Collaboration in Transportation Planning, Service Design, and Implementation

A Look Back at CTAA’s Institutes, 2006–2012

Introduction and overview

The Community Transportation Association of America’s (CTAA) Institutes for Transportation Coordination are an intensive, three-and-a-half day training and planning forum designed to enhance the capacity of communities to provide cost-effective, customer-focused transportation by coordinating information, services, funding and equipment.

Quick Statistics

CTAA has implemented four national Institutes (one each in the years 2006–2008 and the Job Access Mobility Institute in 2012) and six state or regional Institutes (Nebraska 2009, Massachusetts 2009, Texas 2010, Colorado/Wyoming 2010, Iowa 2011, and Arizona 2011). In all, 611 team members participated.

The Institutes were primarily funded through grants from the Federal Transit Administration, plus additional funding for the 2006–2008 Institutes from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy. The costs for all the state institutes were covered through FTA grants and the state sponsoring agency (the state DOTs for all but the Massachusetts Institute, which was sponsored by the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Center for Health Policy and Research).

The Institute attendees were multi-sector teams representing local or regional transit, workforce, older adult, disability and low wage constituents share diverse view-points in guiding the planning process. For many, the Institute represented the team members’ first collaborative effort to develop and implement local transportation solutions. As one participant, Mary Guy-Sell, Mobility Manager, Wasatch Front Regional Coordination Council, UT, said, “The Institute gave us the confidence that we had the ability to move the program forward.”
**Institute Activities**

During the Institute, team members participated in four types of activities: group learning through general session presentations, networking, content-based workshops, and intensive team planning time. Through workshops, teams learned about transportation coordination models and were led to identify components of those models that could be applied in their own communities. Teams also explored promising local practices, discuss effective community outreach and partnership-building strategies, and increase their knowledge about technical tools and other operational issues.

In the team planning sessions, participants were facilitated through a process that allowed them to craft a common vision and objectives related to transportation in their community, identify resources that could be applied toward transportation solutions, and brainstorm and plan models for delivering those solutions. To facilitate follow-up on the Institute work, teams returned home with a 12-month action plan and a 90-day implementation plan, as well as plans for building partnerships with additional stakeholders.

Because many team members came from non-transportation agencies, CTAA staff prepared them for the Institute through webinars on transportation planning and coordination strategies. Teams were also given pre-work, including the FTA/United We Ride’s “Framework for Action” tool, and exercises on developing vision statements and potential focus areas for action. Throughout and after the Institute process, CTAA staff provide technical assistance to bolster teams’ success. Susan Lemke, Transit Manager, Stevens Point (WI) Transit, noted that CTAA’s support was “imperative” in the success of her team’s efforts.

**Job Access Mobility Institute**

Building on the success of the Institute, CTAA convened its first Job Access Mobility Institute (JAMI) in 2012. JAMI takes customer-focused innovation one step further. From the onset, participating teams obtain customer input to design on-the-ground transportation solutions focused on a transportation challenge faced by job seekers, trainees and employers in their locale. During the multi-month research, design, and implementation process teams develop and test service concepts to solve these crucial employment access needs. CTAA facilitators provide ongoing technical assistance as the teams design and test their program ideas. To date, the teams have made significant progress in designing locally based solutions to the challenges faced by area residents. For example,

- In Mercer County NJ, team members are partnering with the transit system and an employer bringing 1,400 new jobs to the area, to ensure workers have shared ride access to the worksite. A newly formed coalition, including representatives from the Governor’s office, is focusing on promoting transportation access in meeting the recruitment needs of multiple employers housed in the warehouse complex.

- The Northeast Iowa team designed an online survey, embedded in a series of Power Point slides, to obtain feedback regarding planned ridesharing alternatives connecting rural
residents to jobs. Events designed to provide business stakeholders with an opportunity to ride public transit are also planned.

- In Tualatin OR, team members are a piloting a project providing access to commuter trains via a circulator route and on-demand vanpools. Having gained significant regional support in its effort to partner with local transit, the team is considering applying for grant funds to support fixed route service along a major employment corridor.

- The Texas Coastal Bend team (representing Brooks and Jim Wells counties) is working with the regional transportation authority to increase collaboration around travel training. As a result of team outreach efforts, the Human Resources Department for the city of Alice hopes to link transportation access to work with recruitment efforts, focusing on transportation as facilitator to employment.

- Research conducted by the Kerr-Tar NC team resulted in local agency consideration of a curriculum to introduce school career and special needs students about the benefits of public transportation. The state Department of Public Instruction requested the team develop a similar curriculum for rural students, focusing on access to work. The team is currently exploring implementation of flex-route and rideshare services in rural county areas.

- Working in partnership with team member Homeward Bound the Marin County, CA team hired four formally homeless individuals to survey low-income community residents to determine their current transportation needs. As a result, the team is considering implementing shuttles at transit hubs to support late night travel to outlying location. They are also partnering with the College of Marin to test software for an affinity rideshare program taking students to and between campuses.

- The team representing Essex County NJ received county approval to develop a transportation kiosk displaying available transit options. The concept may ultimately be replicated statewide. Team members are also working to identify communities where Easy Ride, a program using donated cars, can increase for those needing additional transportation options.

The following report describes the experience and accomplishments of 17 Institute teams taken from throughout the eight Institutes (national and state/regional). Although all teams focused on transportation coordination, their action plans varied by focus area. The summaries are categorized by these focus areas: coordination, mobility management, one-call centers, capacity building, shuttles and gap analysis.
Coordination

Alaska Statewide Coordination Action Team (SCAT)

Institute Year: 2008 (national Institute)

Contact: David Levy, Executive Director, Alaska Mobility Coalition; alaskamc@gmail.com; 907-240—2702

Focus Area: Facilitate information into and out of Governor’s Task Force on Coordinated Transportation

Prior to the Institute, state coordination efforts in Alaska were challenged by the existence of multiple sets of goals and requirements among tribal and agency transportation programs, even when serving similar populations. Further complicating coordination was the fact that nearly a quarter of state residents reside in communities with no access to the state highways necessitating multi-legged trips to reach needed services. A growing senior population and large numbers of veterans, many with disabilities and living in distant locations, increased the demand for accessible transportation options. A lack of state funds to support operating expenses along with limited public knowledge of existing programs increased competition for available funds. Team members believed that coordination at the state level would resolve these issues, resulting in more efficient use of existing facilities and vehicles, better connecting residents within and between communities.

Following the Institute, with CTAA’s assistance, team members designed and implemented a survey to identify all existing programs and services. Team members then held a series of webinars and teleconferences focusing on the ins-and-outs of coordinated transportation. These sessions brought together key stakeholders and state representatives committed to alleviating the transportation barriers faced by special needs populations through the provision of more efficient services.

Shortly thereafter, then-Governor Palin issued an Administrative Order establishing the Governor’s Coordinated Transportation Task Force (CTTF), and directed all state departments to explore ways of coordinating transportation across state government. With knowledge gleaned from the survey and information sessions, team members developed a list of recommendations to guide the work of and suggested possible members for the CTTF. Final task force recommendations were submitted to Governor Parnell and the Alaska Legislature in January 2010. Upon expiration of the initial Administrative Order in February 2010, a second one was signed in June 2011. A new group of task force members was appointed the following October.

The second task force submitted recommendations to Governor Parnell in January 2012, after which the legislature established the Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board. Team members and customer advocates from around the state spoke at public hearings and one-on-one with legislators to voice support for the board. Comprised of representatives of all special needs populations, municipalities and state tribes, the board continues building upon coordination efforts of the Task Force. Although the group accomplished its goals of creating and supporting the Governor’s Coordinated Transportation Task Force, members continue to work together on an informal basis. The Alaska Mobility Coalition’s participation is ongoing.
Timeline:
2008: Alaska Constitution established Governor’s Coordinated Transportation Task Force (CTTF)
2008-2009: Team members develop and submit recommendations to guide work of the task force; suggest possible task force members
2010: Re-establishment of CTTF
2011: New members appointed to the second task force; team members, customer advocates voice support
2012: State legislature establishes the Alaska Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board

North Shore, MA
Institute Year: 2008 (national Institute); 2009 (Massachusetts Institute)
Contact: Mark Whitmore, Executive Director, North Shore Career Center, mwhitmore@nsicareers.org, 978-825-7200; Sandra Efstratiou, Disability Program Navigator, North Shore Career Center, sefstratiou@nsicareers.org, 978-825-7209
Focus Area: To develop an information and referral capacity that allows us to capture full community demand and coordinate the resources to meet it.

“The Institute’s focus on concrete thinking helped us move from broad based ideas to specific action steps for program implementation.” Mark Whitmore, North Shore Career Center

Participation in the 2008 National Institute led to inclusion of the “Greater North Shore on the Move” team as a sub-committee of the region’s Aging and Disability Consortium. Other core members included Area Agencies on Aging, the Career Center, Independent Living Centers, area transit agencies and the Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS).¹ North Shore’s participation in the Massachusetts Institute provided team members a second opportunity to benefit from the Institute process.

Massachusetts Institute team members focused on expanding capacity through inclusion of a wider range of stakeholders in the planning process. Collaboration to expand access to employment corridors for workers dependent on public transit resulted in GLSS taking the lead in designing a one-call center through its Mobility Links initiative. In addition to providing the technology needed to operate the one-call center, GLSS was instrumental in obtaining funding support. Today, the one-call center serves as the focal point for customers across the region, supporting their efforts to live more independent lives.

Complementing development of the one-call center was the launch of a new transportation service, Employment Xpress, by the North Shore Career Center. The center partnered with other stakeholders (community colleges, human service providers and Community Action Programs) to obtain JARC and New Freedom funds, expanding employment options for many low-income residents throughout five communities on the North Shore. Career Center mobility managers now assist customers in identifying transportation alternatives that best meet their travel needs. Customers can purchase low-cost tickets from member human service agencies, and GLSS provides the vehicles. Both Mobility Links and the Employment Xpress seek ongoing customer input to insure they fully meet user travel needs.

The team continued to involve local residents, elected officials and business leaders in the planning process. In 2010, the team shared its plans and accomplishments at a regional symposium to garner additional community support around coordination. A second symposium was held in spring 2013. In summing up her Institute experience, Sandra Efstratiou, Disability Program Navigator, North Shore Career Center noted that the strong bonding experiences created during the Institute continue to enhance working relationships today.

Lessons Learned:

- Collaboration works on many levels
- Think about the big picture and then identify manageable steps to help to effect change

Next Steps:

- Focus on meeting the access needs of returning veterans
- Explore further coordination of services in light of funding cuts
- Address the transportation access needs of older adults re-entering the workforce

Mississippi State

Institute Year: 2006 (national Institute)

Contact: Debra Redmond-Williams, Regional Mobility Manager, Delta Rides Regional Coordination Group, debbra@deltarides.com; 877-866-8272

Focus Area: Education and public awareness of community transportation

At the time of the first Institute in 2006, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), the state Department of Human Services and local planning and development districts were considering options for fully implementing coordination efforts as mandated under passage SAFETEA-LU. As an integral part of the MDOT-led statewide coordinated planning process, and with community assessments and input, a number of regional advisory groups evolved. These regional entities were organized around the State’s Planning and Development Districts and the United We Ride Framework for Action process. The transportation and human services partners that served 15 counties and the mid and upper Mississippi
Delta area formed a regional working group that became known as Delta Rides. They and other regional representatives were among the members of the Mississippi state team.

The team hoped to use information gained about regional coordination strategies for support and service provision as a guide in the development of their respective regional plans. Although coordination between transit providers and social service organizations was a key component of the selection criteria for FTA program funding, the absence of local “buy in” from elected officials and employers had limited the effectiveness of these efforts. Further, the hesitancy of social service agencies to share resources or contract with public transportation providers resulted in inefficient and duplicative programs. Team members hoped to parlay the information gained during the session to better serve and advocate on their customers’ behalf.

Recommendations from the Institute resulted in the formalization of a series of educational activities by the Mississippi Public Transit Association (MPTA), a team member. Known as “Transit Day at the Capital”, and local “Try Transit Day”, the events were designed to update elected officials about key transportation issues, with a focus on their role as transportation advocates. Delta Rides partnered with MPTA and MDOT to sponsor these events.

Following the Institute, Delta Rides continued development of its regional plan with assistance from MDOT and a consultant supported by a grant from CTAA. Hired in 2008, the consultant focused on increasing public awareness about the region’s coordination efforts. Two on-site meetings with transportation providers helped her assess the status of services and to identify additional means of support. That information guided the design of various marketing materials and a website (http://www.deltarides.com/). The website and related toll-free number allow customers in the Delta region to access information about area-wide available transportation services. Additional assistance provided by the consultant included updates of sub-region passenger information materials to reflect current services and ongoing coordination of marketing strategies. Concurrently, Delta Rides’ lead agency, the Bolivar County Council on Aging, tapped into American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to hire a mobility manager. She was tasked with coordinating services between the coalition’s twelve member agencies. The primary deliverable was a detailed report on strategies and options for organizing and promoting access to and the availability of coordinated transportation services throughout the region.

With support and technical assistance from MDOT, the work of the Delta Rides regional group has continued to increase awareness, improve access and increase the availability of services. Thanks in part to additional consultant services and strategic investment made by MDOT, the focus has shifted to the creation of a regional call center enabling member agencies to better coordinate rides and administrative functions. The Bolivar Council served as the lead agency for this effort. Information gleaned from a visit to a similar operation in Paducah, Kentucky helped to guide Delta Rides in the design of the center. Participating agencies are currently receiving training on system-wide software use that will guide operation of the center. The software will enable member agencies to share customer information and travel needs, thus reducing duplication of service. The regional call center is
scheduled to become fully operational by the summer of 2013. Although Delta Rides currently operates the only call center in the state, others have been proposed and are in the pipeline.

**Lessons learned:**
- Coordination efforts reduce duplication of services, saving money and time
- It is best to address turf issues early in the process

**Next steps:**
- Extend transportation services to include later hours and weekend access
- Develop a cost-sharing methodology
- Installation of GPS, mobility cameras and electronic fare box
- Grow regional fleet

**Timeline:**
2006: Developed mission statement and regional plan
2007: Delta Rides participates in Capital Day event
Dec.: 2007: Mobility Manager hired
2008: Established website allowing users to access daily/weekly/monthly trips/maps and schedules
  - Creation of educational materials, including video, media ads and a toll-free number
2009: Established call center to connect routes and services
2012: Availability of GPS
2013: Expansion of regional call center to enhance access through synchronized transit information
  - Develop regional fee scale
  - Develop cost sharing methodology
  - Call-center supervisor hired
  - Call center becomes fully operational summer 2013

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**Passaic County, NJ**

**Institute Year:** 2007 (national Institute)

**Contact:** John McGill, Director, Passaic County Para Transit Program, johnm@passaiccountynj.org; 973-305-5763

**Focus Area:** Develop an evolutionary marketing strategy with incremental steps involving coordination and buy-in with local and state community stakeholders in an efficient and effective customer driven transportation system.

“The Institute was a great tool. It opened everyone up to how we should be collaborating to reduce duplication and save money.” John McGill, Director Passaic County Para Transit Program.
Like many other communities, Passaic County NJ has witnessed increased dependence on shared ride access among populations who are no longer able or cannot afford to operate an automobile. To address this need, the team focused on developing a centralized clearinghouse to better coordinate transportation services and information, resulting in greater mobility, improved service quality, and independence for all area residents.

Prior to the Institute, many team members served on a steering committee involved in the preparation of the Passaic County Community Transportation Coordination Study. Meadowlink, the area transportation management association (TMA) and team member compiled and distributed a directory of county-wide transportation services following the Institute. The directory was disseminated to all county transit providers, adult day care and senior centers, and nutrition sites. The TMA was also instrumental in the implementation of Community Cars, a volunteer driver program providing personalized curb-to-curb transportation for persons 60 and older. Based on similar programs the team learned about during the Institute, Passaic’s program operates in number of towns throughout a six county area. John McGill notes that the ability to build on models shared by other teams significantly aided the Passaic team’s work.

Under the auspices of the United We Ride committee, stakeholders continue to collaborate with paratransit and other providers to facilitate coordinated transportation for the county’s most vulnerable populations; low-wage earners, individuals with disabilities, seniors and rural residents. Efforts to expand the scope of the committee are ongoing. Faith based organizations, providers serving growing numbers of rural residents, and other human service agencies have since joined the committee. The committee is now focused on improving coordination among programs providing access for rural residents and facilitating partnerships between other human service programs and transit providers. Input from community residents gleaned from surveys conducted by Meadowlink help guide the expansion of services to reach those most in need of access to work, social services and other key destinations. Today, Meadowlink serves as the area call center for transportation information.

Lessons Learned:
- Numerous service options that can be duplicated

Next steps
- Expansion of the United We Ride Committee membership
- Greater focus on collaborative efforts to reduce costs by eliminating duplicative services
- Increased marketing to area residents
- Increased agency involvement in computerized scheduling
Salt Lake County, UT
Institute Year: 2008 (national Institute)
Contact: Mary Guy Sell, Mobility Manager; Wasatch Front Regional Council; mguy-sell@wfrc.org; 801-363-4230 x1104
Focus Area: Establishing a centralized call center to provide information, referrals and scheduling for transportation disadvantaged individuals throughout an eight-county region.

The Salt Lake team represented a cross-section of the coordination efforts among human service advocates throughout the county. Their focus on creating a one-call center to address service gaps and better serve residents with financial constraints, physical or mental disabilities and/or operational constraints, evolved from a county-wide to a regional coordination effort. Mary Guy Sell, the team lead, spoke highly of her experience: “I came back from the Institute totally invigorated. The Institute was a catalyst for everything we’re doing now,” Mary Guy-Sell.

Numerous job changes and retirements have altered the composition of the original team. Today, four members continue to partner, as active members of the Wasatch Regional Coordination for Community Transportation (RCC), formed in 2010. RCC’s focus is on centralized services via a mobility management team (MM team). The MM team is responsible for encouraging and managing coordinated efforts including services and information dissemination throughout an eight-county region. In conjunction with the RCC, the MM team established local mobility councils in six counties and worked with local councils to develop transportation strategies unique to each. The remaining two councils will be established in 2013. Websites for the RRC, the local councils and the coordinated plan are designed to share information across the designated service area. An online Community Map was developed to facilitate coordinated planning, information sharing and trip planning. Online surveys to identify needs and inventory transportation services were also developed.

A one-call center in Tooele County was launched in 2012. Establishment of the center included collaboration among disparate agencies and elected officials, securement of funding for three years, development of a volunteer driver program, procurement of an accessible vehicle and CASD equipment and software (in progress), the hiring of a part-time mobility manager, and recruitment of volunteer drivers. The program provides and coordinates accessible transportation services, linking individuals to public transit within the county and also transporting them from destinations within Salt Lake County when public transit services are not available.

The Utah Transit Authority Change Day Program was implemented to assist the RCC and local councils assess proposed changes in local services. The MM team provides mini planning sessions for each of the counties, bringing key stakeholders together to assess impacts. Because the local MPO (employer of MM team) and the councils lack the authority to support program operations, the MM team is moving to establish a non-profit entity to administer various transportation programs including a volunteer driver initiative and a vehicle sharing program.
A trip to Portland OR by the MM team and several members of the RCC explored a similar concept at Ride Connection. Ride Connection’s vision – to meet the individual needs of each customer, partner and volunteer – helped form the foundation for the Utah program.

Lessons Learned:
• Listen to and work with customers to identify solutions that meet their needs.
• Create a program flexible enough to meet customer needs on a case-by-case basis.

Next Steps
• Establishment of a non-profit entity to implement operations for the region
• Secure additional funding
• Finalize public access to the online Wasatch Mobility Plan and Community Map
• Final two local councils become operational in 2013

Timeline:
2007-2008: Initial exposure to coordinating possibilities and discussions of collaboration between agencies
2008-2010: Broad, regional coordinated planning activities
2010-2012: Mobility manager hired; establishment of regional and local councils; identification of regional, local and individual needs and resources; establishment of planning programs; identification of operational programs and resources
2013: Establishment of private non-profit and centralized call center

Larimer County, CO
Institute Year: 2008 (national Institute); 2010 (Colorado/Wyoming Institute)
Contact: Mary Warring, Mobility Coordinator North Front Range MPO (NFRMPO), MWarring@nfrmpo.org; 970-416-2023
Focus Area: Create a better understanding of transportation and human service agency networks

Larimer County teams participated in both a national and regional Institute. Prior to involvement in the Institute process, Larimer County was new to collaboration. NFR MPO’s current mobility manager, Mary Warring, notes that devoting time to both free and guided discussion during the Institute helped direct team efforts toward creating effective change. She also credits the technical assistance provided by CTAA and the United We Ride Ambassadors as critical to keeping the coordination process alive.

In light of limited state and federal resources and increased demand for services in local rural communities, the team initially focused on the need for improved coordination among area public transit and human service agency providers. Members felt that improved coordination would
particularly benefit older adults, people with disabilities or those with limited earnings. Because coordination was new to the region, the team proposed a symposium, facilitated by CTAA, to initiate a dialogue among key community stakeholders interested in moving forward.

Following the 2008 Institute, NFRMPO hosted the symposium on behalf of the Larimer County Mobility Council (LCMC). LCMC represents the county’s three municipal public transit providers and 11 human service agencies. Formation of the council was identified in the regional Coordinated Plan to encourage agency participation in implementing mobility coordination goals. Over 80 people participated in the session. Discussions focused on effective coordination among existing programs to meet the transportation needs of the greatest number of residents.

Additionally, information gleaned from a survey distributed to more than 65 local transit and human service providers helped pinpoint the areas of greatest transportation need. Participants discussed better utilization of limited funding resources, service expansion and the possible establishment of a one-call center. A significant outcome of the meeting was the development of a comprehensive resource guide listing all public transportation services in the North Front Range area. The guide has been updated numerous times since its initial publication. NFRMPO staff and LCMC member agencies continue its distribution. Plans to create an interactive electronic version are currently underway. Once completed, local residents will be able to use the guide as a trip planning tool.

In 2010, team members began exploring the implementation of a one-call center. Issues of cost sharing and the lack of institutional structure to support coordinated financial partnerships became the overriding concerns of the team. Participating agencies are currently awaiting the results of a regional transit study to determine their next course of action.

Team members credit the Institute with strengthening the membership and scope of the LCMC. Currently 10 member agencies collaborate on travel training activities and partner with the United Way Pathways Past Poverty initiative to improve transportation options for low-income residents.

**Lessons Learned:**
- Building trust among stakeholders new to the concept of coordination takes time

**Next Steps:**
- Implementation of an online trip planning tool with awarded grant funds by June, 2013
- Work toward the implementation of a one-call center – contingent on agreements (MOU’s) reached between area transit providers
- Continued expansion of coordination efforts, focusing on joint transportation projects and outreach/education
- Incorporate lessons learned into the new goals and strategies of the 2013 NFRMPO Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan
Mobility Management

Santa Clara County, CA
Institute year: 2008 (national Institute)
Contact: Dr. Kathryn Heatley, Executive Director, Outreach; katieh@outreach2.org; 408-436-2865
Focus Area: Mobility Management Center concept incorporating Emergency Preparedness Planning initially in the small urban areas of the County (3 cities).

Santa Clara’s team came to the Institute with a goal of addressing the diverse transportation needs of vulnerable populations in a manner that was seamless but responsive to a wide range of residents. Team members were not new to partnership building, having participated a similar session previously facilitated by Easter Seals. Their goal of establishing coordinated human service and ADA transportation services was realized in 2009, with the creation of Together We Ride (http://www.outreach1.org/), a mobility management center managed and operated by team member Outreach & Escort, Inc. Outreach provides a range of transportation and social services, including door-to-door transportation trips to older adults and individuals with disabilities. The agency’s extensive experience influenced the team’s concept of expanded integration of ADA and human service transportation options across urban communities. Services are provided with a holistic approach, and incorporate meeting the access needs of older riders, low-wage earners, children and veterans. The enhanced mobility management center uses a multitude of applied technologies to facilitate scheduling, dispatching, enrollment and client accounting.

Outreach has been the ADA paratransit broker for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) for the past 20 years. Services are coordinated through the use of TRIP Net, a web based trip coordination tool. On-line tools assist emergency responders available from any location with internet access and authorizations.\(^2\) Mobility managers can identify the fastest route, and related fare, and maintain detailed trip records for passengers.

Integrating consolidated transportation, mobility management, and ADA services not only reduced duplication of efforts throughout the county, it resulted in reduced per-trip costs, budget requirements, staffing needs and paratransit capital and fleet demands. An online portal allowing human service agencies, veterans groups, hospital discharge planners and others to access shared transportation alternatives that otherwise would have been provided by paratransit operators, resulted in a decline in paratransit trips and increased rider options. Coordination efforts also increased opportunities for federal program support.

\(^2\) To review a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation of the Outreach model for coordination, see OUTREACH Update 2013.ppt
The mobility management center operates 365 days a year, responding to more than 180,000 monthly calls. In recognition of their dedication to ensuring that everyone in their community has access to needed services at all times, Outreach was the recipient of CTAA’s inaugural Mobility Management award in 2012.

**Timeline:**
2007: Team participation in Easter Seals Mobility Planning Institute  
2008: Team participation in CTAA Institute  
2009: OUTREACH established a Mobility Management Center and continues expansion of the associated Web Portal and other on-line tools created for coordination in partnership with Caltrans and Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC)  
2010: Mobility Action Plan completed  
2012: National Center for Senior Transportation selects OUTREACH 2012 to explore person-centered senior citizen coordination model  
2012 Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (Outreach as a subcontractor) awarded a Veterans Transportation and Community Initiative (VTCLI) grant to expand and update the existing one-call/one-click center  
2012: Outreach receives CTAA’s Mobility Management award  
2013: Outreach adds 70 to 90 plug-in electric vehicles with charging systems

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**Portage County, WI**

**Institute year:** 2007 (national Institute)  
**Contact:** Susan Lemke, Transit Manager City of Stevens Point, Stevens Point Transit, slemke@stevenspoint.com; 715-341-4490  
**Focus Area:** Establishment of a Mobility Manager position leading to the coordination of transportation activities throughout the county

“The Institute experience offered the opportunity to witness what was happening with mobility management and program coordination throughout the country, allowing us the ability to consider those experiences when planning our local coordination. That experience as well as the technical support from CTAA has proven to be beneficial to our program.” Susan Lemke, Stevens Point Transit.

The Portage County team has undergone significant changes in membership since the 2007 Institute, but still represents each of the original partner agencies. The team strove to identify gaps in service throughout Portage County, where nearly 60 percent of residents live in rural communities. Team members focused on the creation of a consolidated partnership between the City of Stevens Point and Portage County in the guise of a mobility manager. Today, she is a county employee, working closely with all stakeholders. She also serves as the Transportation Director for the Aging and Disability Center of Portage County. The two entities also jointly support and share a travel trainer.
In 2011, the city of Stevens Point partnered with North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development to apply for technical assistance through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Rural Passenger Transportation Technical Program3. With support from CTAA, a consultant was hired to develop a plan for a City/County coordinated transportation program. The project would not have been possible without support from local elected officials. In addition, an inter-city transportation project, connecting the City of Stevens Point and five surrounding municipalities through an intercity bus route, is under consideration.

A project advisory committee, including representatives from team member agencies, met in 2012. Facilitated by CTAA, the “visioning” session helped the committee delineate how a coordinated mobility management response would address issues ranging from program eligibility to county and city commitment to the concept. Perceived benefits included improved customer service, maximized use of funds, elimination of duplicative services, coordinated driver training and better allocation of staff responsibilities.4 A recently constructed transportation facility, housing both county and city services, exemplifies the team’s continued effort to enhance coordination.

**Lessons Learned:**

- Pool your resources and keep moving forward
- Don’t let funding constraints curtail your efforts
- Anticipate resistance from potential municipal and county partners
- Be creative in your approach, focusing on the benefits partnering
- Garner support from local elected officials

**Next Steps:**

- Establish call center for coordinated trip planning including ADA service, contract, senior services and a new general public demand-response transportation service
- Involve additional providers
- Expand efforts to provide access to employment for rural residents

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3 The Rural Passenger Transportation Technical Assistance Program, funded through a Rural Business Enterprise Grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and in partnership with CTAA, assists rural communities enhance economic growth and development by improving community transportation services. Program objectives include helping small and emerging businesses and stimulating economic development through new and improved transportation programs. See: [http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=258](http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=258) for additional information.

Timeline:
2007: Attended Institute
2010: Implementation of Mobility Management Program
2011: Travel Trainer added to Mobility Management Program
2011: Applied for technical assistance with CTAA for City/County Coordination Project
2012: Worked with RLS Consulting on Coordination Planning
2013: Work with City and County officials on coordination of services
2014: Begin implementation of CC Coordinated Transportation Service
One-Call/One-Click Services

Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), AZ

Institute Year: 2011 (Arizona Institute)

Contact: DeDe Gaisthea; Human Service Transportation Planner, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG); dgaisthea@azmag.gov; 602-254-6300

Focus area: Develop a one-click resource website for human service transportation information

“The Institute provided an opportunity to hear about best practices on the national level. The quality of the discussion with CTAA staff was extremely helpful.” DeDe Gaisthea, MAG.

Coordination has always been paramount in this region, consisting of 23 cities, multiple populations including three Native Communities, and unincorporated areas. All team members actively participate in the MAG Transportation Ambassador Program (TAP), a venue for community involvement in the development of MAG Human Services Coordination Plans.

The team came to the Arizona Institute concerned about the impact of significant funding cuts on the region’s ability to provide transportation services to area residents. A repeal of the Local Transportation Assistance Fund in 2009 and a decline in sales tax revenues resulted in reduced routes and services, especially in outlying areas. The team sought to identify alternative transportation options to improve access for residents without cars through the exploration of existing services. While at the Institute, the team narrowed its focus, to a more manageable approach of providing area residents with information about currently available transportation options. The resources and providers identified in an inventory of the MAG Human Service Coordination Transportation Plan served as the foundation of a one-click resource, available to all area residents.

Following the Institute, team members developed a scope of services for the one-call center. They designed a web site allowing users to filter information and identify the services that best meet their specific transportation needs. Their experience working one-on-one with customers helped guide the design of the one-call resource.

Three mobility managers are currently providing services in part of the region and the MAG has incorporated a Human Services Transportation Planner position, allowing transportation planning activities to cater to the needs of the targeted populations. The planner acts as a conduit in relaying human services transportation information to stakeholders, has facilitated connections among stakeholders and has coordinated training opportunities in the region.

Lessons Learned:
- Reaching out beyond traditional stakeholders is beneficial to program development
- Learning about other best practices helped the team better focus its goals and objectives
Next Steps:
• Posting the provider inventory in a searchable form on the MAG website
• Continuing the dialogue around the one-call center

Timeline:
2009: Repeal of Local Transportation Assistance Fund, decline in sales tax revenues resulting in reduction of routes and services
2011: Identified existing transportation options available for area residents
2011: Developed scope of services for one-call center and begin website design
2013: Website posted by June
2013: One-click/one-call continues to be work in progress

Door County, WI
Institute Year: 2007 (national Institute)
Contact: Pam Busch, Mobility Manager, Door-Tran and WEP, Inc.; info@door-tran.com; 920-743-9999
Focus Area: Development of a One-Call Center

“Since 2007 look what we’ve done! Kudos to CTAA”, Pam Busch, Door-Tran and WEP, Inc.

Coordination activities among the Door County team began well in advance of the Institute. As they worked to complete their Framework for Action tools laying the groundwork for their Institute activities, team members got to know and feel comfortable with one another. Once in DC, the team focused on documenting the scope of existing services in comparison with current customer needs, especially among the community’s most vulnerable residents. They decided on disseminating a resident survey; implemented in partnership with the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay, upon their return home. Survey results were instrumental in the development of policies and procedures governing the one-call center, decisions on expanding existing services, such as the provision of shared ride taxies, and designing a website to market services.

“CTAA was always in touch, providing constant support.” Pam Busch

Having learned about the USDA Rural Passenger Transportation Technical Program at the Institute, the team applied for and received planning assistance from CTAA. CTAA also facilitated a visit by the manager of the Paducah (KY) Area Transit System, who shared her experiences implementing a similar project. Documents she provided aided the team in the design of additional services. Assistance relating to cost allocations for Medicaid trip reimbursements, computer-aided dispatch, and automatic vehicle location (CAD/AVL) technology was also provided. Federal, state, local and foundation funding for the call center and a mobility manager position was eventually secured, and the call center, Door-Tran
(http://www.door-tran.com/) was launched in 2008. At the time, center staff primarily assisted riders in identifying the most appropriate service to use based on need and affordability.

The center’s scope of services has expanded dramatically since 2008. Today, the one-call center\(^5\) assists customers through a partnership with WEP, Inc. operator of the Door County Job Center, via the Door County Transportation Options Program (DCTOP). Door-Tran and WEP’s programs provide assistance for customers in need of transportation, housing, employment and training opportunities. DCTOP operates an employment vanpool and provides vehicle repair/purchase loans. Door-Tran also sponsors a carpool matching program, provides reduced price taxi vouchers to qualifying individuals and operates volunteer transportation programs serving veterans and residents not served by other systems. In addition, Door-Tran maintains a strong partnership with the County and a non-profit provider, offering shared ride taxi and connector services.

**Lessons Learned:**
- Include every provider in discussions about program services so they do not feel threatened by proposed changes/expansions in service options. Their feedback will help guide future program development.

**Next Steps:**
- Work toward coordination all community transportation programs under one dispatch with all partners sharing resources and rides

**Timeline:**
2006-2007: United Way of Door County Steering Committee formed; MM hired. Funds also allowed for University of Wisconsin-Green Bay survey of Door County residents.
2008-2009: Door-Tran awarded federal transit funds to continue staff and research; half price travel voucher program implemented; Door-Tran granted 501 (c) status
2010-2011: Based on research and collaboration by Door-Tran, Door2Door Rides launched in Sturgeon Bay. Door-Tran partners with Veterans Service Office to implement volunteer veterans’ transportation program
2012: Door-Tran launches county-wide volunteer program funded by United Way of Door County; Door2Door Rides connector system implemented

**Yuma, AZ MPO Team**

\(^5\) Additional information about Door-Tran’s partnership with the employment center and the mobility manager who serves as the link between both agencies, see: The Women’s Employment Project and Door-Tran, Inc.: Two Programs that Link Workforce Customers with Transportation, CTAA, 2010.
Institute Year: 2011 (Arizona Institute)

Contact: Norma Lekan; normalsts@yahoo.com; 928-376-7272; Edwardo Castro; edwardosts@yahoo.com; 928)-941-3221 (cell)

Focus Area: To provide area residents with access to transportation services beyond ADA requirements via coordinated service delivery

The Yuma team came to the Arizona Institute with the express purpose of identifying solutions to meeting pending cuts in ADA demand-response services. Team members hoped to identify service responses to meet the transportation needs of older, disabled, rural and tribal residents, individuals in need of cross-border transportation, and those commuting to work within the city limits. Prior coordination efforts had stymied because many stakeholders felt threatened by the idea of shared resources, afraid that coordinated service provision would cost them riders. Working through various team activities during the Institute, team members concluded that a one-call center was the most effective solution to meeting the needs of their extensive customer base. They noted that each participating provider would benefit from reduced staff and fuel costs, maximum use of vehicles and reduced/eliminated service duplication.

“Two years ago nobody was talking about coordination. Agencies were threatened by the idea of shared resources.” Norma Lemke, Saguaro Transportation.

The team returned home with three specific goals:

- to identify who would be affected by cuts in dial-a-ride services
- to better market the benefits of service coordination in a way that would encourage greater participation and information sharing by providers and stakeholders
- to identify the most efficient use of existing services while eliminating duplication

Partnerships increased as agencies realized the positive impact of coordinating ADA service provision. In late 2011, Saguaro Foundation/Transportation Service was selected to operate the one-call center (SARA Rides). Saguaro has a 30 year history in transportation service provision as well as the scheduling software necessary to facilitate all aspects of operation. The Yuma MPO (a team member) is actively involved in supporting the center, as are multiple human service agencies. Achieve and the Yuma Intergovernmental Transportation Authority are providing vehicles. Eventually, the total vehicle fleet will number 12-15. Two local cab companies have been invited to partner on the project. Their participation will expand after hour service availability. Efforts to include additional public and private providers in coordination continue.

Customers contacting the call center will be matched to the appropriate funding source and provider. RouteMatch software will be used to coordinate trips. Coordinated trip options within paratransit will include senior, employment; non-emergency medical and veteran’s transportation. Operating 24 hours a day, the call center will offer ADA eligibility certification, travel training and the ability to match services to proper funding sources. With funding from the Arizona Department of Transportation...
(ADOT), SARA Rides, should be fully operational by July 2013. ADOT is committed to marketing SARA Rides as a model for other call centers within the state.

Lessons Learned:
- Cast a wide net to identify all unmet needs
- Marketing efforts should focus on the benefits of coordination

Next Steps:
- Finalize ADOT funding
- Finalize MOUs with participating providers
- Continue outreach to include other public and private providers
- Design a web portal allowing users to make trip requests
- Implement a regional phone system (via ADOT) directing all calls to the center
- Implement use of on-board mobile data to track vehicle location, service data and streamline record keeping
Shuttles

Acton, Massachusetts

Institute year: 2009 (Massachusetts Institute)
Contact: Franny Osman, Chair, Acton Transportation Advisory Committee; frannyola@aol; 978-621-7330 (cell); 978 635 1819 (home)
Focus area: Develop a commuter shuttle and demand-response van

“The Institute was invaluable to the expansion of transportation-related partnerships in our community”, Franny Osman.

Acton’s team participated in the Massachusetts Institute. Members had been working informally to address area transportation challenges for five years prior to the Institute. Forming a coalition including representatives from neighboring communities was instrumental in moving forward. Franny Osman, Chair of the Acton Transportation Advisory Committee notes that “connection led to connection…. I was just amazed that there were all these other people that were working towards the same goals that I was. I’ve since come to realize that the whole community’s health and happiness and quality of life and ability to function depends on all of these populations getting what they need.”

Faced with the prospect providing better access to commuter rail for individuals while continuing to meet the needs of paratransit users, the team focused on providing more effective, coordinated services that increased access to a local MBTA rail for seniors, people with disabilities, and other Boston area residents needing rides. The outcome was a shared network providing coordinated on-demand services for all and commuter rail service to area residents. In September, 2010, MinuteVan Rail shuttle (now known as Crosstown Connect) and Dial-a-Ride began providing peak commute hour access from an off-site parking lot to the South Acton MBTA Commuter Rail Station. An on-line booking option in addition to phone-reservation service for Dial-a-Ride shared ride service was also implemented. Residents sign up for both via the MinuteVan website. Both projects are funded in part by a grant from the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

Concurrently, the state enacted legislation allowing towns to use municipal parking lot meter receipts for maintenance, purchase or lease of commuter shuttles or shuttle services between those lots and public transit hubs. Also approved was the use of receipts to cover costs relating to liability in connection with these vehicles. The additional income helps support the shuttle. Throughout the planning process, the Acton team sought support from the Board of Selectmen, significantly improving funding opportunities. The town manager composed a team, including the directors of finance and

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6 For additional information about the MinuteVan program, see Lessons Learned from Coordinated Transportation Series: The MinuteVan Team, Practice No. 12, WorkWithoutLimits, July, 2011, http://www.workwithoutlimits.org/sites/default/files/PDF/PracticeBrief_MinuteVanTeam.pdf
health, resulting in support for the shuttle’s inclusion in the Health Department’s budget. Osman described this outcome as “extremely gratifying.”

An Acton-led town and business partnership applied for and received two consecutive Community Innovation Challenge grants from the state Office of Administration and Finance. Funds supported the installation of GPS technology on vans used by the 5 towns and 1 business that partnered to apply. The information gleaned aided cooperative efforts to provide more efficient service to all populations using these vehicles. Partners tested tablet-based dispatch software for senior and paratransit vans and transit from train to workplace. Acton also operates dispatch for the Road Runner van (town of Lowell) to better coordinate services with MinuteVan.

A study of the access needs in nearby suburban communities complemented the team’s work by improving community knowledge about currently available services. Grant funds from Lahey Clinic (awarded to the Acton Department of Health) supported the creation of a video to market MinuteVan. Second year funds, awarded in 2013, support dispatch programming and tablet technology allowing “real time” ride requests to be folded in to identified fixed/deviated routes.

Reflective of its expanding regional service, MinuteVan changed its name to Crosstown Connect in 2013. The team is forming a transportation management association (TMA) to coordinate regional community and employment transportation services. The TMA will focus on commuters and health and human services populations. In partnership with UMMS, the coalition will develop sensitivity assurance programs, ensuring the ridership and health needs of elderly and disabled individuals are retained and enhanced.

Last April, members of all the transportation coordination teams across the state gathered for a seventh bi-annual meeting since first convening at the Institute. Teams meet regularly in their regions and convene statewide twice a year to share their successes with each other and brainstorm solutions to challenges. The April meeting included a panel and workshop on veteran’s transportation, and small group sessions on insurance, volunteer driver programs, and employment transportation. The next meeting is planned for October 2013.

**Lessons Learned:**

- Identify perceived obstacles to moving forward and work through them as a team to find solutions
- It is permissible to provide rides to the general public on paratransit vehicles when seats are available
- Do not underestimate the importance of the personal touch in providing services
- Forming a coalition of stakeholders builds trust among partners, lends credibility to your work and makes program implementation easier
- You need to have a champion
- Continue marketing efforts once your project is on the ground
Transportation doesn’t fund itself. Take advantage of public support of your service when looking for additional sources of revenue

Encourage local governments to dedicate administrative staff to support your activities

Next Steps:

Formation of a regional Transportation Management Association
Identify new, expanding access needs to education and training and adapt transit services to meet them
Continued marketing and improved communications with business, customers and the public

Heart of Texas, Waco, TX
Institute year: 2009 (Texas Institute)
Contact: Julie Talbert, Contract Manager Heart of Texas (HOT) Workforce Development Board, Inc.; julie.talbert@hotworkforce.com; 254-296-5379
Focus Area: Consolidated scheduling and integrated dispatching

“Time spent planning and strengthening relationships is never wasted time. We left the Institute inspired; plan in hand and with creative approaches for the future.” Julie Talbert, Heart of Texas Workforce Development Board, Inc.

WACO’s team participated in the Texas Institute. Although WACO is the economic and employment hub for the Heart of Texas (HOT) region, limited public transportation and the expense of owning a car leave many residents unable to access available jobs within the greater Waco area. Team members hoped to parley the strong partnerships formed during the Institute experience to expand transportation options, building upon successful existing programs such as the “Highway 6 to Success” shuttle. That service grew from conversations between workforce development, Waco Transit, the HOT Council of Governments, the MPO and a major employer. Now known as LINK, the shuttle is supported with federal transportation funds and local funding from diverse partners ranging from community colleges to Sanderson Farms processing plant, to hospitals, banks and the cities of Marlin, Waco, Rosebud and Riesel. With one small provider and four rural transportation subcontractors, increasing need, and decreased revenue, the team members spent significant time brainstorming a path to a more efficient and coordinated project for connecting rural communities to the urban system, allowing for more service within the rural counties, more frequent access to WACO and a seamless fare alternative.

The Institute experience solidified partnerships among the stakeholders, many of whom previously partnered on area projects identified in the 2006 HOT regional transportation plan. Time dedicated to team activities during the Institute allowed members to focus on exploring affordable options of connecting the shuttle to rural transit. Julie Talbert, Contract Manager with the Workforce Board, attributes the relationships forged during the Institute to the success of future transportation goals in
the region. “Relationship building is everything. Spending intensive periods of time together laid the foundation. It made picking up the phone easy.” Julie represents the workforce system on the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council. She and other partners are involved in the design and implementation of a variety of programs ranging from aligning fleets, vehicle maintenance integration, aligning driver training and exploring the use of shared vehicles for demand-response rides.

Following the Institute, team members continued to work toward the regional integration of scheduling and dispatch. In January, 2013, the project reached a tipping point as Waco Transit took over regional dispatch and began to operate the first evening service in the Greater Waco area. The action steps developed during the Institute continue to guide the team’s work today. Building on the success of the LINK service, the Heart of Texas Workforce Board, Inc. submitted what might be the last JARC proposal to continue the Marlin LINK and the Sanderson Farms LINK, and to expand to operate the evening service throughout Waco. Shared rides are now available to anyone residing in the greater Waco area traveling to work and training between 9:30 and 11:45 p.m., six days a week.

Lessons Learned:

- Culture change takes time and work
- Marketing and outreach are crucial components to a successful service.
- Regular and ongoing passenger and partner surveys must be seen as fundamental features of any successful project.
- Building strong partnerships is essential.

Next Steps:

- Sustain the three LINK service options: Marlin, Sanderson Farms and Evening LINK
- Seek employer and municipal support to sustain and replicate LINK options in other parts of the region
**Transit Hubs/Late Night Access**

**Marin County Transit, San Rafael, CA**

**Institute year:** 2012 (Job Access Mobility Institute)

**Contact:** Paul Branson, Community Mobility Manager, Marin County Transit District
San Rafael, CA; pbranson@marintransit.org; 415-226-0863

**Focus Area:** Job access for low-wage workers; coordinated, affordable and convenient door-to-door services for late night workers

“The process encouraged commitment from and helped build empathy among team members.” Paul Branson.

The Marin County team was among seven teams chosen to participate in the Job Access Mobility Institute (JAMI). Team members sought to identify viable solutions to commuter challenges including a strong demand for mobility options across county borders, geographic limits on connectivity options for commuters into and out of the county and high numbers of non-English speaking residents who encounter difficulties using public transit. Although nearly 60 percent of workers in Marin commute in from other counties, and 40 percent commute to jobs outside of county boundaries, existing bus routes and service hours frequently do not correspond with the travel needs of commuters. Thus, many evening and late night workers have limited non-driving transportation options.

Using the design thinking process, team members identified and tested (via data collection and with customer feedback) key assumptions relating to the attractiveness of proposed service solutions. The design thinking process consists of four phases or sequential questions from assessment of current conditions through testing proposed solutions. They are:

- What is? - assessing current conditions
- What if? – envisioning new approaches to address current challenges
- What wows? – developing new solutions
- What works? – testing one or more prototypes and obtaining customer feedback

During the “what is” phase, team members gathered data on transportation access options to late night employment centers and conducted a series of focus group interviews with key stakeholders to identify possible ways to improve access. Next, they brainstormed possible service concepts, exploring a variety of options including bikes, the use of driverless vehicles, car sharing and employer ride boards. With a goal of providing affordable and convenient door-to-door services, the team focused on 3 possible solutions:

- an affinity group to coordinate information on shared ride opportunities
- an employer sponsored shuttle to public transportation
- late night hubs providing last mile access
Next the team focused on designing and building support for services that people were likely to support and use. As their work continued, members focused on obtaining feedback from low-wage commuters, in particular, to identify how they learned about available transportation options. Four formerly homeless individuals were hired to conduct a survey. Based on the knowledge gleaned from over 1,600 responses, the team is expanding outreach to the non-English speaking community, exploring “neighborhood hub” models, implementing a “travel navigator” program and coordinating information dissemination with the new Business Services unit within the workforce development office. Bus passes are available for commuters at a currently existing hub. Additional services include bicycle and electric car rentals and transportation to child care.

Lessons Learned:
- The short timeline for the process encouraged commitment from all team members

Next Steps:
- Major transit changes scheduled for August 2013
- Expanded community outreach; focus on non-English speaking commuters
- Promotion of transit and commute alternatives
- Implementation of “travel navigator” program
- Working with the Transportation Authority of Marin to explore the location of car sharing pods in local neighborhood hubs
- Identifying possible pilot sites for additional neighborhood hubs
- Ongoing coordination with the Business Services Unit of Marin Employment Connection
- Ongoing meetings/coordination of the JAMI Team
Capacity Building

Capital Area Team, Austin, TX
Institute year: 2009 (Texas Institute)
Contact: Stevie Greathouse, City of Austin, stevie.greathouse@austintexas.gov
Focus Area: To remove transportation barriers for the transportation disadvantaged by empowering case workers, social workers, call center staff and other front-line staff with knowledge of the family of public transportation services available in the Capital Area.

Capital Area team members brought a 3+ year history of working together to the Institute. They all serve on the Capital Area Regional Transit Coordination Committee (RTCC) or Technical Subcommittee and have built solid working relationships. Representing more than 25 organizations committed to transportation coordination, the RTCC has approved strategies to overcome jurisdictional boundaries resulting in transit gaps and continues meeting to implement these actions and to address specific coordination issues among paratransit providers.

During the Institute, the team focused on conducting a baseline survey of case managers/social workers, developing an inventory of the family of transportation services, and developing and administering a curriculum. A survey to gauge how the provision of mobility management services helps customers overcome eligibility barriers was designed following the Institute. Questions focused on service area, client disabilities, client transportation needs, where to find transportation resources, and training preferences. Approximately 100 providers were invited to participate in the survey. Of the 67 respondents, 80 percent of identified themselves as feeling very or moderately comfortable in providing information about transportation options to their customers. Responses indicating that 50 percent of customers lost employment because of a lack of transportation illustrated the need to easily identify various transportation options available to regional residents.

In 2011, working in partnership with Capital Metro Transit, the RTCC developed an online inventory of services: http://capitalareartcc.org/getting-ride.html. Subsequently, the Capital Area MPO (CAMPO) entered into an inter-local agreement, signed in October 2012, with the United Way Navigation Center (2-1-1) incorporating the data into their database, and hiring a part time transportation navigation specialist. Capital Metro, CAMPO and 2-1-1 are working on a system to keep the web information current based on 2-1-1 data. The RTCC also convened a subcommittee to work on developing transportation training curriculum for case managers. The curriculum, designed with an emphasis on materials that were easy to access and use, was piloted among frontline staff, resulting in a better understanding of the range of mobility management services currently provided. The Institute was credited as being “particularly helpful” in moving the project forward.
Gap Analysis

Lincoln County, NC

Institute Year: 2008 (national Institute)
Contact: Angela Schlottman, Aging Specialist, Centralina Council of Governments (COG) Area Agency on Aging; aschlottman@centralina.org 704-348-2735
Focus Area: Improving county collaboration and communication through the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB)

The Institute experience “showed us how coordination can help us be more effective in light statewide funding cuts.” Angela Schlottman, Centralina COG.

The Lincoln County team came to the 2008 Institute hoping to improve transportation options for residents of this rapidly growing rural community bordering the Charlotte area. Team members recognized the importance of coordination to meet projected cuts for programs serving all their constituents and that coordination allowed the TAB “more push and influence” in meeting these challenges. Angela Schlottman Centralina Council of Governments notes “you can accomplish anything with the right group of people at the table.”

After learning about a technical assistance opportunity from the Rural Passenger Transportation Assistance Program, the team applied for and received a grant to evaluate transportation services provided by Transportation of Lincoln County (TLC) designed to enhance economic development. Following the Institute, CTAA contracted with LSC Transportation Consultants and AECOM to prepare a Transportation Operations Plan for the County and City of Lincolnton. The process identified opportunities for efficiencies through coordination, as well as improved marketing techniques to increase utilization of existing services. The evaluation resulted in changes implemented to making local routes more efficient.

State funding cuts have since necessitated a need for prioritization of trips based on the great needs, as opposed to focusing on the larger community as a whole. TLC and other staff are also involved in regional efforts focusing on the use of volunteer transportation to fill gaps in service, exploring vehicle sharing to improve cross-county access, and integrating agency software to better track service availability. Changes in regional demographics, resulting in more residents traveling between rural and urban areas to access medical and other services, necessitated greater emphasis on regional transportation solutions.

Today, Centralina is focused on building partnerships throughout the entire nine-county region. That expanded vision is evidenced by a presentation to area stakeholders about mobility management following the Institute. As a result of a presentation about mobility management at a regional ADA training, Centralina plans to establish a mobility management program serving all nine counties.
Lessons Learned:
- Programs are always limited by funding
- Because partners are pulled in multiple directions to provide comprehensive services to their customers, incentives for continuing partnerships are necessary
- Focus on coordination around solutions that address multiple challenges will solidify partnership efforts

Next Steps:
- Centralina applied for a regional planning grant to support implementation of a mobility management program and its volunteer transportation initiative
- Lincoln County TAB members will continue to work toward effective leveraging of resources and to identify opportunities for coordinated training, outreach and marketing.
Increased Awareness/Service Expansion

Transportation Coordination Network of the Coastal Bend (Brooks and Jim Wells Counties), TX

Institute year: 2012 (Job Access Mobility Institute)

Contact: Brigida Gonzalez, Assistant Transportation Planning Director, Corpus Christi MPO, bgonzalez@cctxmpo.us; (361) 884-0687

Focus Area: Make public transportation convenient and affordable for Brooks and Jim Wells counties to employment related destination

“Once the team came together, we saw the importance of building a process that carries on beyond the current year.” Brigida Gonzalez

Coastal Bend was another JAMI participant. Although area services include a 12 county region, the team focused on two rural counties, Brooks and Jim Wells. Those counties have a high percentage of residents living below poverty level and the highest percentage of homes without an available automobile. Large numbers of residents have not completed high school and are in need of employment training opportunities. Residents have limited knowledge of existing services and perceive public transportation as serving only older adults and persons with disabilities.

Further negating progress were the beliefs of many stakeholders that the area was too large to provide inexpensive service, the perception that many residents did not want to access training and that funding options were limited. The team coalesced around the principle that improved transportation access would result in increasingly successful human service provision. Research activities conducted during the “What is” phase of the process reiterated that:

- Residents were uninformed about available services
- Services would be provided if requested
- Educational facilities (schools and colleges) need and want additional transit access
- Businesses felt the negative impacts of limited transportation

Proposed solutions to these challenges included the creation of multiple mobility options (vanpools, night services, etc.), increased publicity about existing services, connecting individuals to employment and training for high demand jobs (welding, electrical and nursing) and creating and testing a pilot project. Currently underway, the pilot promotes access to career exploration alternatives at a local college for area high school students. Picked up at their high school, students are transported to the Public Service Academy at Delmar College West Campus. Additional stops pick up other students who are on the line’s direct route. College issued student IDs allow them to ride free of charge. An agreement between Delmar College and the Regional Transportation Authority supports no cost access for the students.
Next Steps:
- Sponsor a “Media Day” at Delmar to inform county leaders about student
- Identify sources of support for students choosing to continue their training during the fall semester