The Road Less Traveled…

Roundtable: Local Approaches
Where are Other Communities?

A Presentation for
FTA Technical Assistance Workshop

by the
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham

Darrell L. Howard, AICP
Principal Transportation Planner
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Objective

► To develop a plan for human service transportation in the Central Alabama and Greater Birmingham region that maximizes the use of limited resources by minimizing and/or eliminating duplication, increase coordination, and improve cooperation.
Approach

- **Challenges**
  - Six Counties (2 Urbanized, 4 Rural)
  - Four Transit Providers (3 Public, 1 Non-profit)
  - Meeting #2: Concepts and Strategies
  - Meeting #3: Recommendations & Strategies

- Meetings 1 & 2 held in each of the RPC’s six county area

- Meeting 3 was a regional meeting
Approach

► Partnered with

United Way of Central Alabama
- Extremely active in the region’s transportation discussion
- Manage operations of ClasTran
- Good name recognition
- Track record of turning out crowds/engaging stakeholders
Approach

What We Did...

Data Collection
- Demographic information
- Resource information
- Inventory of assets
- Needs assessment

Needs Assessment
- Data analysis
- Stakeholder discussions

Goals and Objectives

Strategy Development

Action Plan

Completed
Approach

What We Are Doing...

**Plan Revisions**
- Specifically to address urbanized area

**Plan Implementation**
- Program urbanized area projects into the TIP
- Establish/Assemble ongoing coordination structure

In Progress
Needs to be Done
Approach

► Stakeholders/Participants

- Riders
- County other municipal representatives
- Transportation Service Providers (public & private)
- Transportation Service Purchasers (Agencies)
- Human service agencies
- Senior services
- School transportation
- Industrial/Economic Development Boards
- The Community At-large
- ALDOT
Common Themes

Things We Heard Everywhere Include:

► Better information for:
  - Resource Workers
  - Public
  - Elected-Officials/decision-makers
  - Business

► Engage
  - Government
  - Faith-based organizations
  - Educational institutions
  - Business community

► Establish partnerships and find solutions
Common Themes

Things We Heard Everywhere Include:

► Improve communication and cooperation between
  ▪ Public sector agencies
  ▪ Private resource agencies, and
  ▪ Transportation providers

► Consider non-traditional approaches and solutions
to addressing the problems

► In order to make advances, we will need to:
  ▪ Give up some control
  ▪ Provide a forum where every voice is heard

► Provide more...
  ▪ Resources (financial, technical, etc.)
  ▪ Local ability to raise necessary capital
Common Themes

Things We Heard Everywhere Include:

► Need for a “seamless” transportation system that provides multiple travel alternatives to fit individual needs

► Consider ways to remove transportation as a barrier in order to help those who can least help themselves become self-sufficient, contributing members of the community
Summary of Findings

Deficiencies and Gaps

- Deficiency/Gap #1
  Poor Communication is a Pervasive Problem

- Deficiency/Gap #2
  Inadequate Coordination and Collaboration

- Deficiency/Gap #3
  Resources are Inadequate to Meet Growing Demand
  - Inadequate/inequitable funding
  - Rural area issues are more pronounced
  - Inadequate analytical and planning tools

- Deficiency/Gap #4
  Unrealistic Expectations

- Deficiency/Gap #5
  No One-Size Fits All Solution is Appropriate
## Strategies for Success

### Goal 1: Improve Coordination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional Human Service Transportation Coordinating Process</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Regional Human Service Transportation Advisory Group</td>
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<td>- Regional Human Service Transportation Coordinating Agent</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Regional Transportation Resource Center</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>“Common Ground” Demonstration Project</td>
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<td>-2</td>
<td>Accredited Driver Training Program Standards</td>
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<td>Consistent Vehicle Standards</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Dedicated Regional Public Transportation Revenue Source</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Develop a Regional Transit Development Plan</td>
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## Strategies for Success

### Goal 2: Improve Efficiency

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<th>Priority</th>
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## Strategies for Success

**Goal 3:**

Improve the Quality of Transportation Services

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>↔</td>
<td>Mobility Coordination Program</td>
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</table>
| ↑        | Centralized Transportation and Information/Referral Service  
  - 2-1-1 transportation information  
  - Information/Referral Website |
| ↑        | Continuous Data Collection Process |
## Strategies for Success

### Goal 4:
Improve Awareness of Available Services

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>↑</td>
<td>Targeted Marketing Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop print and billboard advertisements</td>
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<td>• Develop electronic marketing campaign</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Develop marketing materials in Spanish</td>
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<td>Centralized Transportation and Information/Referral Service</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 2-1-1 transportation information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Information/Referral Website</td>
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<td>Public Engagement Process</td>
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<td>Transit “Booster Club”</td>
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</tbody>
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Strategies for Success

Goal 5:
Expand the Capacity of Human Service and Rural Transportation Services

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Expand Transportation Provider Capacity</td>
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<td>Recruit additional vendors</td>
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<td>Develop a “Road to Independence” Program</td>
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<td>Enlist Volunteer Drivers</td>
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<td>Better utilize existing transportation services and resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop a Shared Driver Pool</td>
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<td>Regional commuter transit routes</td>
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<td>Regional ADA service connector routes</td>
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<td>Regional transfer stations i.e. “Beyond the Borders”</td>
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<td>Shared Vehicle Maintenance</td>
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<td>McKinney-Vinto Demonstration Project</td>
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<td>Standardize and Automate Billing/Reporting Requirements and Procedures</td>
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Next Steps

► **Implementing the Plan - The real work!**
  - Developing formal agreements for cooperation
  - Keeping initial participants motivated
  - Follow through with plans
  - Modify/redirect strategies/tactics when necessary
  - Continue to meet
  - Expand the partnership as needed
  - Let the process grow and change – Have No Fear!
Next Steps

Riders

Single Point Entry

Transportation System Users

Human Service Agencies

Coordinating Agent

Administrative Tasks
- FTA Applications
- State Applications
- Reporting
- Billing
- Verify Applicant Eligibility

Purchasing Agencies

Buys Trips From

Bills/Provides Info. To

Next Steps

2-1-1 Coordination
5-1-1 Initiation Handles

Schedule Trip

Trip Referral

Post Reservations

Trip

BJCTA VIP Paratransit

Private Contractor

Rideshare Services

ClasTran or Agency Vehicles

Volunteer Vehicles

Other Service Providers
Discussion/Questions
Thank You

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