8, 2019

Attendance: Odessa 7, 6 online

1.12 Goal: Improve public awareness

- (a) **Strategy:** Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to be aired on local television and radio stations and/or printed in local newspapers, social media

Workshop response: Project Amistad: monitors & wifi for PSAs on buses. EZ Rider trying to ramp up social media, bus wraps, benches

- (b) **Strategy:** Provide information to local agencies (clinics, colleges, hospitals, senior centers, veteran centers, public schools, etc.)

Workshop response: Amistad: As NEMT in contact with medical. Veterans qualify under 5310, students receive rides for school, handled by mobility manager.

- (c) **Strategy:** Direct mail the general public, including senior citizens and individuals with disabilities, either via newsletters, fliers, or inserted into utility bills that are sent to area households.

Workshop response: Mailing surveys (1800) to existing customers. Amistad: existing client surveys, quality inspections in field and on board surveys.

- (d) **Strategy:** Tickets/passes should be sold at multiple outlets including aboard the buses

Workshop response: EZ Rider at HEB, colleges, city halls, on buses. Looked into mobile ticketing app. Amistad: fare due on ride.

- (e) **Strategy:** providing opportunities to train citizens on how to use the system, focusing on training provided to persons with disabilities and senior citizens.

Workshop response: EZ Rider: planning a training video online. El Paso and Amistad: partnered with Volar to train people how to ride (also fixed route). Volar: persons with disabilities, coordinated with Sun Metro and Amistad to provide training.

- (f) **Strategy:** Drivers should be trained on how to assist the elderly, blind, disabled, and non-verbal riders.

Workshop response: EZ Rider does driver training, working w/ Midland Fire Dept. Amistad leadership team are PASS certified. El Paso: not just drivers, every employee receives ADA sensitivity training, anyone who comes into contact with the public

- (g) **Strategy:** Route maps should be permanently affixed to each bus so passengers can have a better knowledge of the areas served.

Workshop response: Amistad demand response trips, try to limit amount of time passenger is on the bus

1.13 Permian Basin Goal: Facilitate the expansion of transportation services to meet the needs of more clients.

- (a) **Strategy:** Conduct a study

Workshop response: No development. No funding for operational analysis. Riders want New Freedom type service but funding for after hours service is limited now.

- (b) **Strategy:** Entities need to develop relationships with doctors' offices and clinics to ensure client appointment times are in accordance with the transit service hours, especially for senior citizens or persons with disabilities

Workshop response: EZ Rider works with dialysis, not other medical. WTO works primarily with dialysis. El Paso same. ELP centers considering going 24/7. Paratransit: agencies and employment centers who have multiple passengers have a link to the scheduling system with full info and trip status.

- (c) **Strategy:** talking to businesses along the routes about sponsoring a stop for improvements in exchange for advertisements at the stop or on the buses

Workshop response: EZ rider in process, have reached out.

1.14 Goal: Non traditional services

- (a) **Strategy:** alternative providers: include taxi cab companies, UBER, and Silver Star Transportation; potential for car share or volunteer drivers for dialysis trips

Workshop response: El Paso has tried to partner with ride hailing but Drug & Alcohol compliance an issue. El Paso has Checker Cars, have to schedule 24 hours in advance.

1.15 Permian Basin Goal: Develop and market a centralized information system regarding transportation for transit-related requests among urban and rural providers.

- (a) **Strategy:** Begin phased approach by creating a simple webpage with agency information and links to stakeholder websites and social media pages.

Workshop response: USDOT project funded El Paso app for information warehouse for services and transportation, restaurants, shops. El Paso: ways for PWD to identify accessible paths, no current database for accessible navigation.

- (b) **Strategy:** Upon funding allocations, consultants can be hired to develop an interactive site so citizens can schedule journeys from a variety of providers, provide payment for the services, and print necessary documents to complete the requested trip.

Workshop response: Only Greyhound service. WTO limited by amount of providers. Amistad limited by boundary. Can only send one vehicle to El Paso, high demand. EZ Rider: outside boundaries a small distance will take them, also coordinates with WTO. Interested in doing more.

1.16 El Paso goal: Encourage use of fixed route service to reduce costs and redirect funds to extending service times.

Workshop response: Volar trainings: 1/4 of consumers trained use fixed route, others resistant to change

1.17 El Paso goal: Development of Targeted Programs to Address Special Needs

- (a) **Strategy:** Continuation of existing programs, especially access for healthcare, employment, and after hours needs

Workshop response: Dialysis use/abuse of paratransit system. Demanding more service, should be providing funding. Countywide transportation system. No action on report.

13. Lubbock District Public Workshop, January 9, 2019

Attendance: 17 in person

1.1 Goal: Increase public outreach and education on transportation services in the South Plains region.

- (a) **Strategy:** Implement Education & Outreach Collaborative on Transportation Resources in the South Plains—8 transportation trainings in the region.

Workshop response: SPAG extremely successful. 5 so far, very popular and well received. Demand for having on a more frequent basis. These are needed because of HHS turnover and population growth. There are presentations from regional providers. Increases in questions and ridership

1.2 Goal: Continue to improve the coordination and communication between public and private transportation providers.

- (a) **Strategy:** Develop geographic tools for a visualization of the 'no transit service areas'

Workshop response: Citibus has TxDOT funded operational analysis, RFP now out to hire consultant to identify gaps. March-April timeframe

- (b) **Strategy:** Coordinate meetings with the SPRCTAC and public and private providers and use geographic tools to arrive at collaborative solutions on how to best close 'no service' gaps in Lubbock.

Workshop response: from a Rider who uses fixed & Demand Response and works with individuals with disabilities: professionals w/ disabilities have expensive commutes. Need to improve service area past 3/4 mile because of clinic and medical service locations. It costs over \$100 a week to commute. Can't get rides to medical or jobs. Service for blind: who to talk to for what services are available?

1.3 Goal: Increased the accessibility of transit services to veterans and low-income individuals.

- (a) **Strategy:** Frequently attend Veterans Resource Coordinated Group meetings to become aware and knowledgeable of veteran's issues in the community

Workshop response: Veteran organizations: Getting picked up in counties and in Lubbock getting to VA and other locations for treatment is too expensive.

1.4 Goal: Increase the accessibility of transit services to seniors and disabled individuals.

- (a) **Strategy:** Seek partnerships with human service agencies and pursue applicable funding sources for trip subsidies.

Workshop response: Agreement with CIL funded through 5310, trying to get more service outside of transit's usual routes. Need a meeting with those in the room and other orgs to increase those buses and service.

- (b) **Strategy:** Ongoing coordination between agencies & elderly residents. Communicate through traditional mail when possible to ensure accurate messages are communicated in comfortable manner

Workshop response: SPAG: 211 has done marketing pushes in every county to get out the information. Mail, call, email. Expanding mail to phone information.

- (c) **Strategy:** Develop coordinated transportation resource document for public education

Workshop response: General agreement. What about providing bus travel training for individuals with disabilities? Liferun is developing a small training. None offered by Citibus. Citibus is looking to develop more travel training. Done 3-4 a month. Contacting with organizations to meet their needs.

- (d) **Strategy:** Develop map of accessible bus stops

Workshop response: Not all stops are accessible. Need to expand accessibility and have a database of accessible spots. Not all drivers are respectful of letting people off at locations are more accessible than stop. Drivers will pass by.

- (e) **Strategy:** Develop universal ride scheduler and voucher app

Workshop response: Would love this. Superregion of west Texas has been working on this for years. Conflicts between software providers in communications. Some is happening on a small scale between Citibus and Spartan on a limited case by case basis.

Additional comments

- Demand for service would increase if consumer friendly services were improved. Drivers not showing good customer service. Not as accessible to consumer as it is to the driver. Calling in complaints isn't effective. Discourages use of transportation.
- Hours available need to be expanded, starting earlier and running later. Making system more user friendly in Lubbock. More jobs in outskirts, need access.
- Individuals with intellectual disabilities confused by difference in service times from every half hour to every hour depending on times of day.

14. Amarillo District Public Workshop, January 9, 2019

Attendance: 6 in person, 3 online

- 1.1 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Transportation services are being dropped since there are not enough clients utilizing services. Clients are not aware of Transportation services available.**

Workshop response: Amarillo city transit: don't have funds to market services after route changes. Can get word through the city. TxDOT has funded an app to help reach out. PRPC has new contract for app. Bridging urban and rural service gap. 3/4 through the project, it's right before testing app now. TBD rural: PCS is part of the project. CORD and VA involved.

- 1.2 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Transportation services are not available in all areas. Often there are people needing to go to economic centers on dates that a transit doesn't provide service.**

Workshop response: PCS: Huge area, spread thin. Service may not meet convenience for riders, service to some areas does not run every day. Amarillo: master plan process, redid all routes. Highest need/request: evening service. End at 7pm.

- 1.3 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Longer hours and weekend services are needed, but due to constrictions and lack of staff, it is not possible. Expanded transportation service hours are needed in some areas for traveling to work, school, and recreational opportunities**

Workshop response: CORD: only running for 15 months. Works holidays, mornings, evenings, and Saturday. Amarillo has expanded holiday service, fewer holidays. Ridership high on NYE. Drivers come in from 100+ miles away, extending services would be hard on the drivers for their commutes.

- 1.4 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Transportation services are needed in smaller towns since there is no taxi or bus service in some areas.**

Workshop response: Still an issue. Working on it.

- 1.5 Key Barrier/Obstacle: There is inadequate employment transportation and transportation to higher education institutions. Many people do not attend school or miss work due to lack of transportation.**

Workshop response: Amarillo College has been working on partnership with city transit to provide unlimited rides for students going to campus and limited evening service for students (show ID). Demand response to and from campus.

1.6 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Some areas only have access to public transportation for specific routes or medical purposes.

Workshop response: Demand response covers the whole area. First come first serve. Subscription service for medical purposes. Limited to just that service. Dialysis patients can make appointments around regular service times.

1.7 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Passengers need a common place where they can connect to other transit agencies.

Workshop response: Amarillo: 3 proposals to do a planning study for multimodal with Greyhound and others. Transfer point sheltered with amenities. Working with Spartan and Rolling Plains to get riders across regions to other providers. Border is in Childress between PCS and Rolling Plains. Quanah has location. Plainview has connection to Spartan (SPCAA office).

1.8 Key Barrier/Obstacle: "Same day" trips present issues to Transit Agencies

Workshop response: Amarillo: larger communities can be accommodated due to vehicles being there all day. Taxi voucher program? Not enough staff resources to take it on. City public health district did a survey, big need was for access to services to transportation. Mental health and diabetes biggest public health issues. In order to get treatment they need more personalized service to get stabilized. Mobility management with follow up is needed. Opioid addiction needs outlying areas coming into Amarillo. CORD does offer same day as available. Had been for-profit offering service. PRPC did have mobility manager.

1.9 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Medical Transportation Program (MTP) is of vital importance to both the public and to Transportation Agencies.

Workshop response: Very smooth right now. PCS handles 98% of Medicaid trips. Riders are both Medicaid and regular demand response. MTP does outreach, a big help to clients.

1.10 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Service overlaps between services providers exist in some areas. Any new transportation applications for funding should consider existing services. Any existing services should be reviewed to determine if duplication occurs.

Workshop response: Lots of partnering with other providers, not seeing this at the transit level. Would be great to get more taxis, not enough in the area.

Additional comments

- Driver retention: not enough pay to get and keep the best staff. Hourly pay, benefits, bonuses, paid uniforms in the city. Additional work involved in transit beyond just driving the vehicle.
- Customer service is good with long term staff, an issue with new staff. Trying to get non CDL vehicles.
- Only have fleet of 30 in Amarillo, can't afford to have 2 types of vehicles as much. Providing trips for West Texas State University, numbers are going up.
- CORD is volunteer driver program. Drivers all over 50.

15. Abilene and Brownwood Districts Public Workshop, January 10, 2019

Attendance: 40 in person, 1 online

- 1.11 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Transportation services are being dropped since there are not enough clients utilizing services. Clients are not aware of Transportation services available.**

Workshop response: Rural area; poor service. Issues getting to class on time. Need to get ride 2.5 hours early, still not getting there on time. Taylor County. Callahan County also needs service.

- 1.12 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Transportation services are not available in all areas. Often there are people needing to go to economic centers on dates that a transit doesn't provide service.**

Workshop response: Holiday season no rides available. Had to quit job because there was no transportation available. Abilene: request for Sunday service, no funds to provide. Timely service an issue. Sidewalks: missing in some areas, need to travel in the street. Sidewalk maintenance and connectivity. People who can walk don't realize how important it is to have good sidewalks for access. Major safety concerns. Funding available.

- 1.13 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Longer hours and weekend services are needed, but due to constrictions and lack of staff, it is not possible. Expanded transportation service hours are needed in some areas for traveling to work, school, and recreational opportunities**

Workshop response: Is there a program for individuals to provide rides to others? Mental Health America has found isolation more deadly than smoking. Evening activities can't be accessed by a lot of the population. Volunteer driver program that had been funded, was underutilized. Unfair comparison from this area to larger urban areas. Deaf and hard of hearing senior citizens of Abilene: like to go to Friday Night events once a month but there is no public transportation for them.

- 1.14 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Transportation services are needed in smaller towns since there is no taxi or bus service in some areas.**

Workshop response: Lots of agreement. Can't afford taxi even if it's available.

- 1.15 Key Barrier/Obstacle: There is inadequate employment transportation and transportation to higher education institutions. Many people do not attend school or miss work due to lack of transportation.**

Workshop response: hewed out by dispatch that they did not call in 48 hours in advance. Works 12 hour shifts. Cannot get home from night classes. New TSTC campus, is there transportation? Difficulty accessing basic needs. Use for routine stops daily or every other day. 3 day a week GED classes, some people waiting 2 hours for bus ride home. Abilene does after hours routes supposed to be picking up low income riders for work and education. Only in city 325-676-6366. Ridership with this program has been low. Office of Neighborhood Services.

1.16 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Some areas only have access to public transportation for specific routes or medical purposes.

Workshop response: Medical transport trips are the priority. Transport to Dallas area for appointments? Need Transportation to Scott & White in Temple.

1.17 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Passengers need a common place where they can connect to other transit agencies.

Workshop response: No multimodal in Abilene. Either Highway 351 for Greyhound or at a medical facility, no transfer points. Citilink: discussion about multimodal, need cooperation of intercity bus carriers to get funds from TXDOT. Abilene MPO: studies about multimodal, planning is in place. CTRTD: Supportive of Abilene multimodal, bring people in from rural area frequently. Sharing office space, maintenance, training facilities would be good.

1.18 Key Barrier/Obstacle: "Same day" trips present issues to Transit Agencies

Workshop response: Not available. Would have to call 911 for ambulance. Improvements with ride hailing services, more affordable than ambulance. Huge logistical hurdle. More funding, have to have funding sources. Citilink: some same day service on an emergency basis for hospitals, coordinated through previous meetings. Hospital discharge transportation. Does not provide emergency response service. Goodwill: some same day through CHIP and Medicaid. Next day service. Issue getting in touch with CARR. From Merkle is a \$42 taxi ride to Abilene as of a few years ago.

1.19 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Medical Transportation Program (MTP) is of vital importance to both the public and to Transportation Agencies.

Workshop response: Working schedule around dialysis. Contractors providing rides do both. TXDOT funds 50% of operating, the other comes from medical or HHSC funds. Feasibility study: having medical transportation within PTN. A lot of medical trips are under contract.

1.20 Key Barrier/Obstacle: Service overlaps between services providers exist in some areas. Any new transportation applications for funding should consider existing services. Any existing services should be reviewed to determine if duplication occurs.

Workshop response: More gaps than overlaps. Not competing against each other, just trying to meet the needs.

Additional comments

- Need a friendly place to wait. Direct and safe path with protection from elements while waiting for the bus. Need adequate ROW for accessible bus stops, not enough acquired during construction. Needs to be included in road development.

- People take mobility for granted. Have to fight for accessibility. Don't forget us. Hope this spearheads something great.
- Brownwood resident in retirement community: senior service from CARR. CARR required rider to get to entry of community but he could not do that because he could not access that in his wheelchair. Could get services 5 years ago, not now. Why?
- People don't question parking but it's an issue to get accessibility
- Struggle with signage, don't know where to go for bus, find right bus. Citilink working on new signs, route signs to guide riders. Evaluated every bus stop. In process.
- Drivers should learn ASL to help.
- Housing market in Abilene forcing individuals to rural areas but then they can't access services due to lack of transportation.
- Driver safety training. Driver customer service at Citilink an issue in some of these circumstances. How to handle challenges?

16. Yoakum District Public Workshop, January 15, 2019

Attendance: 3 in person

- 1.1 Need: Affordable transportation for special groups: Collaborate with other agencies, religious organizations, employers, groups representing the special groups, state agencies and other appropriate organizations about leveraging funds. Conduct a feasibility study of agencies to assess if available funds can be utilized toward leveraging funds to purchase transportation or match funding**

Workshop response: No study. Golden Crescent has partnerships but no funding. CVT as well.

- 1.2 Need: Extended services (longer hours of availability): Approach Businesses about financial support and realignment of work schedules. Approach Churches about financial support. Conduct a feasibility study**

Workshop response: GCRPC extended service hours: cut Sunday service due to lack of funds. CVT: last run at 6pm M-F, starts at 4am

- 1.3 Need: Extended service area with Voucher Programs (travel to the rural areas of the county): Increase public awareness of potential providers of transportation in all counties and increase the allowable travel distance**

Workshop response: GCRPC expanded voucher program to entire region, same day service in four counties at least 15 minutes notices. In Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson and Matagorda. CVT doesn't have a voucher program, but 24 hour notice, same day as available.

- 1.4 Need: Options to purchase passes (on-line, use of a reloadable card, other): Research any options available. Conduct a feasibility study.**

Workshop response: CVT has online for fare card, GCRPC does not.

- 1.5 Need: Public Awareness on a regular basis: Review current promotional materials and all sources of advertisement for accuracy including websites. Review annual budgets for inclusion of promotional materials and creation of websites. Research grants that can support advertisement. Conduct a feasibility study**

Workshop response: Hasn't happened

- 1.6 Need: Sheltered bus stops: Approach local businesses to sponsor a shelter for a bus stop. Continue to review the annual budget to increase the number of shelters**

Workshop response: GCRPC has been sitting down with the city, looking at coming up with specifics and looking at safety issues, technical specifics of shelters. Accessible path of travel, lighting. CVT shelters in place, some needed to be moved, companies asking to have ones. Evaluating safety for new shelters.

- 1.7 Need: Maps displaying routes and web links to on-line maps (at the bus stops and via the internet): Sponsoring of shelters by a local organization or business to purchase. Review annual budget for availability of funding**

Workshop response: Maps online for both. CVT started with maps at shelters, no longer because of vandalism. GCRPC is starting

- 1.8 Need: Transportation for children in day care: Approach specific daycares and parents and begin a discussion**

Workshop response: GC has agreement with Headstart. No other progress. CVT works with daycare to provide trips but not organized commuting.

- 1.9 Need: Transportation of students that live within a 2-mile radius to a school: Assess the possibility and efficiency of including schools as part of future route developments or modifications. Conduct feasibility study**

Workshop response: No study. CVT has students who ride bus. GCRPC has moved some stops closer to schools.

- 1.10 Need: Increase community agency & citizens involvement in planning processes (RCTP)**

Workshop response: One of the most predominant issues in maintaining participation in RCTP meetings is that past meetings focused on needs of Victoria rather than all seven counties that make up the Golden Crescent Region. GCRPC working on getting counties to do stakeholder meetings for regional plan, since each county has individual needs. Second stage: developing projects from lists of needs.

- 1.11 Need: Increase information regarding transportation issues for Veterans: Meet with agency representatives for Veterans and agree on an approach to obtain information**

Workshop response: CVT able to do some accommodations in Colorado County get to VA in the next county over. Issue: getting from Waller to Harris. They get midway to take bus. Wharton County has a bus, can get to bus stop. GC has a once a month trip to San Antonio VA, VA office in the same building, good relationship.

Additional comments

- TxDOT ADA liaison: struggled to get message out there in rural areas, low attendance of members of the public.

17. Corpus Christi District Public Workshop, January 16, 2019

Attendance: 8 in person, 36 estimated online

1.1 Objective: Establish and maintain strategic, efficient, and integrated transportation services

- (a) **Goal:** Increase frequency on coordinated times on fixed routes to create a regional network

Workshop response: REAL: Interlocal agreement with Kleberg, Kleberg relationship with RTA for Rural Nueces. Paisano and REAL as well. Coordinating with university students. Want to improve. Challenge: providers outside coastal bend, where customer needs are outside the transit service hours and area. Refugio, Bee.

- (b) **Goal:** Use routing/scheduling software to full potential to coordinate demand response or fixed route across service areas

Workshop response: REAL: limitations to current software. Looking to create access portals for customers at different locations such as congregate meal sites. Kleberg: got RTA funds for software and tablets. Upgrading is an option to improve the system. REAL has funding for the new technology, looking for how to expand that to consumer controller and provider controlled area. CBCIL: coordination done manually to link to other services.

- (c) **Goal:** Provide adequate dispatching resources and consistent customer focused service practices to ensure prompt response times

Workshop response: CBCIL: when they aren't in the office the riders can't schedule. Response time delayed by weather, other factors. REAL: looking at on time performance, think software will let this be a higher priority with optimization by allowing real time changes. Public comment: clients are left for more than an hour to get trips. A client was left for over two hours waiting for a ride. Kleberg: 15 minutes before/after for pick up window. Barriers to on time service: weather, train (30 minute delay), other factors. REAL has 24 hour on call staff to address issues. Passenger education and awareness, promotoras.

- (d) **Goal:** Identify opportunities to efficiently centralize services or pool resources, such as dispatching or travel training

Workshop response: Centralized system would be nice. Nothing for training so far.

- (e) **Goal:** Investigate ways to provide public transportation to colonias

Workshop response: Difficult. Sometimes providers can't locate address, roads. Hasn't prevented a trip. CBCIL: identifying issues ahead of time. REAL: no concerted project targeting colonias. Spreading information to colonia representatives at meetings. TCN had specific outreach, no longer happening.

- (f) **Goal:** Improve service utilization in areas with high demographic need or where ratio of trips to population is low

Workshop response: Kleberg: 35 people in the room. People need services after 4, weekends. Looking to expand. So people can get to essential services (pharmacy). CBCIL committed to attend more events and educate about services. CBCIL has limited funds to serve. Cost is the biggest factor in expanding service. Weekend is leisure mainly, also employment.

- (g) **Goal:** Identify frequent transit destinations, such as health care facilities or large employment centers, and find ways to work more closely to coordinate services.

Workshop response: Demand for population is largely medical, primary care in rural areas and specialty care for urban. Future coordination & scheduling of medical done with transit. Empowering clients possible in some situations. Higher specialty care more restrictive appointments. Gregory/Portland/Ingleside: educating employers because 5pm traffic is a problem. Options for transit? Safety issue as well as time. Plants shifts are an issue, rail delays.

- (h) **Goal:** Obtain funds to acquire regular replacement vehicles for all stakeholders with vehicle fleets

Workshop response: Need for smaller vehicles. Demand for smaller, low floor vehicles, for flexibilities but that reduces utilization.

1.2 Objective: Provide a variety of transportation services to improve mobility and options for riders

- (a) **Goal:** Evaluate the feasibility of flexible/deviated or fixed route services in small cities

Workshop response: REAL has looked at this, cost sharing in those areas stopped the conversation. Counties and cities not able/willing to fund so far. Duval and Refugio: REAL purchases services from those counties, a way to offset and enhance need for mobility services

- (b) **Goal:** Actively engage in Texas Health and Human Services dialogue regarding Medical Transportation Program (MTP) policies and practices

Workshop response: Medicaid has small providers in the area, challenging to coordinate with them. One on one service, limited capacity. REAL does not prioritize by trip purpose. Kleberg: 50-60% Medicaid, and seniors aren't charged. Significant cost. CBCIL in talks with Christus Spahn Health system, 75% of trips medical. Presenting to Christus Spahn. No results so far. Medicaid provider receives capitated rate: service is provided but they are not getting reimbursed. Need to highlight this issue: individuals not accessing benefits, benefits not being reinvested into the system. Kleberg missed out because previous director did not apply for a grant, now has greater internal support to pursue.

1.3 Objective: Improve public awareness of available services

- (a) **Goal:** public information availability and clarity: traditional and nontraditional media

Workshop response: REAL: Integrated campaign of radio, billboards, one on one, bilingual campaign in phase 3. Visited every congregational meal site and senior service center. Now phase 4, coordinating rides to Corpus. CBCIL attends health events, collaborative meetings

(b) **Goal:** Single point of public information

Workshop response: 211 doesn't provide exactly, no one central entity. REAL has 1-800 across their service area. Not tracking how new passengers find service. CBCIL quasi functions as this, information and referral. Core partners with ADRCs, Christus Spahn. REAL provides social services as well.

(c) **Goal:** highlight who uses transit in the region to correct public perception of riders and increase awareness

Workshop response: Public education about services for REAL does that. Kleberg: perception that vans are for seniors, still need to improve.

(d) **Goal:** Familiarize drivers and dispatch with other services and provide excellent customer service

Workshop response: Kleberg: dispatchers/drivers know the need, constant emphasis. CBCIL: customer satisfaction surveys with all consumers that get transportation. Usually ongoing services so there is a high level of comfort. REAL: challenges of working with the public. annual survey of ridership with ride alongs. Mobility manager went on with a tablet and filled out questionnaire. 5 complaints for one compliment. Recorded conversations for training. Follow up with problems as they arise.

(e) **Goal:** Ambassadors or new rider friends

Workshop response: REAL has a consumer attendant ride along service to help gain confidence. Trained community health workers and promotoras.

1.4 Objective: Coordinate for residents' mobility needs to destinations outside the region

(a) **Goal:** Assist veterans in the region to access Veterans Administration facilities outside the region (e.g., San Antonio, Laredo)

Workshop response: Corpus VA service twice a week. Veterans Service officers in counties have vans. Veteran specific services, not from public transit providers. REAL: Service from Live Oak Co to San Antonio 2x month. Laredo trips done on scheduling ability. CBCIL has provided trips via Valley transit to San Antonio.

(b) **Goal:** Coordinate service schedules at shared stops or transfer hubs, such as between regional providers and intercity bus operators across the Coastal Bend

Workshop response: REAL does this with Paisano. Informal drop off and pickup locations. Done with RTA in Robstown as part of interlocal agreement. No agreements for cost sharing or transfers outside the region.

- (c) **Goal:** Improve maintenance for accessible vehicles (e.g., public and private, including intercity bus), with special focus on lifts and ramps used by riders with assistive mobility devices or needs

Workshop response: Limited to service from one company in Corpus. Wishes TxDOT could introduce to someone to get more people certified to service lifts. Regional approach where TXDOT has interlocal agreement to get certified. When 5310 couldn't address maintenance for other vehicles this impacted maintenance.

Additional comments

- From Kleberg: the public is at the satellite meeting in Kingsville. Fixed route has no stop at Lulac Manor. Has trouble with day in advance, gets delays and then can't call for another ride. Evening and weekend service was very helpful to get out of the house, get to the store.
- New to area: why not weekend and evening service for "people who are really in need" for service. Vans are small, crowded. Individuals have to ask for the lift. People who are at the meeting can't hear because of the phone in Kleberg. Trouble with computer access.
- Saw it in the Kingsville Record. Think about the people who want to see what's going on. A big need, need more programs for Kleberg. Need resources, need to be more aware to get what we need for this county. Denied REAL service because she didn't live in the service area but sees the REAL vans all the time.
- Educational transportation need. Transportation from Sinton to Coastal Bend College. What exists for that, Del Mar, A&M Corpus? Vocational school transportation as well. REAL offers summer transportation to colleges. During semester, A&M Kingsville has service. REAL serves some Del Mar and Coastal Bend but no deviated or fixed route service. Kleberg does a Kingsville to Corpus route to take students. Trying to get a conversation going with RTA.

18. Pharr District Public Workshop, January 17, 2019

Attendance: 12 in person

1.1 Strategy: Development of regional mobility management

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** Coordination activities

Workshop response: VAIL: exciting to educate communities. Urban areas. Travel training. Transportation needs surveys. TXSILC accessible transportation summit in March here. Use GIS system to map routes and do travel planning. Coordinates Valley Metro. Center covers Island to Laredo, mobility management limited to tri-county area. Still provide services but not under contract.

- (b) **Potential activities/projects:** Public information

Workshop response: Metro Express was a huge coordination activity for the whole region. Continual need to educate the public.

1.2 Strategy: Human service coordination opportunities

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** Work to move riders to fixed route

Workshop response: Minimal success. Trips to adult daycare. Travel training is success for getting them onto transit but not onto fixed route.

- (b) **Potential activities/projects:** Assist agencies in providing their own transportation safely and economically

Workshop response: Brownsville coordinates with Workforce Commission, provides specific free service to veterans for them to access workforce. VAIL doesn't have vehicles, doesn't know of others who do. If Valley Metro applied to purchase vehicles maybe?

1.3 Strategy: Coordinate procurements

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** Bus stop amenities, technology, maintenance equipment, supplies, or services

Workshop response: Brownsville did coordinated plan and study of bus amenity needs. In process for realignment to provide more amenities. Looking at different grants for technology. Community has requested. People want next bus arrival information at stops. Not everybody has a smart phone. Valley Metro works with other transit agencies for joint procurements for technology, vehicles, bus stops, cities UTRGV, to get a faster procurement process. RFPs take a long time to get approved.

1.4 Strategy: Coordinate operations and administrative training

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** Dispatch and administrative training

Workshop response: Yes, working with other agencies who host trainings and get invited.

1.5 Strategy: Transit traveler information

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** One consolidated regional transit website with all pertinent information for each agency.

Workshop response: Talked about it in RTAP meetings but ongoing discussion. Partnership with Pharr High School marketing course created logos, one for Metro Express and regional advisory panel. Also created website.

- (b) **Potential activities/projects:** One trip planning tool (app) and/or trip planning number to call for customers to use.

Workshop response: Not yet. Valley Metro has Doublemap, others have Ridesystems, need to look at how they can communicate. These companies merged so more will be possible.

- (c) **Potential activities/projects:** A consolidated printed schedule and map for the main line trunk service in the region

Workshop response: Not yet. No discussion but RGV Metro Express partnership could discuss with RTAP. Almost all systems have GIS format files so it would be easy to put together.

- (d) **Potential activities/projects:** A regional map of services, stops, bike share locations, pathways and other transit, bicycle and pedestrian amenities

Workshop response: Not yet. Looking into at Valley Metro.

- (e) **Potential activities/projects:** Ensuring the availability of all transit system schedules and all major transfer location, ticketing locations and administrative offices.

Workshop response: McAllen Metro terminal and B Metro terminal in Brownsville. Valley Metro passengers can transfer to McAllen and B Metro. Edinburg University campus also acts as a hub. Can get tickets everywhere except university. Materials available at transfer points. Valley Metro opening their own transit center in Edinburg, same services as university.

1.6 Strategy: Fare structures

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** Efforts to support the discussion and implementation of a universal fare card and transfer policy should be continued

Workshop response: No work yet. Under discussion.

- (b) **Potential activities/projects:** Mobile ticketing

Workshop response: Not yet for Valley Metro, but starting procurement of ticketing devices and software. Reviewing tech with vendors, intent is to have online purchasing.

1.7 Strategy: Connectivity - Routes that do not end at jurisdictional lines and have timed meets with connecting services

Workshop response: Valley Metro provides service in 5 county area, except in cities and Island. RGV Metro Express. Services Starr County at transfer point.

1.8 Strategy: New regional services

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** Coordinate service between Brownsville and South Padre Island, Hidalgo County and Harlingen to South Padre Island, Raymondville and Willacy County to Harlingen

Workshop response: All covered.

1.9 Strategy: A route structure that operates at least six days per week, Expanded service hours – All day service on most routes

Workshop response: Almost everybody has this.

1.10 Strategy: Reduced headways should be no greater than one hour (30 minutes should be the baseline, 15 minutes is ideal in peak density corridors although that would be in the long term future.

Workshop response: RGV Metro Express has ~45 minutes. Every 30 minutes, adding vehicles during 12-4 peak hours.

1.11 Strategy: Rural fixed schedule service

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** 1. Service connecting colonias, rural areas, towns and outlying areas in each of the three counties to one of the urban hubs in timed meets so riders can seamlessly transfer to their ultimate destination. 2. Increase frequency of bus service including evening/night service in these areas 3. Add more fixed-schedule service in Willacy County. 4. Add limited Sunday service in rural areas.

Workshop response: Valley Metro has deviated fixed routes in rural areas. Willacy, Starr and Zapata have demand response. SPI Serves Laguna Heights every 30 minutes and connects to Valley Metro. RGV Metro express has Sunday service. Brownsville has agreement with county to have deviated fixed route in rural area. Demand response only in Willacy now.

1.12 Strategy: Paratransit services

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** Paratransit service should be reserved for ADA service in cities and remote exceptions in rural areas. Paratransit should be considered a last resort due to its expense.

Workshop response: Valley Metro does not operate paratransit. 3/4 mile limitation on deviated.

1.13 Strategy: Pedestrian and cycling access

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** Accessibility for bus stops

Workshop response: Issues getting to stops. VAIL consumer worked for 2 years to get city to fix sidewalk. Took a lawsuit. Working with mobility management. Looking into TAP funds.

1.14 Strategy: Develop sponsorship program

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** A sponsorship or partnership program should be designed to sell a service to both public and private sponsors.

Workshop response: Valley Metro and Brownsville sell vehicle ad space, Brownsville sells ads at stops. Brownsville working on bus stop sponsors for TIGER grant.

1.15 Strategy: Establish a regional rideshare program

- (a) **Potential activities/projects:** vanpools or carpools

Workshop response: Talked about it, previous plans, nothing yet.

Additional comments

- Getting and retaining drivers. Need funding/scholarships to fund CDL program. Looking at funding continuing education. Hard to get mechanics. Need training for lift maintenance certification. B outsources maintenance, everyone else has in house.
- Onboard announcement and signage for visually impaired.
- Funding for more public education for 5310 population.