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TRB TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD

TRB Webinar: Improving Mobility in Rural and Tribal Communities

February 25, 2026

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM (eastern)

PDH Certification Information

1.0 Professional Development Hour (PDH) – see follow-up email

You must attend the entire webinar.

Questions? Contact Andie Pitchford at TRBwebinar@nas.edu

The Transportation Research Board has met the standards and requirements of the Registered Continuing Education Program. Credit earned on completion of this program will be reported to RCEP at RCEP.net. A certificate of completion will be issued to each participant. As such, it does not include content that may be deemed or construed to be an approval or endorsement by the RCEP.



AICP Credit Information

One (1.0) American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Certification Maintenance (CM) Credit

You must attend the entire webinar

Log into the American Planning Association website (<https://www.planning.org/>) to claim your credits

Contact AICP (AICPCM@planning.org), not TRB, with questions

Purpose Statement

This webinar will explore a range of service design strategies and transit modes, including emerging non-traditional services, that may be appropriate for rural and tribal contexts. This webinar will also highlight practices aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness in providing mobility options.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Explore and evaluate the potential for various enhanced or new service designs and modes that may be appropriate in their community, and
- Implement the new or enhanced service design, such as planning for that new service, communications with passengers, safety and security, and ensuring effective services.

Questions and Answers

- Please type your questions into your webinar control panel
- We will read your questions out loud, and answer as many as time allows

The screenshot shows a dark-themed mobile application interface for a Q&A session. At the top, a navigation bar contains several icons: a question mark icon (highlighted with a red box), a list icon, a settings gear icon, and a three-dot menu icon. Below the navigation bar is a header titled "Questions" with a close button (X) on the right. The main content area displays a large question mark icon and the text "No questions yet" followed by "Questions you send and answers from the staff will appear here". At the bottom, there is a text input field with the placeholder "Enter your question" (highlighted with a red box). Below the input field, the text "Your question will be sent to staff" is displayed next to a "Send" button (also highlighted with a red box).

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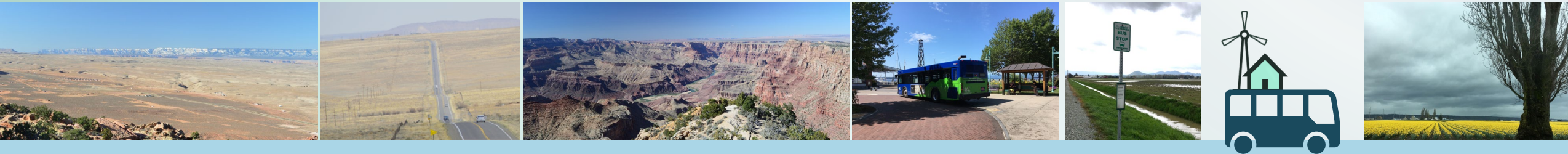
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NCHRP Research Report 1144/TCRP Research Report 251

Public Transportation in Rural and Tribal Communities

Guide for Service Improvements



Webinar | February 25, 2026



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Tyler Bevier, St. Cloud Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, Traverse City, MI

Daniel Currier, Vermont Agency of Transportation, Barre, VT

Laurie Anne Garrow, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA

Santo Grande, Delmarva Community Services, Inc., Cambridge, MD

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Kari Ruse, Nebraska Department of Transportation, Lincoln, NE

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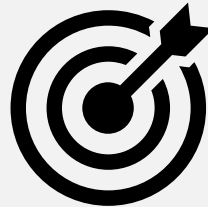
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Webinar Objectives

At the end of this webinar, participants will be able to:

Explore and evaluate the potential for various enhanced or new service designs and modes that may be appropriate in their community

Better understand how to implement the new or enhanced service design, such as planning, funding, management, communications with passengers, technology, safety and security, and ensuring effective services.



NCHRP 08-147/TCRP B-49 - Research Objective

Overall Objective

Develop a practical and actionable guide to improve mobility in rural and tribal communities

- help transit providers determine which service designs and modes are most appropriate within their community, and
- support implementation of those services.

Guide

Underlying Principles

1. “How to” in addition to “What/Why”
2. Easy to Read and Use
3. Cover Wishlist from Survey
4. Use Lessons Learned from the Case Studies and Literature Review

Four Parts of the Guide

SECTIONS OF THE GUIDE

PART 1

New or Emerging Successful Service Strategies

PART 2

Practices or Tools to Support the Implementation of Strategies

PART 3

Topics of Informational Interest such as State DOT and Tribal Government Roles

PART 4

Case Studies (9) – Introduction in Printed Guide and Details in Web-only Document

APPENDIX

Literature Review and Resources

PART 1

New or Emerging Successful Strategies

- Service Designs and Operational Practices
- Mobility Management and Coordination
- Connections to National and Regional Intercity Networks

Part 1 – New/Emerging Service Strategies

Service Strategies and Operations Management combined with Improvements to Efficiency and Effectiveness

Service revisions that better meet local mobility needs, such as using flex routes in place of fixed routes to expand the reach of transit and improve its effectiveness and piloting an on-demand service using new mobility providers, among many other examples.

Connections to National and Regional Networks

Better connections to the national and regional transportation networks, expanding mobility options for their rural residents.

Mobility Management - Coordination

Mobility management efforts that focus on the needs of customers through a coordinated use of programs and providers.

PART 2

Support Practices or Tools

- Topics that may need to address as you consider implementing new strategies
- Could stand on their own
- Guide approaches them through the lens of how they support the implementation of new or enhanced strategies

Part 2 - Support Practices or Tools

Planning Process

- Planning necessary for considering new service strategies, involving customers and the community for input, developing specific recommendations, and implementing the new service.

Management and Operations – managing and operating new services

- Decide Who Operates – In house, Contractor, TNC/Taxi
- Employee Management - Recruiting, Training and Retaining Staff (esp. drivers)
- Vehicle and Facility Considerations- Needs/Requirements and Staging
- Monitoring Service on the Street
- Customer Service – Customer facing services policies

Communications with Current and Prospective Passengers

- Effective communications including citizen advisory groups, a marketing plan, and use of social media, among other practices.

Safety and Security - Risk Management

- An important support function, with practices such as driver retraining after an accident and supervisor/driver training for conflict management, among others.

Part 2 - Support Practices or Tools

New Technologies to Support the Strategies

- Various technologies to support transit operations, such as mobile data terminals to improve scheduling and dispatching and the use of apps for an on-demand service.

Measuring Success and Outcomes

- Measuring success and outcomes using a performance evaluation process, with specific goals and objectives for the transit service as well as defined measures to track achievement along with operating and financial data to compute the measures.

Funding and Revenue

- Increasing funding and revenue which may include using in-kind match to draw down additional grant funds to support the transit service.

Service Accessibility to Persons with Disabilities

- Ensuring service accessibility is important because meeting (and going beyond) ADA requirements facilitates, and literally supports, transit use by people with disabilities. At the same time, as they implement new services, transit providers must understand the ADA requirements so that they can comply with those regulations applicable to their service.

PART 3

Other Implementation Informational Topics

- Role of State DOTs
- Role of Tribal Governments
- Compliance with Federal and State Requirements

PART 4

Case Studies

- Summary of the Case Studies in the Printed Guide
- Full Case Studies included as web-only document

PART 1

New or Emerging Successful Strategies

Service Strategies and Operations Management

Key Findings

Funding constraints necessitate looking at comparative cost effectiveness of different solutions

Service mismatches to demand characteristics and community needs occur with "one-design-fits-all" approaches

Improper designs yield low ridership and high cost per trip

Most rural/tribal transit providers are short staffed and thinly spread

Struggles to attract experienced management and staff

Service Strategies and Operations Management

Key Findings

Overall strategy is to have a tailored approach

Increasingly (but still reflecting 44% of the respondents), rural/tribal transit agencies are diversifying service types and designs to tailor service to needs

The result is a more cost effective family of services that also better addresses mobility needs

New on-demand technologies are enabling different, pin-pointed solutions

Service Strategies and Operational Practices/Management

Service Strategies

- Fixed Route
- Flex Transit – Route Deviation and Point Deviation
- General Public Demand Response (Dial-a-Ride)
- Microtransit
- Travel Vouchers and Farecard Programs
- Volunteer Driver Programs
- ADA Complementary Paratransit

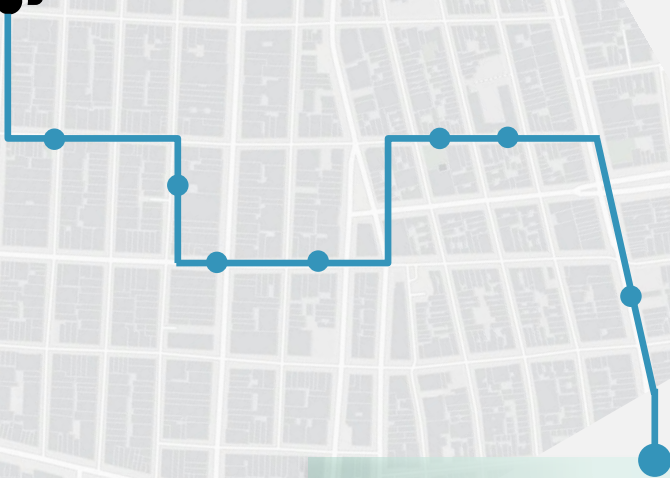
Operational Practices

- Managing Demand in Large Regional Service Areas?
- Use Part-Time Operators
- Maximize Use of Subscription Services-Trips

Management Practices (Part II)

- Utilize contractors and provide contractors with supporting assets (vehicles, facilities, software/ technology) to increase competition and reduce risk
- Use part-time operators
- Diversify fleet mix to reduce capital and operational costs

Service Strategies – Fixed Routes



Service on pre-determined routes according to a set schedule. Generally designated stops – only a third of rural bus systems operate on fixed routes.

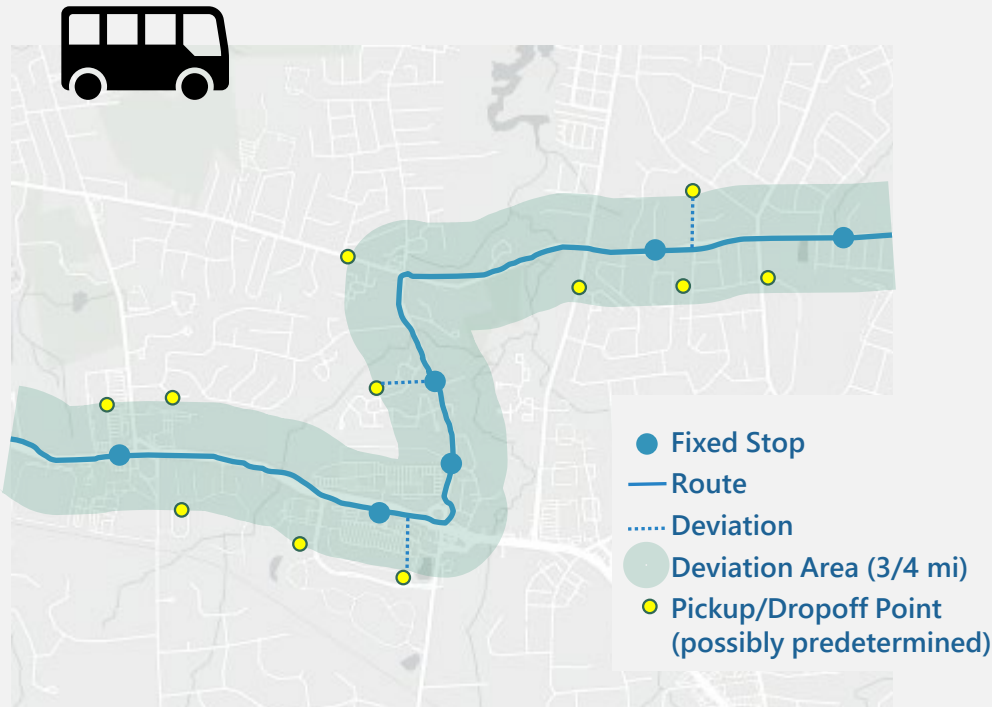
When to Consider

- Appropriate where and when there is **sufficient demand** to support such a service.
- Use in corridors and areas with **higher population densities**, where there is enough concentrated demand to be productive.

Notes for Successful Implementation

- Focus service on higher demand trip generators (such as a large regional store, hospitals, and human service agencies) that produce peak period job-related or program-related demand.
- Focus on trip patterns in your area—origins and destinations of riders that create concentrated demand.
- Consider fixed routes as one of a compendium of services in a community—they can leave persons in low-density areas without service if only fixed-route service is provided.
- Less effective when routes are long, one-way loops that attempt to serve too many origins and destinations.

Service Strategies – Flex Route Deviation



Hybrid between Fixed Route and Demand Response. Expand the service area of a traditional fixed route by going “off route”. Buses follow a fixed route but will deviate from the route to pick up or discharge passengers.

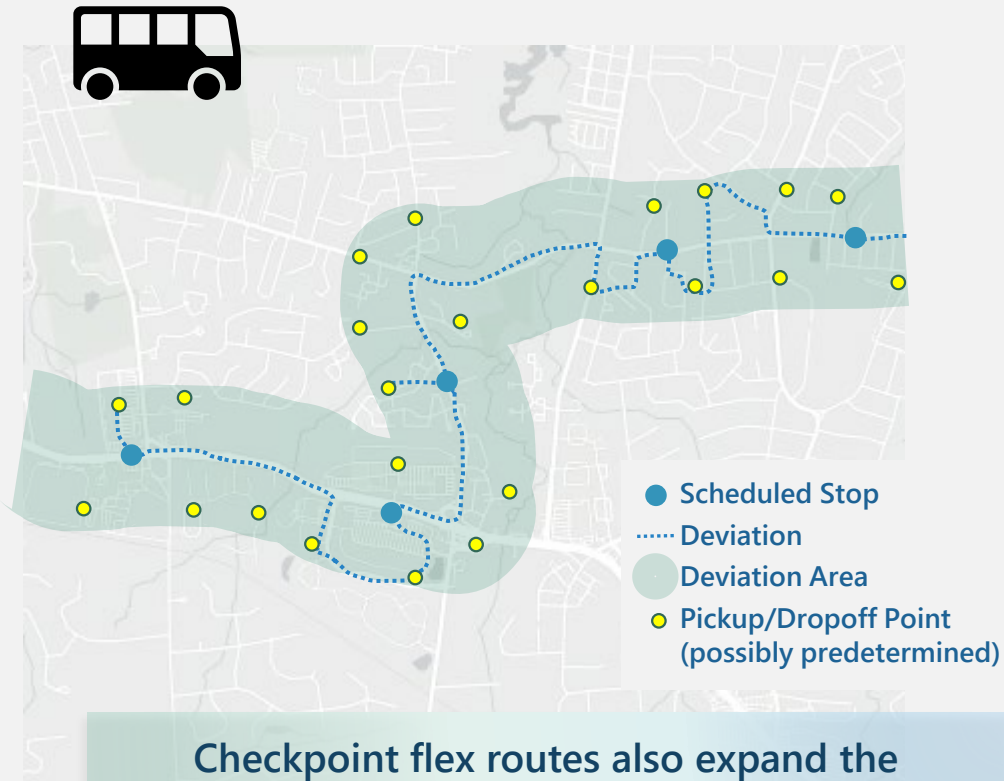
When to Consider

- Flex routes/route deviations are appropriate in corridors with **defined routes but also pockets of demand beyond bus stop walkshed** but not far enough to warrant extending fixed-route service in these areas.
- Use to **serve medium-density areas with insufficient demand** for traditional fixed-route but where there is still a more pronounced demand density within a corridor.

Notes for Successful Implementation

- Appropriate where people do not live along main roads on which bus stops are not easily accessible.
- Expands the reach of transit service by allowing the vehicle to deviate off the route’s main road to pick up/drop off riders.
- Generally, need to accept requests for deviation from all riders, and the deviation distance should be reasonable, per FTA guidance.
- Build slack into the schedule to allow for a reasonable number of deviation – 10%-15% rule of thumb until have experience
- May limit number of deviations per run to stay on schedule
- No ADA paratransit obligation if deviation is for all.

Service Strategies – Flex Checkpoint Deviation



Checkpoint flex routes also expand the service area of a traditional fixed route but buses do not follow a fixed route but there are scheduled stops. Again, the buses can pick up or discharge passengers between the scheduled stops.

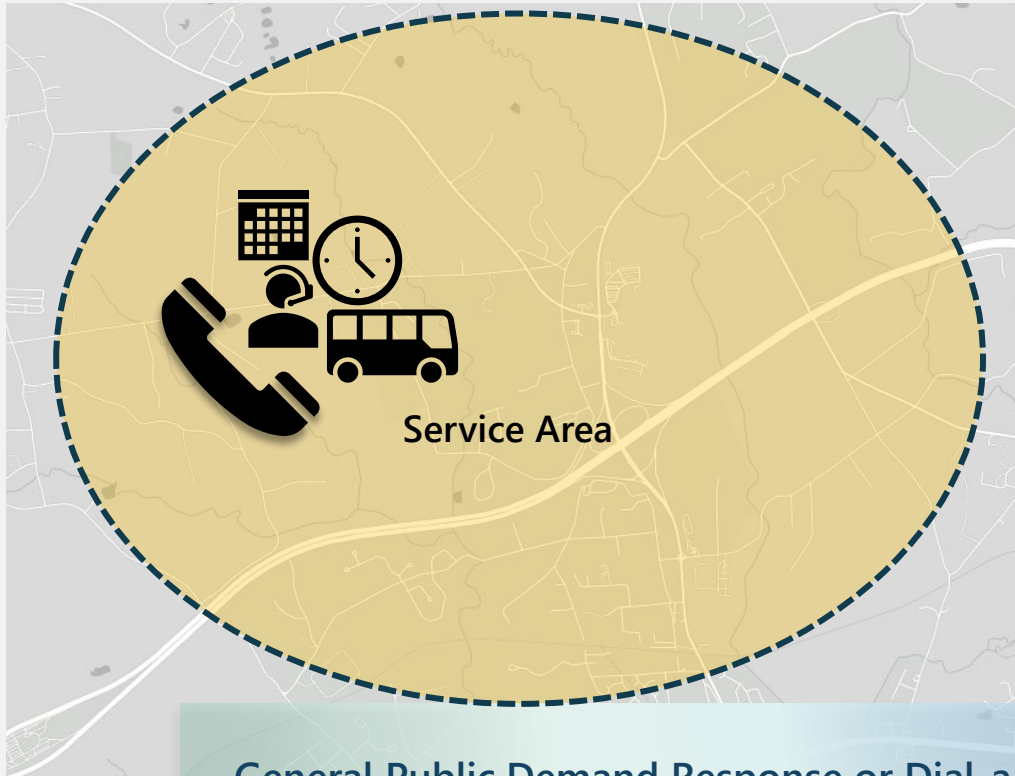
When to Consider

- Checkpoint deviation service can be useful in areas that do not suggest a base route, especially in **less dense areas** but where **anchor destinations exist**.
- As with route deviation services, checkpoint deviations also can serve areas with medium density but with demand insufficient for transitional fixed routes and a more dispersed population.

Notes for Successful Implementation

- Suggested where there are **one or more high-demand stops**, such as a transit center, a big box store, a shopping center, a hospital, or a college.
- Expands the reach of transit service by allowing the stops wherever there are origins or destinations that will attract sufficient ridership.
- No ADA paratransit is needed/required if deviation is for all.

Service Strategies – General Public Demand Response



General Public Demand Response or Dial-a-Ride allows all members of the community to request a pick-up or drop-off at any location within the service area

When to Consider

- **Use in geographic areas and/or during particular times/days** that do not have the demand density for fixed- or flex-route transit.
- Effective way to serve **a large area with low and dispersed demand.**

Notes for Successful Implementation

- Can be used to complement fixed-route transit or flex-route transit in less dense areas.
- Can be used to feed fixed routes – timed transfers
- Also can be used to serve specific population subsets (e.g., older adults and people with disabilities), or for specific trip purposes such as medical trips.
- Can be used to “test” the transit market in new service areas
- Demand response service must be operated so that service equivalency is achieved for persons with disabilities.

Service Strategies – Microtransit



Microtransit is an on-demand, e-hailing service for the general public generally using smaller vehicles and mobile technology to schedule a trip within a particular zone or zones

When to Consider

- Use to **expand transit service to a new area and/or at a new time** that is unsuitable for fixed- or flex-route transit.
- **Can replace an underperforming fixed- or flex-route or route segment.**
- Can replace **underperforming demand response or during low demand times.**
- May be a more effective service design in well-defined **corridors or zones** of operation **that cannot sustain a productive fixed route**, such as in small cities (including small cities in rural areas), commercial subdivisions, or strings of office parks.
- Can **provide more flexibility to customers** than traditional fixed-route service.
- Can work as **feeder** to fixed route or flex route stops – first mile-last mile

Notes for Successful Implementation

- Has been used in communities of populations between 5,000 and 20,000 by rural transit providers, with service provided in a designated zone or corridor.
- Focus the zone on a small geographic area (5-7 sq.mi.), anchored by stops at transit connections and other major demand generators; generally, the smaller the zone, the more productive the service.
- Microtransit can typically carry between 3-6 passengers per hour.
- If service equivalency cannot be achieved with on-demand service, can delay service to 1- to 2-hour advance notice.
- Need for WAV vehicles and drug and alcohol testing must be considered.

Service Strategies – Travel Voucher and Fare Subsidy



Travel vouchers and fare subsidies are used in conjunction with existing public or private providers. Generally, riders arrange for service directly from the service providers

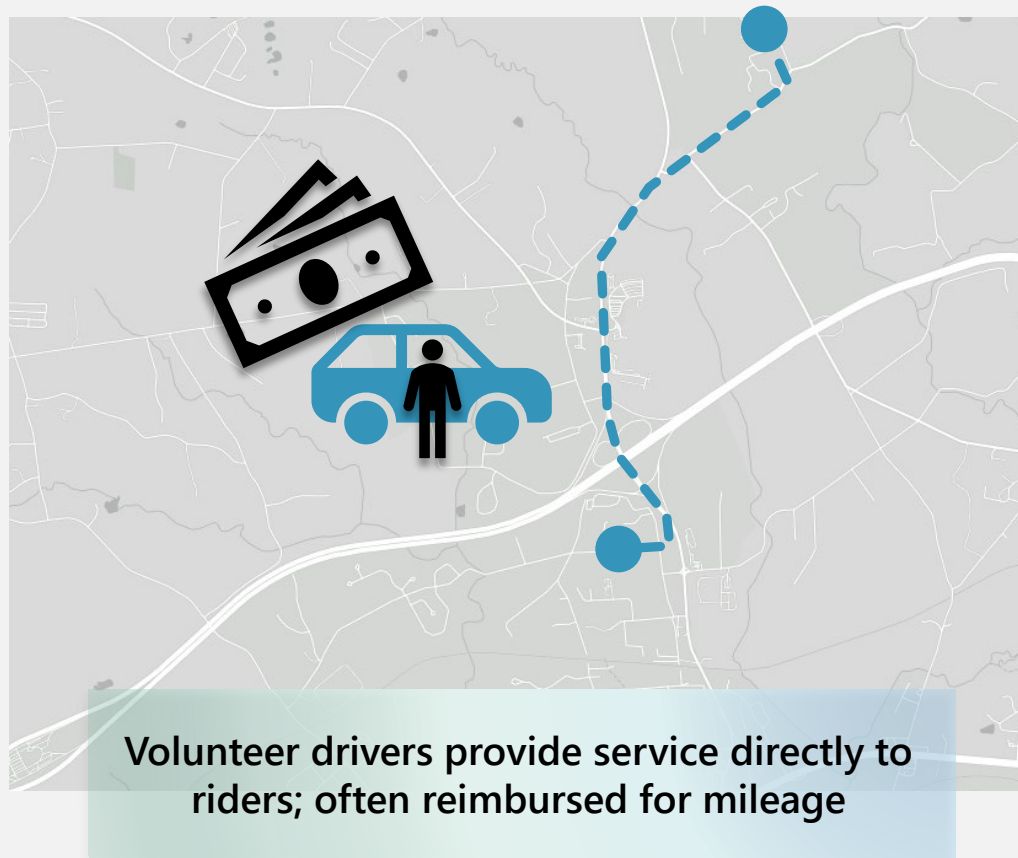
When to Consider

- **Used in conjunction with existing public and private service providers**, with the riders arranging for service directly with the service provider.
- Can be used to make existing transportation services **more affordable for low-income** riders.
- **Cost-effective way to target subsidies** for eligible riders.

Notes for Successful Implementation

- Vouchers can be paper vouchers or scrip tickets. Each voucher or scrip ticket has a monetary value and allows riders to pay for trips on existing transportation services that participate in the program (e.g., public transit services, taxis, or other for-hire services, intercity bus carriers).
- Fare payment cards are now more common than paper vouchers or scrip, with the transit agency adding funds to an eligible rider's card to subsidize trip-making use.
- For fare cards, consider possible implications for the unbanked population. Applications using customers' fare card or bank card accounts may not be accessible to the unbanked or persons without smartphones.

Service Strategies – Volunteer Driver Programs



When to Consider

- Use to meet **mobility needs in areas where transit services and taxi/TNC services are limited** or cost-prohibitive
- Can be an **effective means to accommodate unmet mobility needs of older adults and other transportation-disadvantaged people in rural and tribal communities** where transit, paratransit, and taxi/TNC services are limited or cost-prohibitive.

Notes for Successful Implementation

- Volunteer programs can also coexist to augment other existing transit services.
- With reimbursement to volunteers for mileage at an IRS-approved rate, volunteers provide a low-cost option to meet needs, particularly for long-distance trips.

Service Strategies – ADA Paratransit



Paratransit (door to door or curb to curb) service provided to complement traditional fixed route services. Similar to demand response services but focused on riders who are unable to use the fixed routes. Must meet ADA service criteria.

When to Consider

- Required if providing **traditional fixed-route services**.
- May be possible to provide ADA complementary paratransit on fixed route vehicles, especially when fixed route services are provided along very long, very rural routes.

Notes for Successful Implementation

- Service should only be provided to people with disabilities who are prevented from using fixed-route transit because of their disability or disabilities.
- Service must meet six service criteria, including the prohibition of capacity constraints. Transit providers must monitor service for patterns of service shortcomings, such as trip denials and late trips, among others.
- Using the same vehicle to provide fixed-route and ADA paratransit can be complicated to operate as all ADA paratransit requirements must be met in serving the ADA paratransit trips.

Connections to Regional and National Networks

KEY FINDINGS

- **One of the major challenges identified on the transit provider survey**
- **Riders in Rural and Tribal areas can access through:**
 - Intercity or Regional Bus services that stop in rural or tribal communities
 - Local transit providers that connect to regional or intercity services
- **Facilitates access to services that are not available in rural/tribal local areas such as**
 - Major employers
 - Major medical/specialized facilities
 - Major shopping, prisons, visiting, education
- **Increasing importance because:**
 - Elimination of intercity routes by carriers – fewer local rural stops and schedules that make it harder to make connections to national network
 - Closing rural hospitals
 - Major shopping is becoming more regional - “big box”
 - Need to connect to airports
- **Often requires state role – to facilitate planning, technology and coordinate non-federal funding that cross jurisdictional boundaries**

Connections to Regional and National Networks

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES



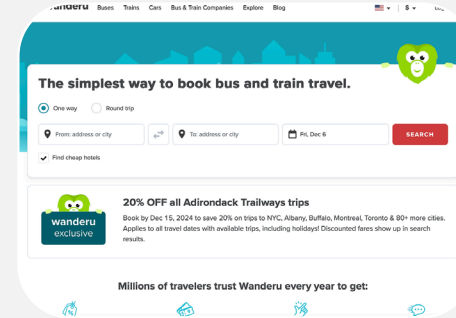
Route feeder services to regional and/or national networks



Demand response or on-demand feeder services



Ensure connecting service is GTFS-formatted and included in national intercity atlases



Agents for Intercity firms



Offer interline ticketing

Note: this section of the Guide includes both multiple examples of S.5311(f) Rural Intercity Projects and a step-by-step process for developing rural and regional intercity connections.

Mobility Management - Coordination

KEY FINDINGS

Section on transit service strategies emphasizes tailoring transportation services in your community and providing a **family of services** that can effectively address mobility needs.

“Coordination” has been an issue for many decades – federal/state transit programs have supported approaches to coordinate the 130 transportation components of programs under 28 federal agencies across 11 federal departments.

Recent coordination efforts have evolved into Mobility Management which focused more on customers and their needs.

Mobility management is especially important in rural and tribal communities where non-auto options are limited and there is a long history of human service transportation.

Mobility Management begins with a **community vision** in which the entire transportation network works together including public transit, human service transportation, private operators, volunteer drivers.

Technology is emerging and evolving that can facilitate service integration and trip coordination.

Public Transit can be the bridge coordinating mobility options but need to reach out to other providers in the community.

Mobility Management - Coordination

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Conducting Community
Self-assessment

Developing Coordinated
Public Transit- Human
Service Agency Plan

Comingle agency-
sponsored trips with
public transit and ADA
paratransit (esp. NEMT)

Encourage agencies to
have clients use public
transit fixed routes –
purchase tickets or
sponsor services

Use Transportation
Broker

PART 4

Case Studies

Case Studies – 9 from the 12+ Suggested

Service Strategies (Microtransit)

- **CARTS NOW** – Microtransit as a Fundamental Change for Rural Transit
- **High Valley Transit** – Expanded Fixed Route and Consolidated Microtransit and ADA Paratransit Service
- **Mountain Empire Transit (MET) – METGo!** Microtransit Providing Better Quality Service for Rural Riders in Southwestern Virginia

Route Design Improvements

- **Okanogan County (WA) Transit Authority “TranGO”** – Non-Traditional Service Design
- **North Central Regional Transit District (NCRTD), New Mexico** – Meeting Needs in a Diverse Multi-Jurisdictional Service Area

Combining Multiple Modes

- **Cascades East Transit** – Leveraging Funding and Partnerships to Maximize Mobility in Central Oregon

Mobility Management and Coordination

- **Open Plains Transit, Western Nebraska Panhandle** – Rural Demand Response and Intercity Bus Service
- **PICK Transportation, Eastern Oklahoma** – Consortium of Public Transit Agencies Uses Microtransit to Fill Gaps in Traditional Service

Connections to National and Regional Transportation Networks

- **South Dakota’s Rural Intercity Bus** Feeder Services

CARTS NOW

Microtransit to Replace Rural Transit

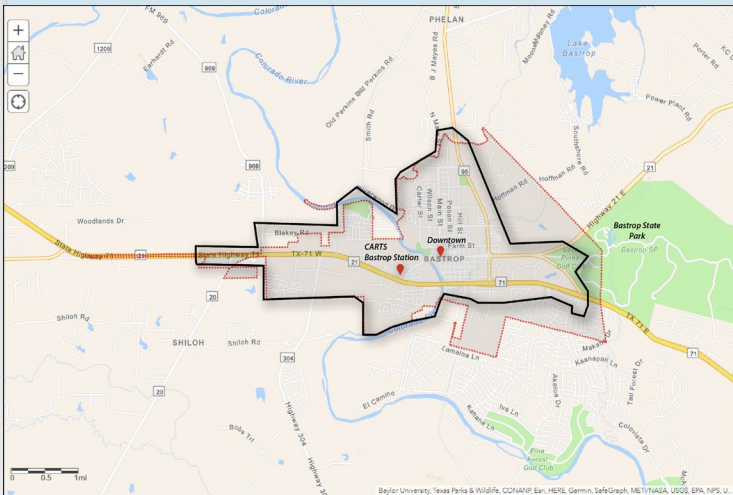


BACKGROUND

- **Capital Area Rural Transportation System (CARTS)** – Provides transit service in and around non-urbanized areas across 9 counties in Central Texas, including Bastrop County.
- CARTS gained initial experience with microtransit – In partnership with Austin's transit agency Capital Metro, CARTS piloted a microtransit service in an Austin suburb.
- Learned key factors for successful microtransit – Population density, service area size, wide range of trip generators.
- Applied that experience with microtransit in City of Bastrop (2020 population of 9,688).

CARTS NOW

Microtransit to Replace Rural Transit



CARTS- Microtransit
Service Area

 Bastrop City  CARTS NOW Service Zone

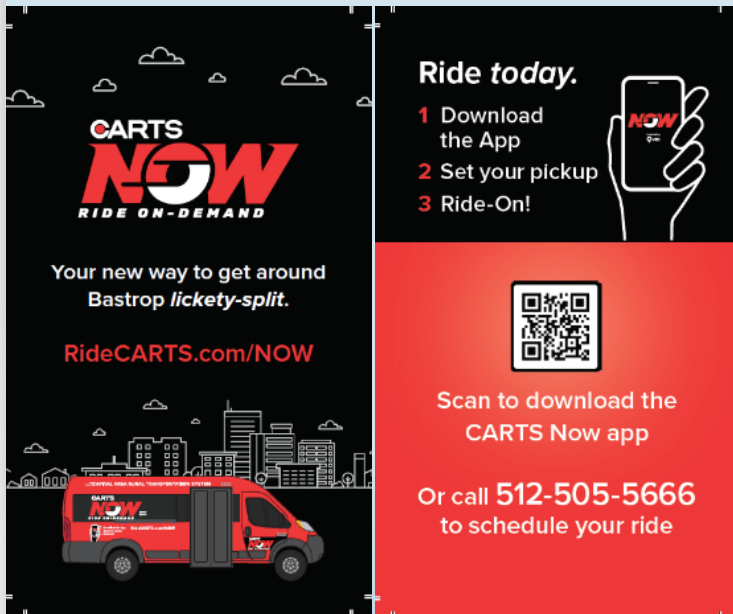


WHY CITY OF BASTROP?

- Significant fixed route ridership declines (COVID).
- O/D study showing limited needs for regular trip making (i.e., fixed route not effective).
- Presence of factors contributing to microtransit success.
- Support from community leaders.
- Texas DOT (TxDOT) issued Call for Pilot Projects in 2020.
- CARTS submitted funding request for 4 microtransit projects
- TxDOT awarded funding; CARTS selected City of Bastrop as first project.

CARTS NOW

Microtransit to Replace Rural Transit



The advertisement is split into two vertical panels. The left panel has a black background with white clouds at the top. It features the 'CARTS NOW' logo in red and white, with 'RIDE ON-DEMAND' in small white text below it. The text 'Your new way to get around Bastrop lickety-split.' is in white, followed by 'RideCARTS.com/NOW' in red. At the bottom is a red van with 'CARTS NOW' on its side, parked in front of a white city skyline. The right panel has a black top half and a red bottom half. The top half says 'Ride today.' in white, followed by a numbered list: '1 Download the App', '2 Set your pickup', and '3 Ride-On!' in red. To the right of the list is a white line-art hand holding a smartphone with the 'NOW' logo. The bottom half of the right panel contains a QR code, the text 'Scan to download the CARTS Now app' in white, and 'Or call 512-505-5666 to schedule your ride' in white.

CARTS NOW
RIDE ON-DEMAND

Your new way to get around
Bastrop lickety-split.

RideCARTS.com/NOW

Ride today.

- 1 Download the App
- 2 Set your pickup
- 3 Ride-On!

Scan to download the
CARTS Now app

Or call 512-505-5666
to schedule your ride

STEPS TO IMPLEMENTATION

- Coalition building – CARTS emphasized creation of broad-based support from public and private sectors.
- Community outreach – Including continued coalition building, info materials, social media, other media, professional marketing support, branding – CARTS Now
- Technology – VIA Transportation Inc. set up app, allowing riders to request trips and track trips in real time. Call option also provided.

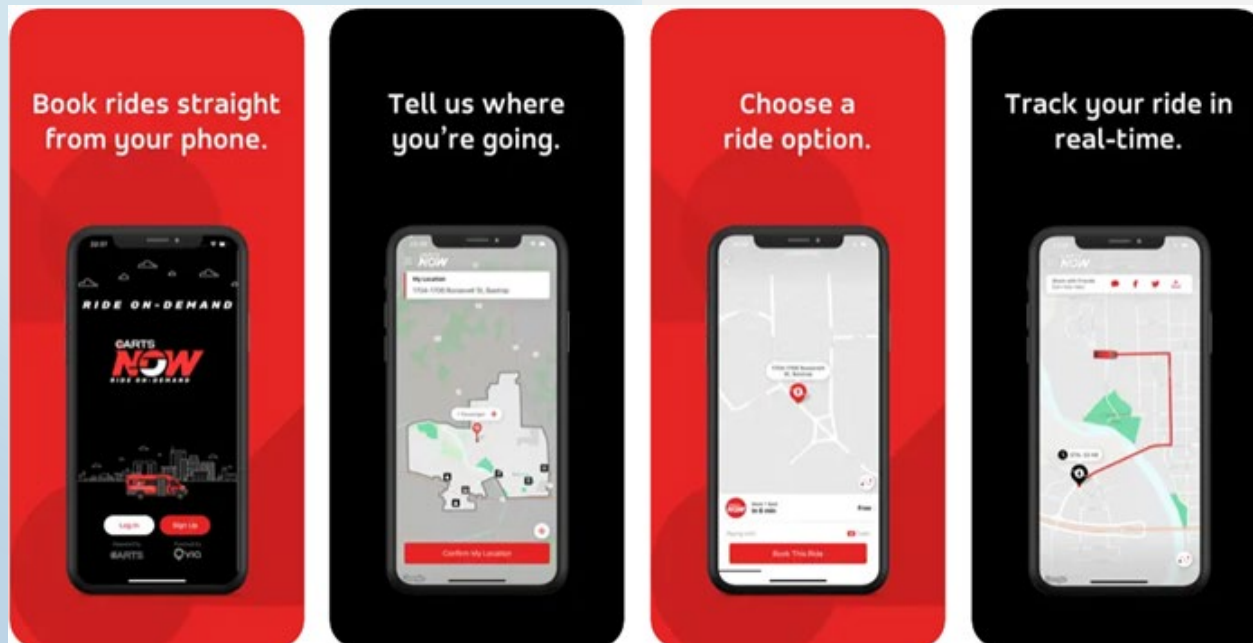
CARTS NOW

Microtransit to Replace Rural Transit

LAUNCH

- Service began late December 2020; fare free at start.

- By September 2023, average of 111 trips/day. Average productivity of 4.6 trips/hour.
- 64% of trips booked by app; 36% of trips through call center.
- Very well received by the community; CARTS replicated the service in other smaller communities in its service area.



CARTS NOW

Microtransit to Replace Rural Transit

- Low floor, ramp equipped, 8-10 passenger capacity with 2 wheelchair positions.

VEHICLES – Dodge Ram vans



CARTS NOW

Microtransit to Replace Rural Transit

COSTS

- No significant new operating costs; used funding from replaced transit service (one vehicle in fixed route service and one vehicle in advanced reservation dial-a-ride service).
- Fare structure
 - » One Way - \$2.00
 - » All Day Pass - \$6.00
 - » Monthly Pass - \$88.00
 - » Half- Price Fares
 - » Seniors over 65
 - » Persons with Disabilities
 - » Children under 12 (with an adult)

CARTS NOW

Microtransit to Replace Rural Transit

LESSONS LEARNED IN BASTROP

- Microtransit generates new ridership.
- Riders prefer microtransit over fixed route (feedback from focus groups with riders).
- Requires fewer dispatch interventions than advance reservation paratransit.
- Reporting requirements – Be clear what you want from your software vendor.

Experience From **CARTS** And Other Microtransit Services

Focus service on a **smaller geographic area**, anchored by stops at transit connections and other **major demand generators**.

Used in communities between **5,000 and 20,000** by rural transit providers

With population densities from **700 to 1,500 persons per square mile**.

Service area size: if using dedicated vehicles, service area up **to 5 to 7 square miles** will keep vehicles productive. Larger service areas better served with non-dedicated vehicles or mix of dedicated and non-dedicated vehicles.

Use **small vehicles and mobile technology** with dynamic routing and curb-to-curb or corner-to-corner service

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

BACKGROUND

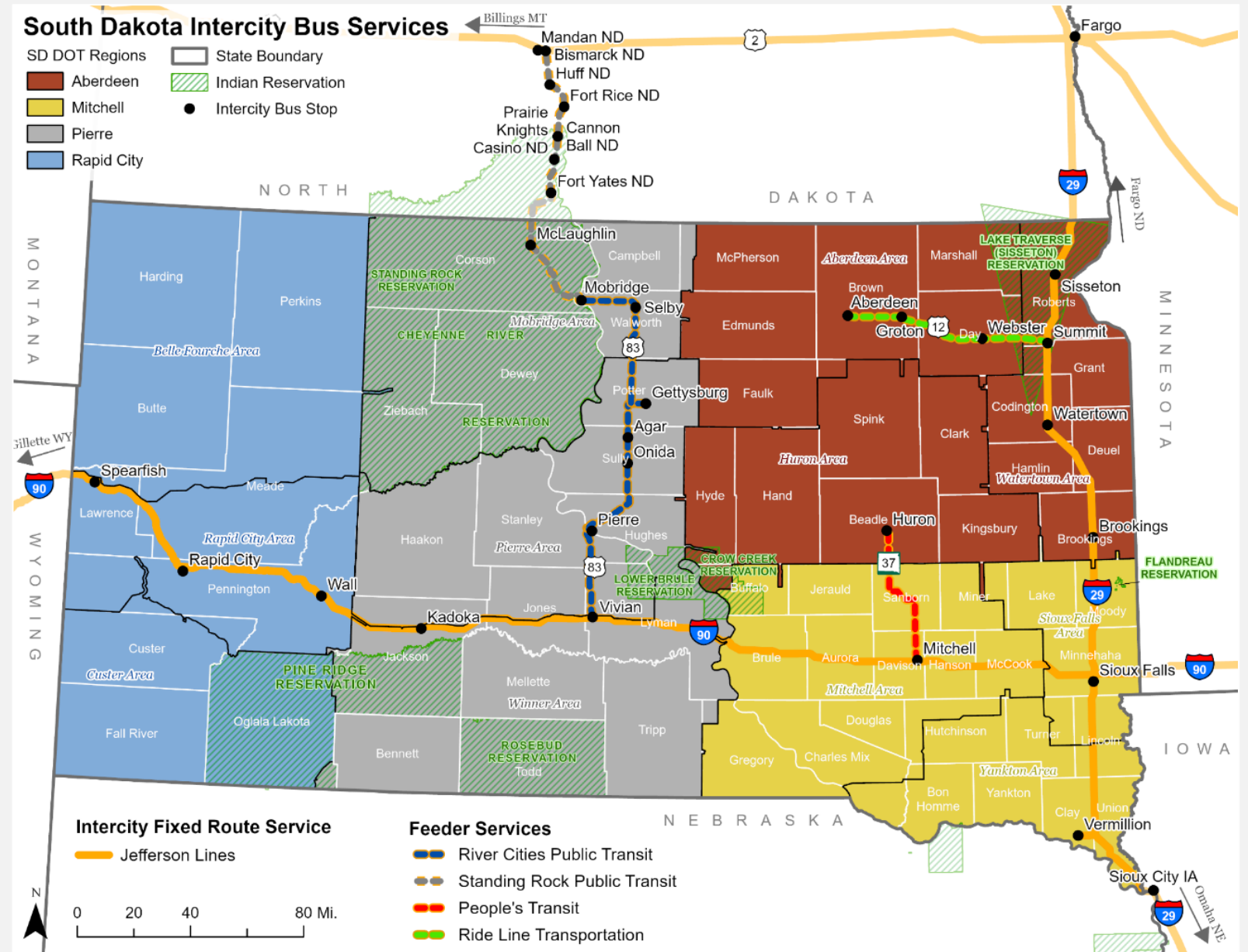
- Changes in intercity bus network began with 1981 federal deregulation.
- Many rural communities and small towns lost connections to national intercity bus network and larger populations centers, including in SD.
 - » *Jefferson Lines, a major regional intercity bus operator, had served many smaller communities using state highways that went through center of the communities.*
 - » *After deregulation and with financial pressures, Jefferson pulled back and focused service on the two interstate highways, with schedules designed to make connections at larger cities including outside the state.*
- An Aberdeen resident lost his connection to travel to Minneapolis and lobbied Jefferson to retain Aberdeen service.
- Eventually, Aberdeen began service to Jefferson's stop in Summit, SD.
 - *First feeder service to the Jefferson Lines' intercity network in SD..*

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

CURRENT NETWORK

Jefferson Lines and Rural Feeder Services



SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

CURRENT SERVICES

- **Jefferson Lines operates two routes:**
 - » North-south route linking Fargo, ND and Omaha, NE.
 - » East-west route linking Minneapolis, MN and Billings, MT.
- **Four rural feeder services:**
 - » Aberdeen Ride Line
 - » People's Transit
 - » River Cities Public Transit
 - » Standing Rock Public Transit
- **Intercity Ticket Agents/Depots**

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

CURRENT SERVICES

Rural feeder services:

– Aberdeen Ride Line

- » City of Aberdeen's Ride Line operated original feeder service; office/depot has waiting area and sells tickets; coordinates closely with Jefferson's agents in Fargo and Sioux Falls regarding any passengers making a connection.

– People's Transit

- » Non-profit provider serving City of Huron and surrounding counties.
- » Operates intercity feeder route between Huron and Mitchell (a stop on Jefferson Lines).
- » Transit agency's office functions as the intercity depot, with waiting area and ticket sales.

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services



CURRENT SERVICES

Rural feeder services:

– River Cities Public Transit

- » Private non-profit agency; public and specialized transportation in Pierre-Fort Pierre area and coordinating transportation for smaller communities in central So. Dakota.
- » Provides two routes that connect with Jefferson's intercity service.
- » Office serves as bus depot; waiting area; ticket sales.

– Standing Rock Public Transit

- » Based on No. Dakota, Sitting Bull College provides regional rural transit service.
- » Serves rural communities in south-central No. Dakota and north-central So. Dakota.
- » Feeder route connects Bismark, ND to Mobridge, SD where it connects with River Cities feeder service.
- » Service supported with FTA 5311(f) from No. Dakota DOT.

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services



CURRENT SERVICES

Intercity Ticket Agents/Depots:

- Two rural transit systems, served directly by Jefferson Lines, provide depot for intercity passengers.
 - » **Prairie Hills Transit** serves as bus depot, located in Spearfish, SD at the western border of the state; provides waiting area; sells intercity bus tickets.
 - » **Vermillion Public Transit** in the south-eastern corner of the state, provides service in and around City of Vermillion as well as service to Sioux Falls; transit agency's office sells tickets; actual Jefferson Lines bus stop is one mile away so Vermillion Public Transit provides connecting service on an advance reservation basis.

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

FUNDING

– Jefferson Lines

- » Operating deficits are supported by So. Dakota through FTA Section 5311(f).
- » Jefferson Lines provides cash match from its corporate funds.
- » Farebox revenues from passengers.

– Rural transit systems – for their feeder services

- » FTA Section 5311(f) with local match.
- » Contract with Jefferson Lines that pays fixed amount per vehicle trip.
- » Commission on each Jefferson Lines ticket sold.
- » One rural system receives FTA Tribal Transit Program funding.

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

So. Dakota Addresses Challenges to Provision of Rural Feeder Service

- Ticketing – The So. Dakota example highlights fact that the four feeder services are fully integrated into national interline intercity ticketing system as Jefferson Lines.
 - » Passengers can buy ticket for travel on multiple carriers that are part of the interlined system and information on the carriers is available, including the connections.
- Stop locations – Passengers need a place to wait for the intercity bus, particularly in bad weather, and to buy tickets.
 - » All the rural providers in the So. Dakota network recognized need for a functional stop.

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

So. Dakota Addresses Challenges to Provision of Rural Feeder Service

- Coordination of passengers – Relatively few passengers and importance of ensuring the transfer connection means the rural providers need to communicate and be aware of the connecting passengers.
 - » Interline intercity ticketing system provides information on all the passengers so Jefferson Lines knows of connecting passengers.
 - » Jefferson Lines staff support coordination with phone or email to notify the rural carriers of inbound passengers.

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

AMONG BENEFITS & LESSONS LEARNED

- Rider survey finds feeder service convenient and high quality.
 - » Riders tend to be older adults of working age, lower income, often transit dependent, relatively frequent users (1/3 ride once/month; 1/3 ride few times/year)
- Major benefit is access to long-distance transportation for people without their own transportation or ability to drive themselves.
 - » 67% of So. Dakota's population within 10 miles of an intercity bus stop.

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

AMONG BENEFITS & LESSONS LEARNED

- Integration of rural feeder services into interline ticketing system that serves Jefferson Lines, Greyhound/Flixbus and other bus companies facilitates and expands transportation service for riders.
 - » Riders can purchase one ticket for entire trip covering multiple providers.
- Value of So. Dakota's intercity service network is recognized by other rural transit agencies in the state that now want to participate.

SOUTH DAKOTA DOT

Rural Intercity Bus Feeder Services

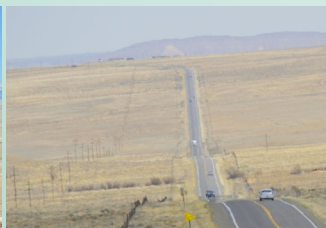
AMONG BENEFITS & LESSONS LEARNED

- Combination of rural transit feeder services as interlined parts of the national network of long-distance interstate bus service is relatively unique and seen as key aspect of transit's mission in So. Dakota.
- The rural transit agencies strongly support their feeder service.
 - » Providing connections to distant locations is part of the rural transit agencies' overall goal of providing mobility for their communities.
 - » Decision-makers at the rural transit agencies have continued to support this goal and to provide funding through the local match required to maintain the service.



QUESTIONS / DISCUSSION

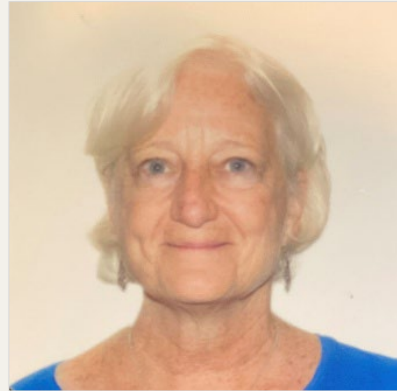
Public Transportation in Rural Areas and Tribal Communities:
Guide for Service Improvements



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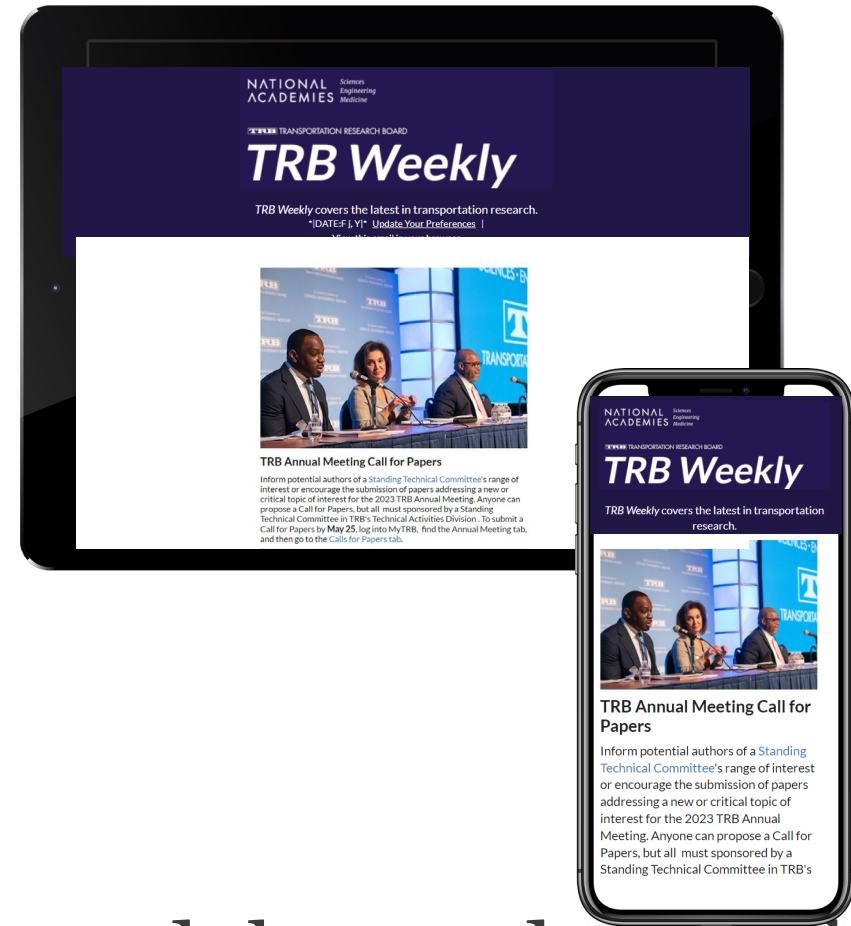


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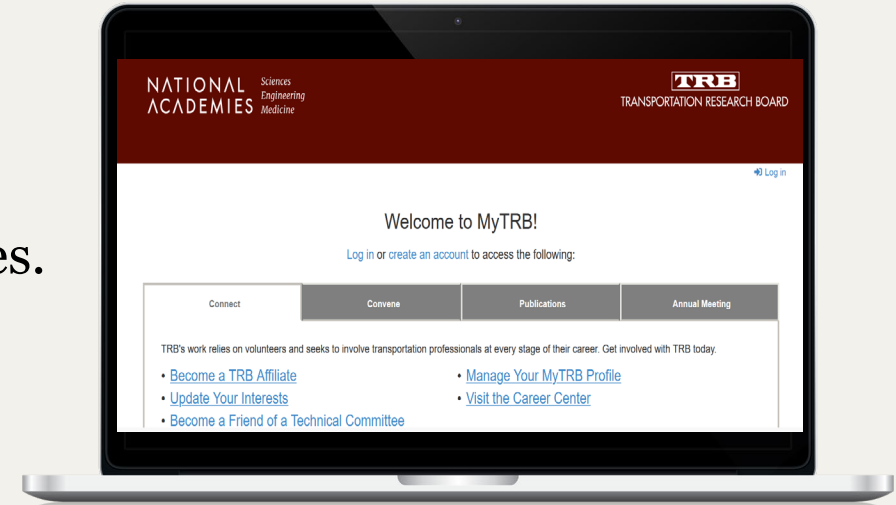


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