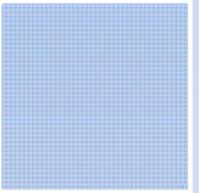
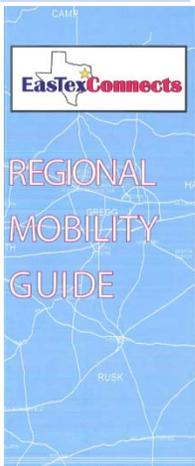
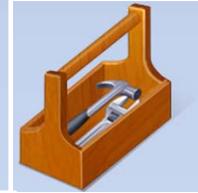
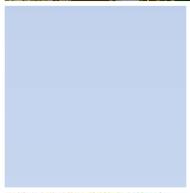
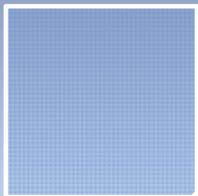


# EASTTEXCONNECTS WORKSHOP

SYNERGY PARK, KILGORE, TX  
OCTOBER 29, 2013



# EASTEXCONNECTS WORKSHOP

Synergy Park Kilgore, TX

October 29, 2013

**Welcome & Introductions** - Linda Cherrington

**1) Accomplishments Across the Region** - Shawna Russell

**2) Review of Steering Committee Interviews** - Linda Cherrington

**3) Case Studies & Best Practices** - TTI Team

A. **Hill Country Transit District (The HOP)** - Linda Cherrington

B. **Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission** - Jonathan Brooks

C. **Texoma Area Paratransit System (TAPS)** - Linda Cherrington

D. **Foothills Transit** - Jonathan Brooks

E. **Valley Metro, Arizona** - Linda Cherrington

F. **Northwest Oregon Transit Alliance: The CONNECTOR** - John Overman

**4) Breakout Sessions: Strategies for Identified Goals and Priorities - CONNECTIONS:**

A. **Connecting with Customers & the Community** - Shawna Russell

B. **The Connection Between Data, Performance & Service** - Jonathan Brooks

C. **Connections with Partners** - John Overman

D. **Connections: Enhancing the Customer Experience; Becoming Seamless** - Linda Cherrington

**5) Group Presentations from Breakout Sessions** - Jonathan Brooks

**6) Common Themes Moving Forward:  
Identifying Strategies & Next Steps** - Linda Cherrington





# Welcome & Introductions

First things first!



*Welcome and Introductions* 1



## High-level overview

- Accomplishments across the region
- Review of steering committee interviews
- Case studies and best practices
- Breakout sessions
- Group presentations from breakout sessions
- Common themes moving forward



*Welcome and Introductions* 2



**First up...**

Accomplishments across the region!



*Welcome and Introductions* 3

# Accomplishments Across the Region

Great things you've done!



Great things you've done

1

# Improving the Customer Experience

- Branding of GoBus
- Longview Intermodal Center
- Longview Train Station Renovation
- Tyler: "Route Shout" & Travel Trainer
- Marshall Depot: Improved ADA Access
- Bus Shelters & Stops in Longview & Tyler



Great things you've done

2

## EasTexInnovations

- Regional Maintenance
- Same Software  RouteMatch Software
- Non-traditional Partnerships
- Creative Service Expansions
- Intercity Rail  AMTRAK
- Truly Multimodal Coordination: Airports, RMA Participation, Inter-city Bus, & Amtrak



Great things you've done

3

## Customer Focus

- Veterans' Initiatives: "Basic Training" Brochure, Interconnectivity Day, and Access to Shreveport VA
- Updated Coordination Plan
- Customer Outreach: Regional Mobility Guide & PSA Efforts
- Awards & Accolades



Great things you've done

4

**Think of the many ways you've  
changed people's lives for the better  
in East Texas by working together...**

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people  
can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.  
— Margaret Mead



Great things you've done

5

**Next up...**

Review of steering committee  
interviews



Great things you've done

6



# Review of Steering Committee Interviews

What y'all told us.



*Review of Steering Committee Interviews* 1



## Overview

- UWR Assessment Tool used as model.
- Timeframe July and August 2013.
- TTI able to visit with 90 percent of the membership (26 out of 29 members).



*Review of Steering Committee Interviews* 2



## Numerical Scoring & Over-arching Themes

- *Review of handout: Numerical scores.*
- *Dominant themes from comments section:*
  - ✓ *Commitment to customer: “People first, barrier free.”*
  - ✓ *Interest in moving forward to become seamless and expand opportunities throughout the region.*
  - ✓ *Recognized the importance of marketing and public information for both customers and the general public.*
  - ✓ *Additional observations...*



## Next up...

Case studies and best practices



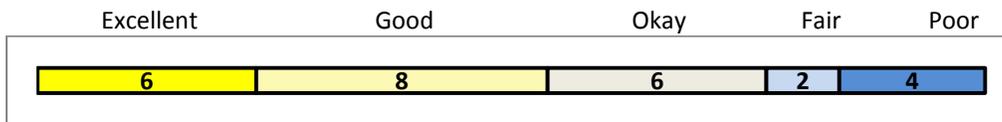
# EastTexConnects Stakeholder Interviews: Summary of Responses for Structured Questions

Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) staff met with members of the EasTexConnects Committee during July and August 2013, to discuss regional transportation coordination in East Texas (Planning Region 6). Out of 29 committee members, TTI met in person or by conference call with 26 (90 percent of the membership). TTI was not successful in scheduling time with two members and one member declined to meet. Researchers followed a discussion outline in each meeting or conference call to obtain answers to core questions. The interviews ranged from 30-60 minutes in duration.

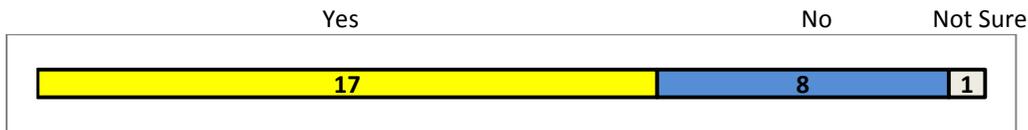
This section summarizes responses for the 10 more structured questions found within the survey document. The questions discussed here were adapted from United We Ride’s “*A Framework for Action, Building the Fully Coordinated Transportation System: A Self-Assessment Tool for Communities*” (UWR Assessment Tool). While some respondents also shared examples and comments, TTI’s primary focus was on obtaining a structured response (such as a 1 to 5 rating, yes/no, or agree/disagree) during this portion of the interview. Combined scores and responses to these questions are found below. Additional statements and comments offered as part of these questions will be discussed as part of the overall survey report.

## Responses to the 10 questions modeled after the UWR Assessment Tool

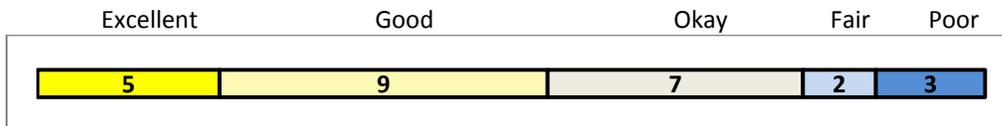
**1) How would you rate the governing framework [EasTexConnects] that brings together providers, agencies, and users?**



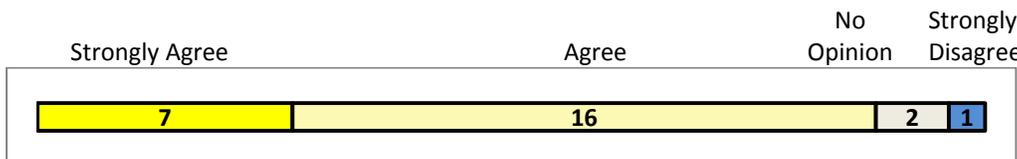
**2) Are there clear opportunities that all support?**



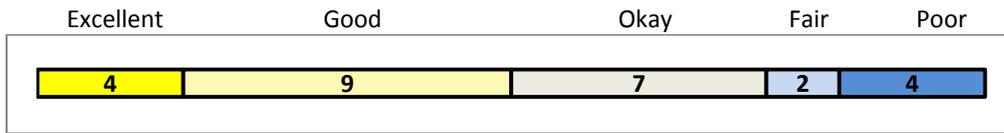
**3) How would you rate the sustained support for coordinated transportation planning among elected officials, agency administrators, and other community leaders?**



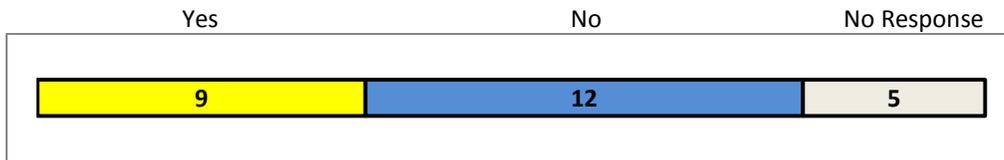
**4) Is there positive momentum in the region? Is there growing interest and commitment to coordinated public transit and human service transportation to maximize resources?**



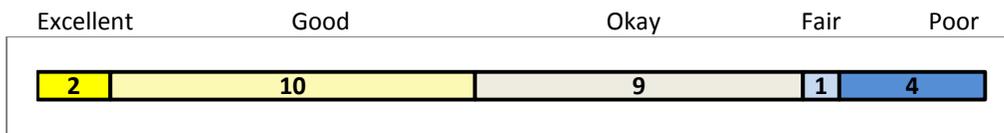
5) Please describe your overall evaluation of how well is the region doing in the area of making things happen by working together.



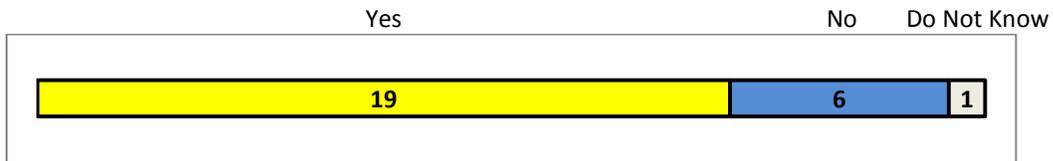
6) Are there adequate resources and programs that fund transportation services?



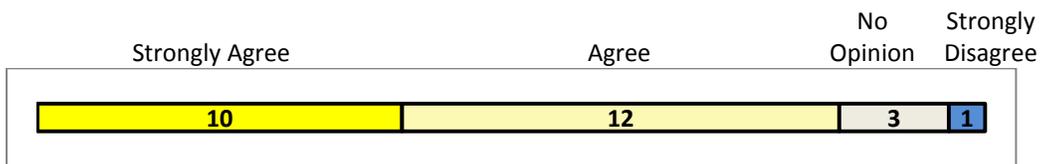
7) How would you describe the region's process to identify duplication of services, underused assets, and service gaps?



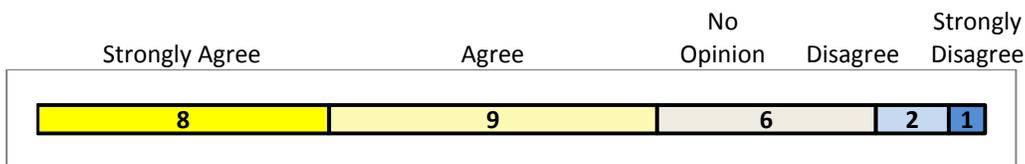
8) Have community outreach and previous planning processes adequately involved the full complement of potential stakeholders?



9) The region should pursue a seamless payment system that promotes customer choice.



10) The region should pursue a single call center/dispatch for all providers to book demand-response trips.



## **What is successful regional public transportation coordination for the region?**

This section summarizes responses from a series of questions asking each stakeholder to define his/her vision for regional public transportation coordination.

### **Themes from Stakeholder Comments**

- Regional “compact” so that all providers are committed to work together for common goals [to expand service, enhance customer service]
- Multimodal – public transportation, private transportation, non-profit transportation service providers, intercity bus, regional rail, airport transportation
- People first, customer first, barrier free
- Interconnectivity between modes
- Transportation for medical, work, shopping, personal trips [and MTP?]
- Expanded service
  - Days of week
  - Span of service per day
  - Regional access/regional connections
  - Access to jobs, education, training
  - Veterans to medical/support services
- Mix of service types appropriate to markets
  - Match type of service (fixed route, demand response) to market/customers
  - Rebuild intercity bus connections
  - Expand regional rail
- Regional connections
  - Urban-rural
  - Fixed route-demand response
  - Intercity-local
  - Public-private
  - Connections to jobs, education, training
  - Veterans to services
- Seamless connections, transfer points
- One call, one click for the customer to access information about all services
  - “No wrong door”
- Mobility management to help individuals access service
- Seamless fare for the region, all transportation services/providers
- Public information/marketing to ensure the general public is aware of services, successes
- Customer information to ensure riders and possible riders know how to access services
- Extraordinary customer services
- Transparent information
  - Data, benchmarks, milestones, performance measures
  - Measure success
  - Provide information to document return on investment
  - Equitable distribution of services according to need
- Public support, local government support
- Expand resources (dollars) for public transportation

## **What are the expected benefits of regional public transportation coordination?**

This section summarizes responses from a series of questions asking each stakeholder to explain the expected benefits of coordinating regional public transportation.

### **Themes from Stakeholder Comments**

- Benefit regional economy if clients/users have access to transportation that is affordable and make connections to jobs (leading to more earned income, more purchase of goods and services, more personal activity)
- Economic growth, ease of getting to/from places
- Benefits individuals because they have access to better jobs, health services, food (less isolated and happier, healthier lifestyle)
- Benefits providers because can share costs and reduce inefficient trips
- Build positive reputation. Demonstrate success.
- Better outcomes, accessible transportation for more people
- Better service, lower cost, and potentially more service as well
- Improved geographic coverage, access to/for persons in need
- More efficient service
- Better service for people, meeting needs
- Better physical/mental health by facilitating people to get out and participate in the community
- Better service for Veterans, connections to medical services
- Increase in number of riders
- Connections
- Lower cost/rider
- Improve performance measures
- Better service to the customer
- Expand services
- Possible to implement the Regional Coordination Plan

## **What are the impediments to regional public transportation coordination?**

This section summarizes responses from the question “In your opinion, what are the impediments to regional public transportation coordination?”

### **Comments from Stakeholder Comments**

- Committee is large and diverse
- Not every member of committee has same vision
- Some members more assertive than others
- Do not always practice effective communications tools
- Lack of mutual trust among some providers
- Tendency to get stuck on a divisive issue
- Tendency to get stuck on issues that are not pertinent to delivery of services to the customer
- Passengers tend to get lost in the conversation
- Not looking at big picture, not focused on quality of service or delivery of service
- Not all stakeholders agree on priorities
- Turf, plant the flag
  
- Public and private providers represent different business models
- Fare structure and sharing
- Providers serve constituent base
- Local governments focus on service for residents
- Need public to be more aware of the services available
- Need more local share investment
- Funding has become a competitive process, need to refocus on collaboration
- Lack of transparency
  
- Size of the region is large, diverse urban/rural
- Advance scheduling for demand responsive service
- No service evenings
- Conflicts about rules on transfers
- Is there progress to close the gap (in needed services)? Need data
- Demand responsive transit not really conducive to work trips in outlying areas

## **What changes are needed to deliver highly coordinated public transportation?**

This section summarizes responses to a question about what changes are needed to achieve highly coordinated public transportation in East Texas.

### **Comments from Stakeholder Comments**

- Focus as a committee on Actions
- Facilitator to help improve communications
- If needed, seek training on conflict resolution
- Recognize we may not always agree, but we can still respect one another
- Work to implement more elements of the Regional Coordination Plan [Update]
- Focus on the rider and services
- Expand outreach
- Seek non-traditional answers to challenges of providing service to very different urban and rural markets
- Focus on delivery of service to the customer
- Need more service
- Need connections
- Implement project reporting system to track progress, share data
  - Data transparency

## **What are expectations of this project?**

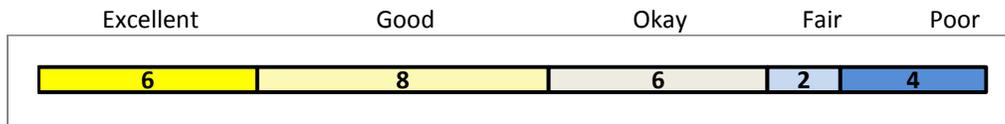
This section summarizes responses to a question about stakeholder expectations for this project.

- Focus on common goals
- Energized to tackle issue(s), accomplish, make progress
- Plan of action, dates/goals, next steps, tracking accountability
- Provide objective, transparent data
- Back up facts with data
- Revisit service design
- Set positive tone, set of priorities that can be implemented
- Provide real and measurable strategies to make systems work together better
- Recommend enhancements based on need
- Remember the goal is to get better service for the end user (customer)

## Annotated Responses to the 10 questions modeled after the UWR Assessment Tool

Additional statements and comments offered as part of these questions:

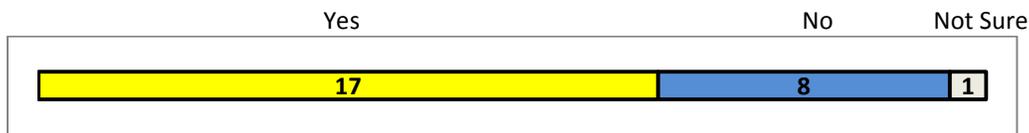
**1) How would you rate the governing framework [EasTexConnects] that brings together providers, agencies, and users?**



**Comments ...**

- *“Finally getting things done, positive results”*
- *“All providers have to be involved, we have to have that expertise; however, that means we will always have vested interests”*
- *“Lots of interest in working together, lots of committed people, but there are barriers”*
- *“Finally getting things done, positive results”*
- *“Just need to work to make a big organization work. Everyone is competent”*
- *“Members represent a lot of organizations that have a common bond: “coordination” but there are different constituents and different priorities.”*
- *“I think we should have been further along by now. On paper looks good, there is a good framework, but are we actually making progress?”*
- *“Meet a lot, but not a lot accomplished. What are we doing?”*

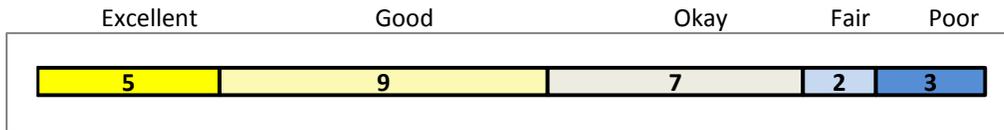
**2) Are there clear opportunities that all support?**



**Comments ...**

- *“Expansion public transportation; there is universal buy-in that public transportation is worth the extra investment”*
- *“Yes – after discussion”*
- *“Yes, for example video, Interconnectivity Day”*
- *“All want better transit. Working together to improve East Texas regional transportation”*
- *“Majority; everyone votes same way.”*
- *“Deep down ‘Yes’ – people mean well”*
- *“Most of the discussion should be about opportunities to provide (more) transportation service”*
- *“Sure everyone believes in seamless transportation, but breaks down between what and how. There are still gaps in service. We should focus on the passenger.”*
- *“There was agreement on the regional plan, but not how to implement?”*
- *“Yes, a majority support, but not everyone”*
- *“Difficult to get everyone to listen to one another”*
- *“Members need to be more than their own “mode” advocate and learn to more effectively listen to other members. Currently, if something is not important to them they tune out”*
- *“Maybe this could be studied a little more, or a discussion topic for the committee”*
- *“I will say ‘No,’ I have not been involved where I heard we all had agreed on goals”*

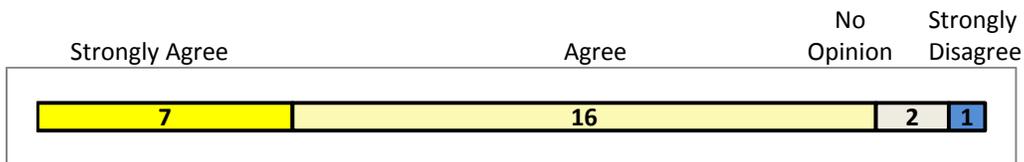
**3) How would you rate the sustained support for coordinated transportation planning among elected officials, agency administrators, and other community leaders?**



**Comments ...**

- *“Very good success in transportation (Aviation)”*
- *“The region pulls together when pursuing roadway projects”*
- *“Elected officials like to hear about how services relate to their voting constituents.”*
- *“Support is weak now, but if EasTexConnects gets functioning then support will come”*
- *“Before I can rate support higher there would need to be more local funding from cities and counties”*
- *“Could use more involvement from smaller counties.”*
- *“Since the early 1990’s the mechanism and processes have gradually improved, but there is still not a lot of local support”*
- *“Elected officials may have different ideas of how to get there”*
- *“For a period of time, turmoil concerned XXX County and whether or not it was well represented; possibly withdrawing. There are some counties concerned not well represented”.*

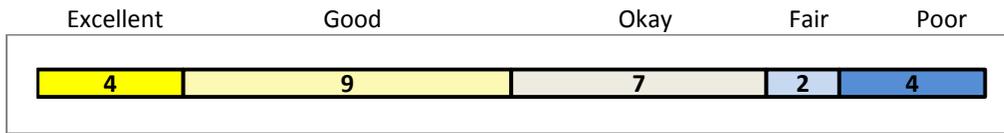
**4) Is there positive momentum in the region? Is there growing interest and commitment to coordinated public transit and human service transportation to maximize resources?**



**Comments ...**

- *“Agree, referenced momentum other regional initiatives with support in Austin”*
- *“Basic training, rider guide, Interconnectivity Days”*
- *“The positive momentum is driven by client and constituent demand”*
- *“There was always an interest. Question is how to do better?”*
- *“Could be better – needs to be positive”*
- *“Turf battles are too common – more transparency may help”*
- *“There are many disagreements, but still momentum”*
- *“We badly need the coordination of transportation authorities”*
- *“No opinion: agree the intentions are good, but disagree because there continue to be issues”*

**5) Please describe your overall evaluation of how well is the region doing in the area of making things happen by working together.**



**Comments ...**

- *"I say "Excellent" but not just referring to EasTexConnects"*
- *"We work very well together. Good to air different ideas."*
- *"Whole lot of progress. We need to continue working together."*
- *"Examples: training, vehicle maintenance, Interconnectivity Days, but there are distractions"*
- *"Groups of stakeholders do well, others sometimes do not, and still other stakeholders do not participate at all"*
- *"Very positive, when we get together and agree to get it done. Negative when we let the small stuff get us sidetracked"*
- *"Roller coaster. Distractions, lose momentum. Spin-off issues. In last year, we have made progress in communication and education. There is so much more to do, for example, with Veterans"*
- *"Questions about 5310 process. Problems occur when you ask a committee to evaluate projects but there is not formula."*
- *"Disagreements are taking a toll"*

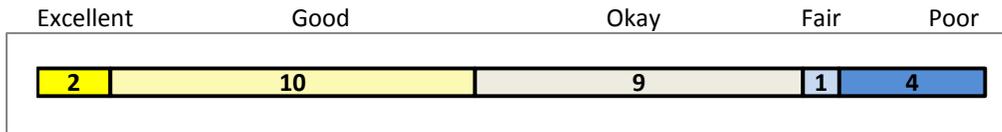
**6) Are there adequate resources and programs that fund transportation services?**



**Comments ...**

- *"Probably yes, but their dispersion is the challenge"*
- *"Enough money available, but takes work and planning"*
- *"More local funding needed"*
- *"Yes, there are sufficient funds if use coordination to leverage. Funding is always tight; we have to work with what we have."*
- *"Regulation and a plethora of funding sources complicate using resources efficiently. For example, some human service agencies own vehicles funded by more than one source, each of which has different process to manage the vehicle purchase, use, and disposal."*
- *"Absolutely not...for example, aging client needs in East Texas use more resources than funding streams from those agencies can usually provide."*
- *"Inherent subsidy, seems expensive but because we do not price the externalities of owning and operating a vehicle"*
- *"So far, TxDOT [FTA] funds have been sufficient; risk that we get all of our resources from 1 source"*
- *"No, because I do not think my county gets its fair share of resources"*
- *"Tough to find local share"*
- *"No county contributes funds for public transportation. City of Marshall and Kilgore College support rural transit services; City of Longview and City of Tyler support urban transit services."*
- *"Can always use more. Not always enough emphasis on outlying communities."*
- *"Challenge for public transportation, many want to put transportation funds into capital projects."*
- *"Unsure - do not know enough about programs and grants"*

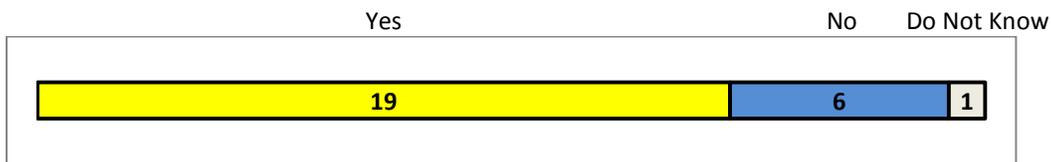
**7) How would you describe the region’s process to identify duplication of services, underused assets, and service gaps?**



**Comments ...**

- “No duplication of services, providers do a good job of using assets, and service gaps exist but are hard to address due to lack of resources”
- “Service gaps are well addressed, underused assets not a big deal”
- “Self-interest is okay, but sometimes overrides global intent/purpose”
- “I think service should be bid to lowest cost operator in each county”
- “Regional Coordination Plan 2011”
- “Regional plan, only as good as implementation. Need action plan.”
- “Committee not always cohesive. Pieces of the puzzle but not the whole picture.”
- “Duplications are known, so process is there to identify but does not solve the problem.”
- “See the process for the Regional Coordination Plan before it was published.”

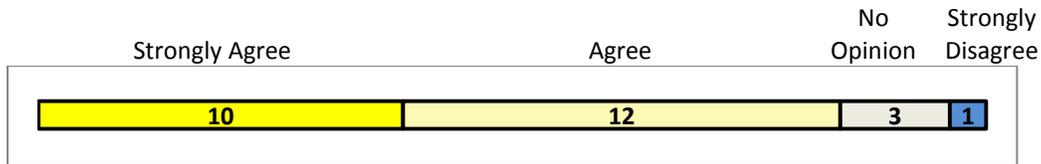
**8) Have community outreach and previous planning processes adequately involved the full complement of potential stakeholders?**



**Comments ...**

- “Everyone has had opportunity to be at the table; providers have to be there but there is an inherent self-interest. Challenge those who are getting the funds are on the committee”
- “And then some...need to try to limit committee to 24. Requires a commitment of a lot of time.”
- “Can be challenging for some stakeholders to attend meetings at times/locations transit service not available”
- “Need more outreach, get message out to residents, and phone application may be useful”
- “The processes may involve too many stakeholders without direct interest in transit”
- “Planning processes were effective at being open and accessible to groups with agencies, some groups not aware/involved enough until too late in process”
- “To be worked on”
- “We still need HHS agencies”
- “Passengers are not involved. We could use technology to bring more people to the meetings. We need reminders of why we are here – need to bring focus back to riders”

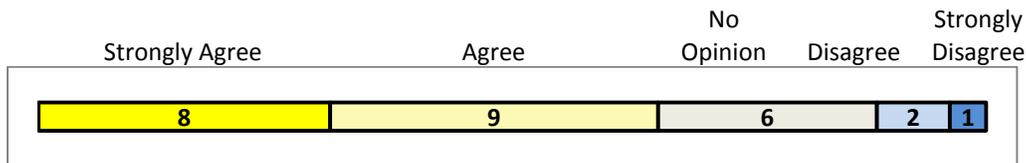
9) The region should pursue a seamless payment system that promotes customer choice.



Comments ...

- “Sounds like a good idea for the rider”
- “Simpler to use. Do not over complicate.”
- “Universal travel card has other benefits: safety, teach money management, avoid carrying cash
- “Probably a good idea”
- “Farebox revenues are very low, is it worth it?”
- “Needs to be investigated, depends on the technology, must be closely investigated, numbers fully vetted; sounds great but what are the details?”

10) The region should pursue a single call center/dispatch for all providers to book demand-response trips.



Comments ...

- “Strongly agree need single call center for customers, like 211. Promote with a lot of public information.”
- “Agree a central dispatch would be more efficient, operate like a hospital central dispatch.”
- “Maybe two call centers, one East and one West. Serve as back-up to each other.”
- “Agree we need single call center, but disagree we need central dispatch”
- “We need seamless call center to meet customer needs, but not central dispatch”
- “Prefer ‘single point of entry, but no wrong door’. Need more information, who all would be involved, what does it look like?”
- “There are pros and cons. Pros: more efficient. Cons: cultural issue, many people want person-to-person connection. Maybe one call center but not one operator [dispatcher].”
- “Could be a single number/dispatch service, but would probably be helpful to have more than one location for redundancy purposes”
- “May be OK.”
- “Hesitant. How would it work?”
- “Need more information.”

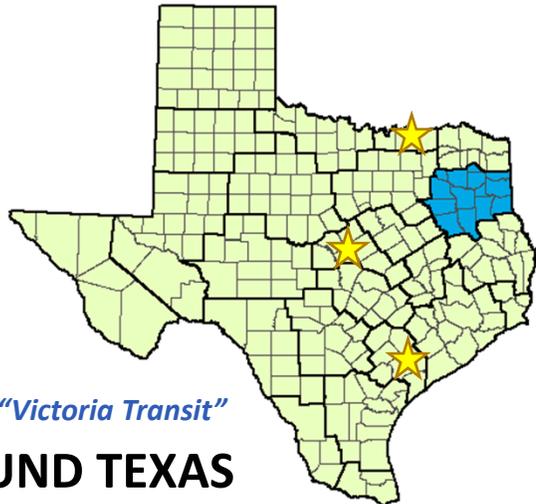


**Case Studies & Best Practices**

Great Things Others Have Done

**EastTexConnects**

*Case studies and best practices* 1



*HCTD "The Hop"*  
*TAPS "GO taps"*  
*GCRPC "RTRANSIT" & "Victoria Transit"*

**A LOOK AROUND TEXAS**

**EastTexConnects**

*Case studies and best practices* 2

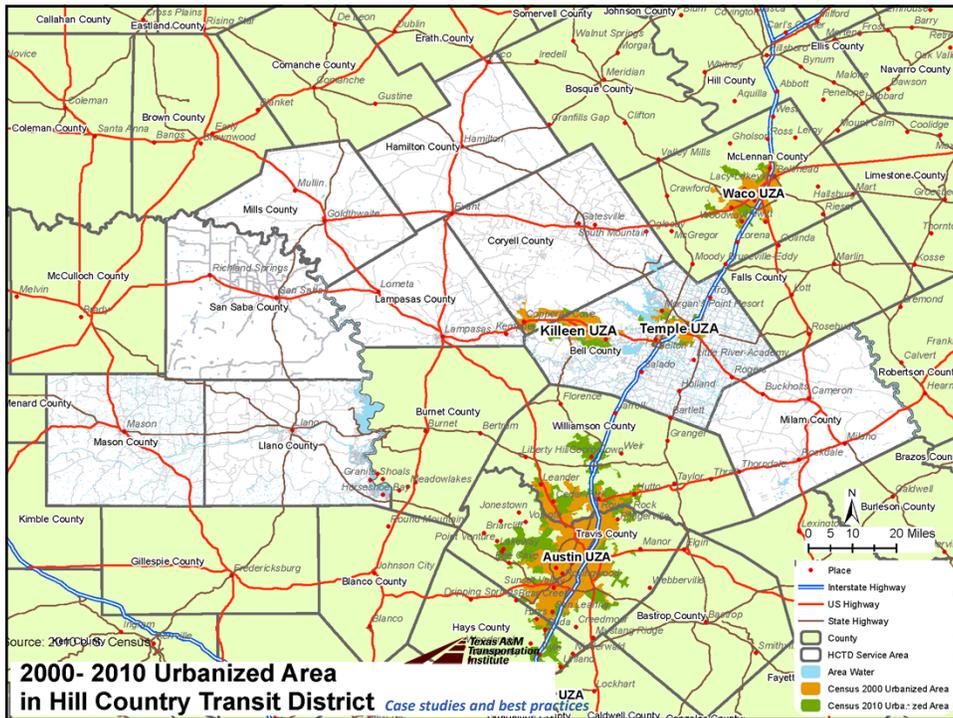


**“The Hop”**

**HILL COUNTRY RURAL TRANSIT DISTRICT**



Case studies and best practices **3**



# Organizational Overview



TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
CENTRAL TEXAS



Case studies and best practices

5

# Best Practices: Consolidated Urban Operations



Case studies and best practices

6

# Best Practices: Partnering Efforts

## Veterans' Groups



## Partnering with Colleges



TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
CENTRAL TEXAS



Case studies and best practices

7



*"RTRANSIT" & "Victoria Transit"*

## GOLDEN CRESCENT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (GCRPC)



Case studies and best practices

8



## Governing Body

- General Assembly
  - County Commissioners
  - Mayors
  - Councilmembers
  - Citizens
  - Hospital Districts
  - River Authority
  - Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Board of Directors
- Policy Advisory Committees



Case studies and best practices

11

## Public & Private Collaboration: Inteplast JARC Success Story



Case studies and best practices

12



*"GO taps"*

## TEXOMA AREA PARATRANSIT (TAPS)



*Case studies and best practices*

13

## Introduction



Where do you live?

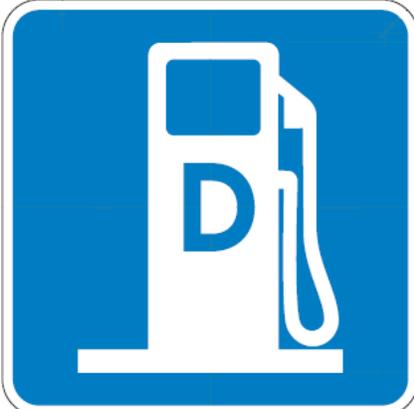


*Case studies and best practices*

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## Fuel Purchases

- Innovative partners
  - City of Bonham
  - Tarrant County
- 21% savings
- Local match




Case studies and best practices 15

## Employer Shuttle

- Peterbilt
- \$80 monthly pass
- Motor coach layover at Peterbilt
- Waiting list
- Employee Coordinator, local match




Case studies and best practices 16

## Customer Information

- Website
- Facebook
- Brad's blog
- E-blast
- Newsletter
- Youtube



Case studies and best practices

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## College Partnerships

- Roo Route (22,000 trips)
- Viking Route (64,000 trips)



Grayson County  
Viking Route

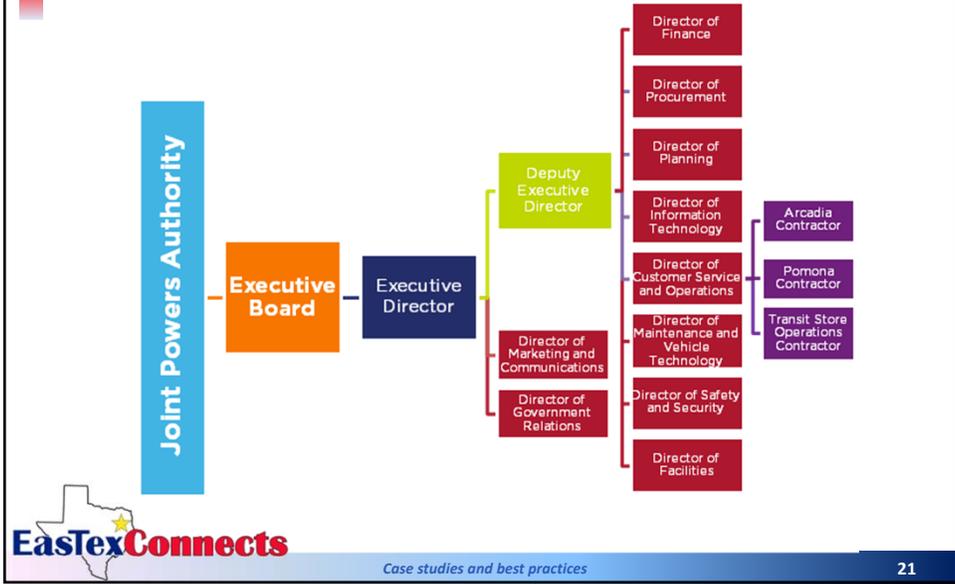


Case studies and best practices

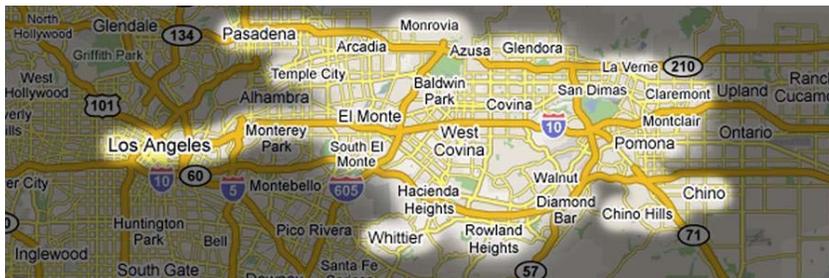
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# Organizational Structure



# Service Area



# Best Practices



**BUS BOOK**  
SCHEDULE AND INFORMATION GUIDE

**Foothill Transit**  
GOING GOOD PLACES

**EastTexConnects**

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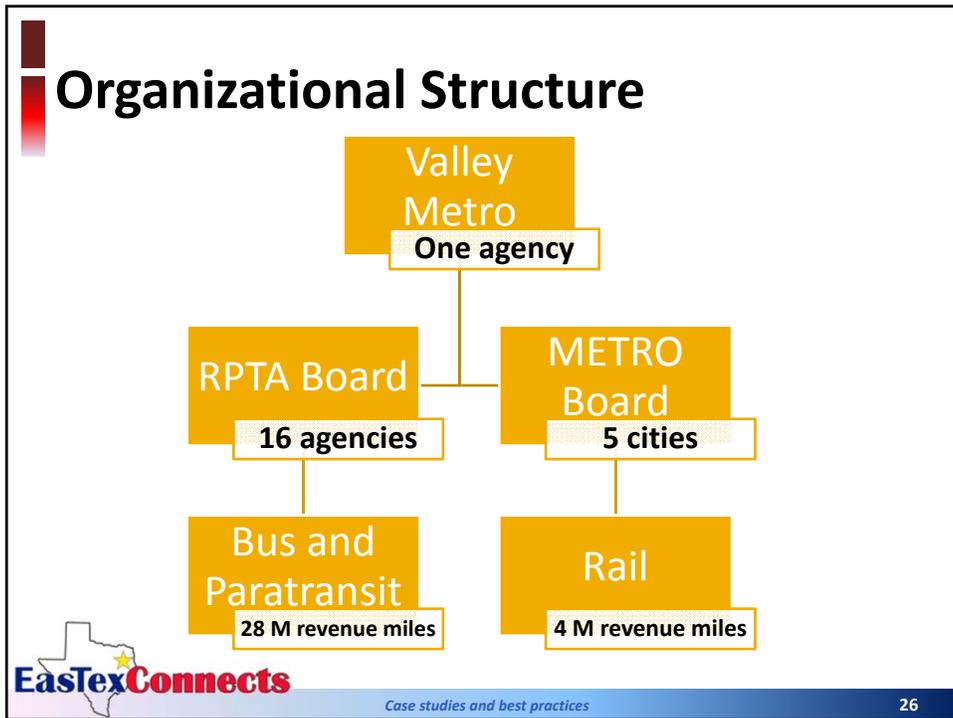
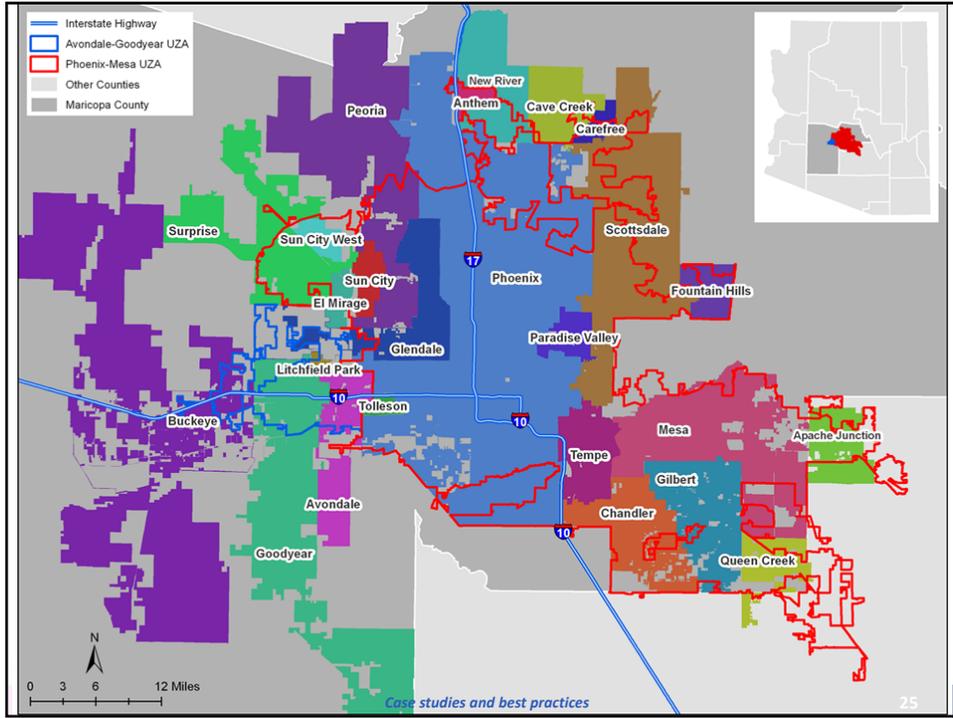
*"Valley METRO"*

**ARIZONA, GREATER PHOENIX AREA**

**EastTexConnects**

*Case studies and best practices*

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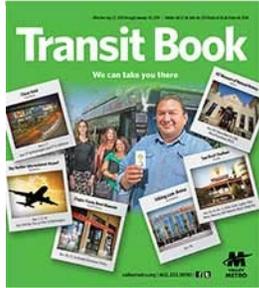


## Best Practices







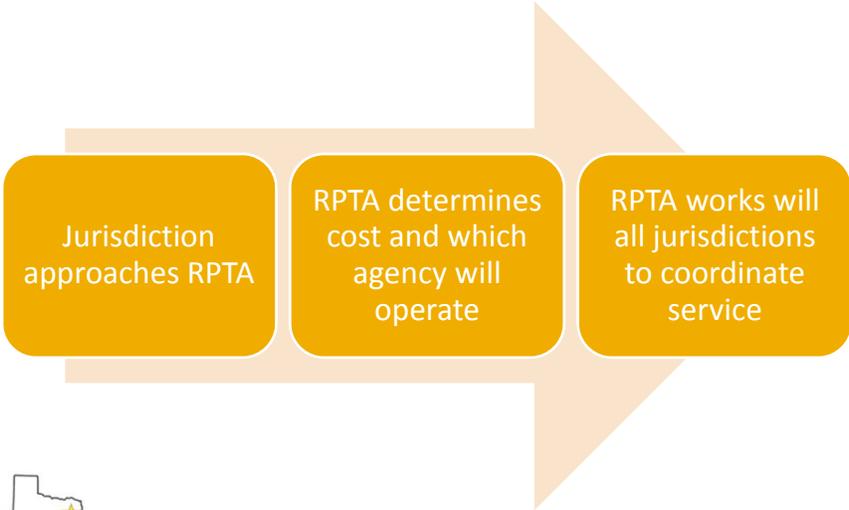





Case studies and best practices

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## Process for Service Implementation



Jurisdiction approaches RPTA

RPTA determines cost and which agency will operate

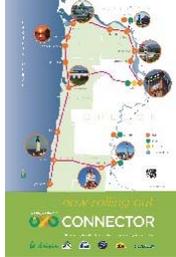
RPTA works with all jurisdictions to coordinate service



Case studies and best practices

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*"The Connector"*

## OREGON, THE CONNECTOR ALLIANCE OF NORTHWEST OREGON



Case studies and best practices 29

## What is an Alliance?

- Like... 
- Or like... 



Case studies and best practices 30



## MAJOR TASKS

- Branding and Marketing
- Regional Route and Service Coordination
- Centralized Website
- Strategic Partnerships
- Sustainable Funding







Case studies and best practices

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## Coordination Focus Areas

- Connections across county lines
- Population/employment clusters and tourist attractions served by existing routes
- Commuter and visitor markets
- Fare policy
- Funding plan



Case studies and best practices

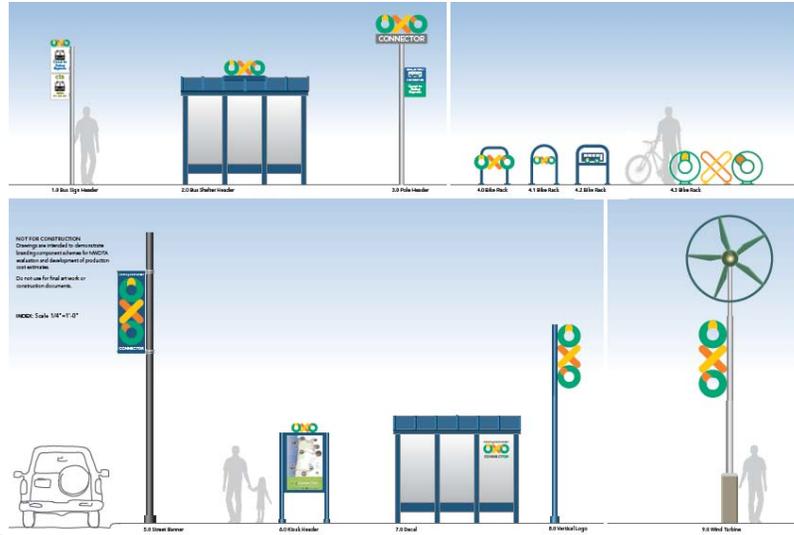
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## Strategic Partners

- Employers
- Colleges/Students
- Visitor Groups/Hotel-motel Industry



# BRANDING



Case studies and best practices

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## Next up...

10 minute break (with snacks!),  
and then breakout sessions



Case studies and best practices

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# Hill Country Transit District

## Profile

The Hill Country Transit District (HCTD), also known as The Hop, is a rural transit district responsible for providing services in nine counties. HCTD serves Hamilton, Lampasas, Llano, Mason, Milam, Mills, San Saba, and the non-urbanized areas of Bell and Coryell counties—approximately 9,000 square miles. Additionally, HCTD operates urban transit services in the Killen and Temple urbanized areas (UZA) and is the Medical Transportation Program (MTP) operator for the region. The population of the non-urbanized (rural) areas served by HCTD was 155,387 in 2010. In the same year, the population of the Killen urbanized area was 172,031 and the population of the Temple urbanized area was 90,390. The HCTD service area experienced approximately 20% growth from 2000 to 2010, which is comparable to growth in the East Texas region. Figure 1, below, depicts the HCTD service area as well as the Killen and Temple UZAs.



HCTD operates door to door demand response public transportation in the non-urbanized areas of the nine counties within the HCTD service area. Nine urban fixed routes operate in the Killen UZA and four operate in the Temple UZA. In 2012 HCTD's fleet had 61 vehicles dedicated to rural service, 46 vehicles operating in Killen and 37 vehicles operating in Temple.

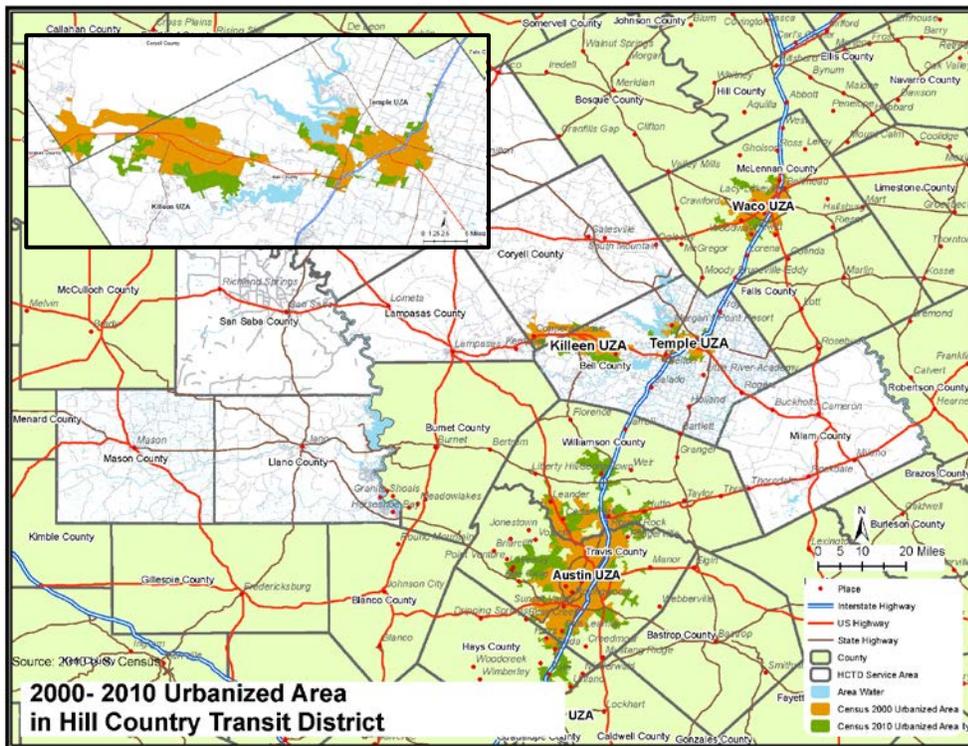


Figure 1. Hill Country Transit District Service Area

## Transit Service

HCTD operates in three areas:

- Demand-response service to the non-urbanized areas of the counties of Bell, Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Llano, Mason, Milam, Mills, and San Saba.
- ADA paratransit service to the cities of Copperas Cove, Killeen, and Harker Heights.
- ADA paratransit service to the city of Temple.

HCTD provides human services transportation through the TxDOT non-emergency Medical Transportation Program and through three separate Area Agency on Aging contracts for persons 60 and over. HCTD has an agreement with Hill Country Community Action to provide Head Start transportation services. In all, HCTD provides an average of 500,000 one-way trips per year, with a 100-vehicle fleet and a 130-member staff. Many riders are elderly, particularly in the rural areas, and a large number of trips are provided for dialysis and other medical appointments. All modes and routes are operated in house.



Service is available Monday through Friday from before 5:00 am until 10:00 pm and Saturdays from before 5:00 am until 6:00 pm. On Sundays and holidays, no service is provided. The standard fare for a one-way trip in the urban areas is \$1.00. Half-fare rides, verified by an agency issued eligibility card, are available to the elderly, disabled individuals, Medicare participants and students. Monthly passes are available for the 19 urban routes for \$25.00 per month. Rural demand response services operate with mileage based fare scheduled with “suggested contributions” ranging from \$1.00 for the shortest trips to \$18.00 for the longest trips (150 miles maximum).



## History and Governing Body Representation

Until 1998, HCTD was known as Hill Country Community Action—a community service transportation provider. In 1998 the Hill Country Community Action transit board voted to separate the portion of the organization responsible for transit provision to create a standalone rural transit district - HCTD. During the same year HCTD entered into an interlocal agreement with the cities of Copperas Cove, Harker Heights and Killeen to provide fixed route and paratransit services. HCTD began offering services in

these cities in 2000 as an urban-rural provider. Shortly thereafter (2001/2002) the city of Temple transferred its direct recipient status to HCTD in exchange for new fixed route and paratransit services. Today HCTD operates both rural and urban service (urban services are offered in Killeen and Temple). According to Carole Warlick, of HCTD, the agency will soon transition to the large urban provider status in the Killeen UZA because the population there has grown beyond 200,000 people.

HCTD is governed by a 14 member board of directors, made of solely elected officials, with representatives from the nine counties HCTD serves. The cities of Belton, Copperas Cove, Harker Heights, Killeen and Temple also have representation on the board. Additionally, a transit advisory committee created to represent the Killeen and Temple UZAs advises the board of the interests of the cities within the HCTD service area. The advisory committee consists of riders, social service agency representatives and representatives from each city council within both UZAs.

## Best Practices

### *Automated Scheduling and Dispatch*

In 2008 HCTD implemented an automated scheduling and dispatch system. The product helps HCTD reduce or eliminate duplicative or redundant services such as excessive trips to transfer sites or downtown centers and helps identify route-pairing opportunities. As a result, HCTD has been able to merge several small inefficient routes resulting in time savings. This merger allows HCTD to keep service hours constant while expanding route service into previously un-served areas, resulting in overall ridership increases (increase in vehicle boardings/revenue vehicle hour).

### *Maintenance and Repairs*

HCTD relies on local vendors for basic maintenance and repairs and performs fleet specific functions (such as lift maintenance) using a Rural Fleet Manager. Within the urban service areas, HCTD has begun to deploy a three-step process to centralize repairs:

1. Bring fleet maintenance in house using industry standards for preventive maintenance inspection and repairs.
2. Computerize preventive maintenance scheduling and reporting to track costs and control quality.
3. Merge urban functions into one central urban maintenance facility to minimize maintenance travel and allow for fleet service resource sharing between HCTD's two urban service areas.

### *Strategic Growth and Service Expansion*

HCTD routinely seeks opportunities for growth and service diversification. The agency has approached stakeholders in both the Killeen and Temple UZA's about the potential for transit service expansion in both cities. In addition, there are several transit generators and attractors in the cities. Temple is home to a major Veteran's Administration Hospital and the city of



Killeen houses Fort Hood. The military base alone has a population of approximately 53,400 as of the 2010 census. The VA Hospital in Temple draws patients seeking care from throughout Central Texas. Thus, there is demand not only for transit services within the two cities, but for connecting services throughout the region.



The HOP recognizes the demand for transit services connecting current members of the military and the veterans in the region. The agency has been present at various events supporting the military in the region, including the VA Health Fair, depicted below.

# Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC)

## Introduction

The Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) is the rural transit district for an 8-county region covering 7,087 square miles of non-urbanized land area bordering the Gulf Coast. The counties served include Calhoun, Dewitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, Matagorda, and Victoria. The region also contains the Victoria Urbanized Area and GCRPC serves as the lead agency for the State's regional transit coordination plan.

GCRPC's rural service area population was 160,333 in Census 2000 and grew to 161,645 (0.8 percent) in Census 2010. The population density per square mile is 22.81. Gonzales County experienced the largest growth (six percent). The urbanized area is 0.4 percent of the Golden Crescent service area. The remaining 96.6 percent is rural (non-urbanized). Figure 1 depicts the Golden Crescent service area (shown in white). The orange area depicts the Victoria Urbanized Area.



## Transit Service

GCRPC directly operates transportation service within Victoria and DeWitt counties. GCRPC uses subcontractors to provide transportation in the other six counties. (Subcontractors include Calhoun County SCA, Inc., Goliad County, Gonzales County SCA, Inc., Friends of Elder Citizens, Inc., and Lavaca County). Rural demand response transportation service called R-Transit is provided in Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, Matagorda, and Victoria Counties. R-Transit service operates Monday through Friday 7:00 am to 5:00 pm. Customers must schedule rides 24 hours in advance.

GCRPC operates fixed route and paratransit service in the Victoria Urbanized Area called Victoria Transit. Victoria Transit operates three fixed routes with more than 70 stops and approximately 30-minute frequencies. Bus service is available Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. Victoria Transit also operates four flexible job access reverse commute (JARC) routes seven days a week, with limited hours on weekends. Paratransit service is offered to individuals who have trip origins and destinations within ¾ mile radius of the four flexible job access routes. In addition to the rural and urban transportation service, GCRPC is also the Medical Transportation Program operator for Medicaid-eligible passengers.

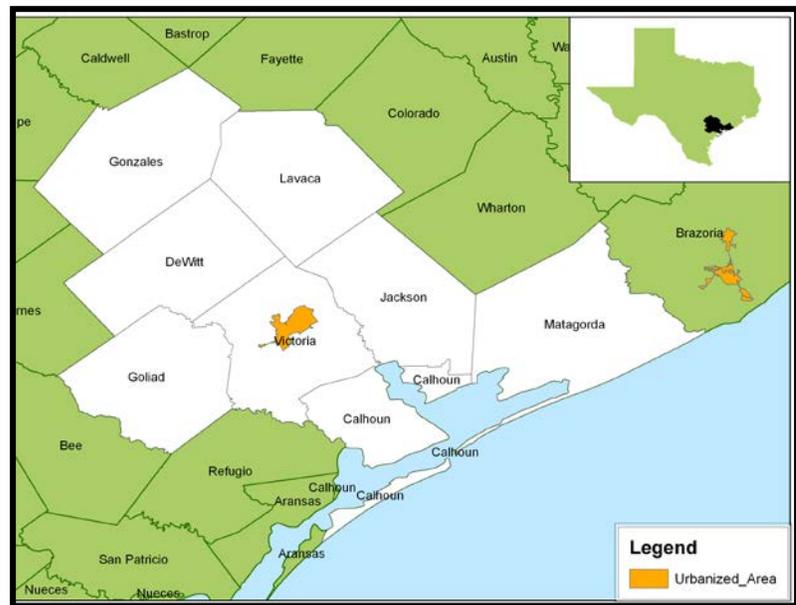


Figure 1. GCRPC Service Area.

Fares vary by service type (fixed route, variable JARC route, paratransit, and demand response) and by youth, adult, elderly, and Medicare cardholders. For example, paratransit fares are \$1.50 per trip, or \$13.50 for a 10-trip book. Victoria Transit offers bulk passes for all services. Fare details are available here: <http://www.victoriatransit.org/fares.html>.

## Operating Statistics

Table 1 shows GCRPC’s rural and urban operating statistics for FY 2013 as reported to Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Public Transportation Division (PTN). For rural service, GCRPC operates 1.3 million revenue miles per year at \$2.34 per mile over 62,000 revenue hours. GCRPC provides 212,000 passenger trips annually at approximately 0.16 passengers per hour. Annual operating expenses are \$3.2 million dollars and annual revenues are \$3.6 million dollars. For urban service, GCRPC operates 654,000 revenue miles per year (at \$3.13 per mile over 47,000 revenue hours). GCRPC provides 354,000 passenger trips annually (at approximately 0.54 passengers per hour). Annual operating expenses are \$2 million dollars and annual revenues are \$2 million dollars. For both urban and rural service, GCRPC provides more than 2 million revenue miles and more than 500,000 passenger trips annually.

**Table 1. GCRPC 2013 Operating Statistics.**

Annual Revenue Miles	Annual Revenue Hours	Annual Passenger Trips	Annual Operating Expenses	Total Annual Revenues	Pass Trips/ Revenue Mile	Operating Expense/ Rev Mile*
<b>Rural</b>						
1,348,000	62,000	212,000	\$3,156,000	\$3,630,000	0.16	\$2.34
<b>Urban</b>						
654,000	47,000	354,000	\$2,045,000	\$2,093,000	0.54	\$3.13

## History and Governing Body Representation

The GCRPC was created in November 1986 and is a regional voluntary association of local governments and other agencies. From 1986 until 1999, GCRPC administered rural public transportation services. In 1995, the Victoria County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) commissioned a study to assess the need for transit in Victoria. In 1999, Victoria Transit began demand response service through an Interlocal Agreement with GCRPC. Victoria Transit’s fixed route service began in 2002 and the JARC program began in 2008.

The GCRPC policy-making bodies include a General Assembly and Board of Directors. The General Assembly meets annually and includes County Commissioners, Mayors, Councilmembers, citizens, and representatives from the Hospital Districts, River Authority, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The Board of Directors is a smaller group of elected officials that meets monthly. Board members include County Commissioners, Mayors, and Councilmembers. The GCRPC supplements the Board and Assembly with policy advisory committees composed of elected officials and appointed local government officials and citizens.

## Best Practices

GCRPC began fostering public-private partnerships in 2008 to provide vanpool service for employees in the region through JARC programs. One of GCRPC’s most successful partnerships is with Intoplast (a plastics and chemical manufacturing company) to provide rural transportation for employees in Lolita.

Inteplast has a 700-acre site where more than 2,000 people are employed. The plant operates seven days a week, with shifts from 7:30 am to 7:30 pm and workers need affordable and reliable transportation during non-traditional work hours. Inteplast reported to the *The Victoria Advocate* that the company was losing employees who could not afford the commute to work from communities 25 to 40 miles away.



Inteplast purchased the first bus, and R-Transit initially operated one route that generated 1,300 trips per month. The success of the service spurred GCRPC to expand to four more routes that now generate 9,000 trips per month. Inteplast estimates that over 35% of their workers use the program to commute to and from work. Inteplast has a three-year contract for service and provides GCRPC a 50% local match.

The GCRPC Director of Transportation Services states that service reliability is critical to the project's success. GCRPC took several steps to make sure the employees using the service can get to and from work on time. To ensure on-time performance, GCRPC developed partnerships with outlying communities to house vehicles so the vehicle can start the route each day in the community served. For example, the City of Yokum houses vehicles for GCRPC for trips to Inteplast generated in Yokum. GCRPC also purchased additional buses to ensure an adequate spare ratio, further demonstrating GCRPC's commitment to service reliability.

GCRPC also partners with other regional employers for transit service. GCRPC has a contract with Workforce Solutions in Golden Crescent to provide unlimited transit passes for Workforce Solutions clients. Workforce Solutions committed to provide a 4% local match to GCRPC for three years.

Additionally, GCRPC coordinates with DARS and Amour Adult Day Care to provide passes. GCRPC directly contracts with Affectionate Arms Adult Day Health Care Center to provide transportation services through a grant from the TxDOT Elderly & Disabled Grant Program.



The agency expanded evening and weekend service to accommodate the hours of employees in the region. In 2008, GCRPC began a "Flex Route" JARC program for employees in the City of Victoria. Flex Route stops are designated with a certain logo, and all customers on the Flex Route stops receive a free ride. Customers are typically retail employees. The City of Victoria has provided GCRPC a 6% local match to operate Flex Route service.

## Opportunities

GCRPC will soon enter into a new partnership with Devereux Victoria, part of the Devereux Foundation--the nation's largest nonprofit behavioral healthcare system. Devereux's treatment facilities specialize in treating children and adults with emotional, behavioral, developmental, and psychiatric disorders. GCRPC received funding for vehicles and preventive maintenance from Devereux to help with work transportation needs of their clients. GCRPC is in the process of purchasing four vehicles to transport Devereux clients to and from the Foundation, located in Rural Victoria County and to housing facilities in Victoria so they can get to work and job training.

# Texoma Area Paratransit System, Inc. (TAPS)



## Introduction

Texoma Area Paratransit System, Inc. (TAPS) is a rural-urban transit district serving a 7-county region. The service area is 5,601 square miles in total, including non-urbanized (rural) land area and two urbanized areas (UZAs) plus part of the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington urbanized area. TAPS serves the counties of Clay, Montague, Cooke, the non-urbanized portion of Grayson, Fannin, Collin, and Wise Counties. The urbanized areas include Sherman-Denison (urbanized part of Grayson County) and as of July 1, 2013 TAPS began managing and operating transit service in Collin County rural areas and McKinney urbanized areas. TAPS is now the McKinney urbanized area direct recipient for federal transit funds and as McKinney’s urban transit district. The TAPS Board of Directors approved a plan for TAPS as the Collin County non-urbanized area (rural) direct recipient for federal rural transit funds and as Collin County’s rural transit district. The direct grant recipient for Sherman-Denison is the Texoma Council of Governments (TCOG). TCOG, in turn, contracts with TAPS for the delivery of all services within the TCOG service area.

TAPS’ rural service area population was 200,948 in Census 2000 and grew to 220,927 (10 percent) in Census 2010. The population density per square mile is 39.54. Wise County experienced the largest growth (ten percent). The Sherman urbanized area is 0.6 percent of the TAPS service area. The remaining 99.4 percent is rural (non-urbanized). The service area changed in 2013 to include Collin County.

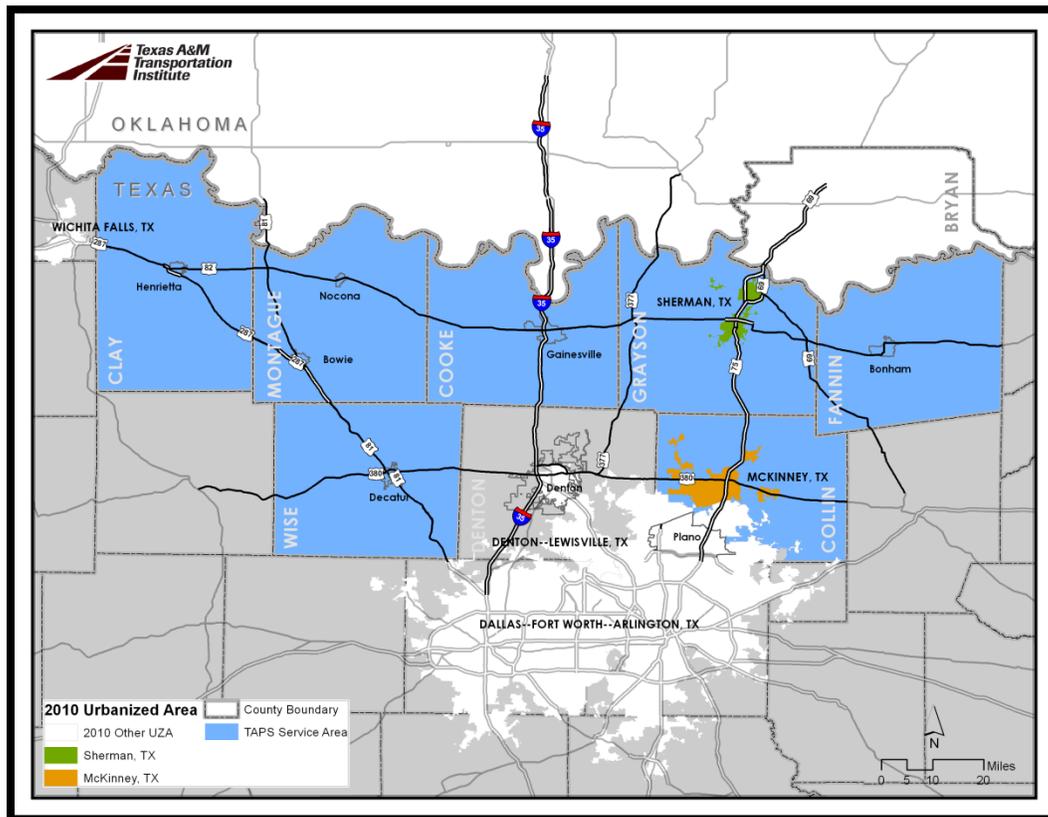


Figure 1. TAPS Service Area Map (Texas only)

## Transit Service

TAPS provides a variety of service types, each focused on different transit markets. TAPS provides general public demand response service in the rural and urban areas and fixed route service within the Sherman-Denison urban area. TAPS contracts with the private sector for transit management, including a subsidiary company as the employer of drivers and dispatchers. TAPS operates fixed route service to select locations outside of its service area (major employers, DART light rail system, and shuttle service to Dallas airports), and new fixed route service to major employers in southern Oklahoma through a Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) grant. TAPS also operates three park and ride lots. The agency is also a Medical Transportation Program (MTP) subcontractor for the region.

TAPS' accepts cash and passes as fare. Individual trip fares for seniors and individuals with disabilities are \$1.00 for one-way in town trips, \$1.50 for out of town trips and \$2.00 for out of county trips. General public trip fares are \$2.00 for one-way in town trips, \$3.00 for out of town trips, and \$4.00 for out of county trips. Premium services, including Tex-Express and McKinney Commuter Connect, have slightly higher fares that vary by service type. The fare structure is available at the following location: <http://tapsbus.com/fares/>. In November 2013, TAPS will offer a "Go Anywhere" pass for \$80 a month. Customers with the Go Anywhere pass have unlimited rides on any service (excluding airport shuttle service).

## History and Governing Body Representation

TAPS was first a van and a station wagon ride service created by the Area Agency on Aging in 1986. Service was provided by 13 separate Senior Centers and communities in Fannin, Grayson, and Cooke counties. TAPS' service area has grown to include Montague, Clay, and Wise Counties and in 2013, TAPS began managing and operating transit service for Collin County. TAPS now operates more than 3 million revenue miles and more than 400,000 passenger trips annually.

TAPS is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors made up of elected officials representing each of the counties served and urbanized areas. The Chair is a Council member for the City of Decatur, and the Secretary is a Council member from the City of Denison. Other members include:

- Grayson County Treasurer
- Fannin County Judge
- City of Sherman Council Member
- Clay County Judge
- City of Bonham Council Member
- Wise County Commissioner
- Collin County Commissioner
- Mayor of the City of McKinney
- McKinney City Council Member
- Mayor of the City of Wylie
- Cooke County Commissioner
- Clay County Representative
- Montague County Representative

## Best Practices

### *Fuel Contract*

TAPS has many innovative partnerships in the service area and beyond. For example, TAPS purchases fuel from bulk fuel purchasers such as the City of Bonham and neighboring Tarrant County. TAPS is able to "piggyback" on Tarrant County's existing diesel fuel contract at a discounted rate. The fuel savings discount is passed through to TAPS and is used as local match. TAPS' spends between \$50,000 to \$60,000 per week in fuel. Since establishing fuel purchasing partnerships, TAPS has been able to save approximately 21% on fuel.

### *College Partnerships*

Colleges are also partners with TAPS for pass programs. Grayson College (Viking Route) students and

Austin College (Roo Route) students can show their student ID on any TAPS fixed route without paying a fare. TAPS has agreements with the aforementioned colleges where the institution pays a set amount for TAPS services; students do not pay transportation fees. Austin College requires that all students live on campus. As such, the Roo Route operates non-traditional hours from 4 pm to midnight and takes students from campus into the community, spurring economic development. The Roo Route generated 22,000 trips this year. TAPS also maximizes social media to inform customers. The agency is about to launch a Youtube Video to depict upcoming changes to the Viking Route, where TAPS will add 45 new stops. The Viking Route generates approximately 64,000 trips per year.



### Commuter Routes

TAPS operates many job access (commuter) shuttles including service between the cities of Nocona, Gainesville, and Bowie to the Peterbilt Motor Company facility. Employees can purchase an \$80 monthly pass for unlimited shuttle rides. TAPS operates Peterbilt routes out of two locations in the morning. The first route is from Sherman and Gainseville to Denton and uses a 54 passenger motor coaches. The second route is from Bowie and Montague and uses two smaller passenger vans. The motor coach uses the Peterbilt facility as a layover location before the return trip in the afternoon to minimize deadhead. Each afternoon, a 43-passenger vehicle goes from Sherman to Gainesville to Denton. The program is so popular, that all seating is at capacity and there is a waiting list for service. Peterbilt also has an employee coordinator on-site who is dedicated to the program with TAPS and used by TAPS as local match. TAPS also provides job access routes for Texas Instruments, Trailblazer, and United America that connect Denison, Sherman, Bonham, McKinney, and Richardson, and a shuttle that connects Texoma-area communities to the Alliance Airport.

### Inter-State Coordinated Services

The Red River Route takes TAPS customers from Texas to Oklahoma and operates 10 trips per day. The Red River Route, depicted in a series of maps, below, connects with Southern Oklahoma Rural Transportation System (SORTS) at the Choctaw Resort. The route provides service in one of TAPS' highest growth areas. The Executive Director estimates that 90% of the service is job access related. Students who travel between Sherman and Denison to the Southeastern Campus have access to the Storm Route. Both routes generated 36,000 trips in the first year.



Figure 2. Red River Route (Texas to Oklahoma)

# Foothill Transit

## Introduction

Foothill Transit is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) comprised of 22 member cities in the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys of Southern California. The agency provides fixed route bus service over 327 square miles. Public sector employees comprise Foothill Transit's management team, including the Executive Director. Foothill Transit contracts all operations and maintenance services to two private contractors that operate out of two different facilities. The contractors provide all bus operators, mechanics and supervisors. Foothill Transit pays for fuel.



Figure 1 Foothill Transit Service Area

## Transit Service

Foothill Transit uses 305 compressed natural gas (CNG) buses and three electric buses to operate 34 fixed route lines, most of which are local bus service. Foothill Transit also operates Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service using 30 articulated buses, and park and ride service, operated out of facilities shared by regional operators throughout the valley. In 2013, Foothill Transit opened its first fully owned and operated park and ride in the City of Industry. Bus stops are paid for and maintained by the cities in the service area; Foothill Transit pays for and maintains the bus stop signs. Foothill Transit operates five transit stores where customer service representatives sell fare media and answer customer questions.



## Fares

Foothill Transit accepts cash, passes, and a regional TAP smart fare card on all routes. Other regional operators, including Omnitrans, a bus operator in neighboring San Bernardino County, also accept TAP cards. Single base cash fare is \$1.25, Express cash fare is \$2.75 - \$4.90 (depending on the hour), and transfers are \$0.50 if purchased at the time the customer pays the full fare. Fare media sold at five "transit stores" located throughout the service area. Detailed fare information is available here: <http://www.foothilltransit.org/PassesFares/>.



## History and Governing Body Representation

Foothill Transit was created in 1988 as a unique JPA following the Southern California Rapid Transit District (RTD) announcement of service cuts and fare increases that would negatively affect the San Gabriel Valley. Foothill Transit assumed operation of 14 lines, previously operated by the RTD, and was tasked by community leaders to provide superior public transportation while reducing costs and improving local control. For 25 years, three separate private contractors (one contractor for management services, two separate contractors for operations and maintenance) operated Foothill Transit. In 2013, the

Executive Board voted to terminate the management contract, and make management staff public sector employees. Operations and maintenance services are still contractor-provided.

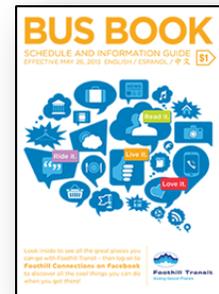


Foothill Transit's Governing Board leadership is comprised of elected representatives of 22 member cities in the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys and three appointees from the County. The Governing Board meets twice a year and approves the agency's budget. The 22 member cities are further broken down into "clusters." Each cluster appoints a representative to serve on the Executive Board that meets monthly and sets agency policy.

## Best Practices

### *Unified Branding*

Foothill Transit operates as a unified agency under one name and one logo in the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys, despite being operated by three different entities (management team, two operations and maintenance contractors) and jointly led by 22 different cities. The bus livery is the same (white with striping and agency logo) for all 308 vehicles in the fleet. All operators wear the same uniform, displaying the Foothill Transit agency logo, despite working for a private contractor. There is one fare structure, bus book, system map, and customer information phone line for the entire agency.



Foothill Transit established a single brand for the agency, and uses marketing and communications tools to maintain a unified front in the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys. Foothill Transit maintains a Facebook page and Twitter account, distributes a

monthly newsletter to customer called "Footnotes," emails Rider Alerts to customers, and publishes a new Bus Book with each bi-annual service change. Additionally, the agency announced in October that it is undertaking a new branding scheme for vehicles and marketing materials, depicted in the following image. The branding change is the first in the agency's 25-year history.



### *Alternative Fuels*

The changes to branding coincide with several big milestones, including the purchase of 64 new CNG buses. The purchase of the new vehicles aids in the retirement of the agency's last diesel bus. As of November 1st, Foothill

Transit's fleet will be 100% alternative fueled (CNG or electric). In addition, the agency also had 12 new electric buses delivered for Line 291, which is the first all-electric bus line in Southern California.

# Valley Metro, Maricopa County, AZ

## Introduction

Valley Metro operates fixed route, ADA paratransit, demand response, light rail, and vanpool in Maricopa County, Arizona. Maricopa County is located in south central Arizona, has a population of 3.8 M, and covers 9,200 square miles.

The Greater Phoenix metropolitan area is comprised of two urbanized areas: Phoenix-Mesa and Avondale-Goodyear. The region contains multiple jurisdictions involved in transit service facilitation. The region is comprised of

multiple providers that operate and fund service and entities that purchase from the operating agencies. These transit services operate under a unified brand name, Valley Metro.

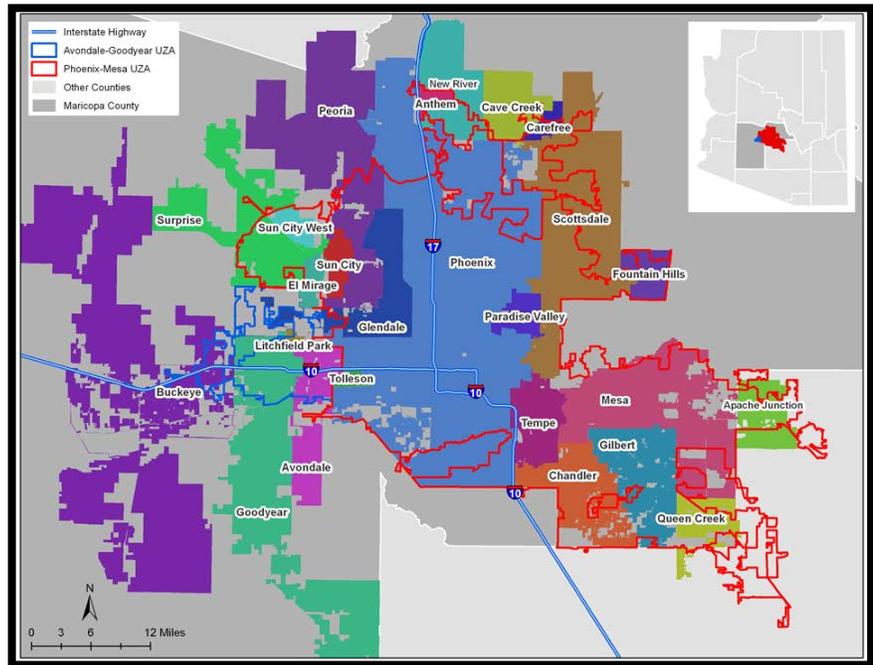


Figure 1. Urbanized Areas and Major Cities in Maricopa County.

## Transit Service

Three primary agencies contract for fixed route transit service in the Phoenix area including the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA), the City of Phoenix, and the City of Tempe. The standard service delivery method within the region is contracting to third-party transportation providers. RPTA, City of Phoenix, and City of Tempe contract with private companies to operate fixed route for the region. Several additional cities fund transit services by contracting through RPTA, City of Phoenix, or City of Tempe.



Local bus and light rail fare is \$2.00 for one ride, \$4.00 for an all-day rail pass, \$6.00 for an all-day bus pass, \$20.00 for a seven day pass, and \$64.00 for a monthly

pass. Fare details are available here: [http://www.valleymetro.org/paying\\_your\\_fare/fare\\_options/](http://www.valleymetro.org/paying_your_fare/fare_options/).

## History and Governing Body Representation

The RPTA formed in 1985 as the result of Proposition 300 in which Phoenix-area voters approved a one-half percent sales tax increase for expansion of the local freeway system and expansion of mass transit. The RPTA was chartered under the laws of the state of Arizona. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the region had a fragmented transit system, with the majority of transit service provided by City of Phoenix (Phoenix Transit System). The cities of Mesa and Scottsdale implemented their own services in 1990. The

jurisdictions in the county wanted more transit services for their respective cities. Many purchased transportation service from the Phoenix Transit System; however, the municipalities preferred not to use the Phoenix Transit System brand within their jurisdiction. The region’s municipalities worked with RPTA to create a regional identity. From these efforts, Valley Metro was created. The City of Phoenix and the surrounding municipalities agreed to the regional branding of the vehicles. Valley Metro did not begin operations as an integrated regional transit service, under its own brand identity, until 1993. The current brand used by the agency is depicted to the right.



In 2012, RPTA joined METRO Rail under the Valley Metro name. Valley Metro is governed by two Boards of Directors. The RPTA consists of 16 public agencies that set policy for bus and paratransit. RPTA board members include:

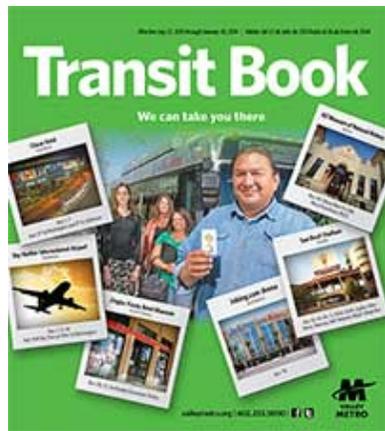
- Mesa Councilmember
- Chandler Councilmember
- Avondale Councilmember
- Buckeye Councilmember
- El Mirage Mayor
- Gilbert Councilmember
- Glendale Councilmember
- Goodyear Vice Mayor
- Maricopa County Supervisor
- Peoria Councilmember
- Phoenix Councilmember
- Scottsdale Councilmember
- Surprise Mayor
- Tempe Councilmember
- Tolleson Councilmember
- Wickenburg Councilmember

The METRO board consists of five cities that set policy and direction for light rail. There is now one CEO for the two transit systems.

## Best Practices

### *Seamless Transit Provision*

To the customer, Valley Metro operates as a unified transit agency in Maricopa County despite being operated by two different boards, representing 21 cities. The agency uses the same branding on all services (green and purple with Valley Metro logo). Valley Metro produces one printed transit book and system map for bus and rail services, available both in print and online. Additionally, the customer information phone line is the same for the entire agency. Valley Metro also has a seamless fare structure for all services. Valley Metro accepts coins, cash, and transfers.

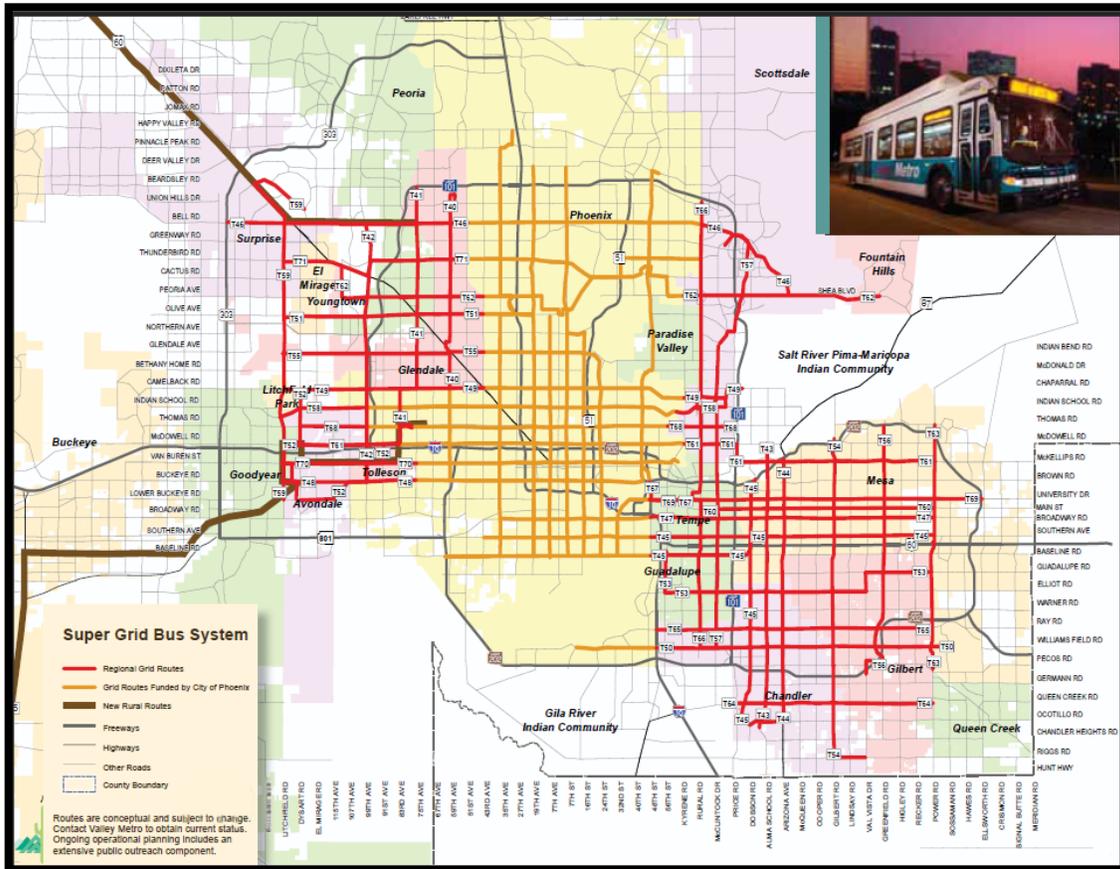


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### *Regional Transportation Coordination*

In 2009, the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), the lead agency for regional transportation coordination, worked to update the Human Services Coordination Transportation Plan. The MAG region has been particularly successful in coordinating human services transportation. In March 2009, the Federal Transit Administration bestowed the United We Ride Leadership Award for major urbanized areas to the MAG Human Services Coordination Transportation Planning Program.

The below map depicts the vision of the Super Grid Bus System as a part of the Regional Transportation Plan in Maricopa County.



The region determined 5 major goals to work towards in the next few years:

1. Transportation Ambassador Program
2. Standardized Driver Training
3. Standardized Coordination Policies
4. Need and Demographic Tracking
5. Travel Training for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

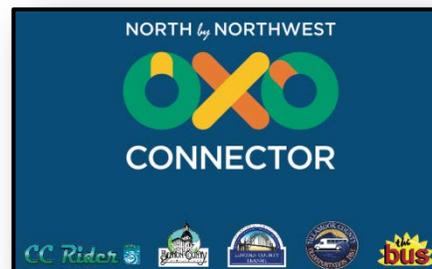
Of the 5 goals, the most notable is that of standardized driver training. The stakeholder agencies, including for profit and nonprofit organizations, have the opportunity to train their drivers with the newly developed standardized driver training program for a certificate of completion. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) expanded their online training portal to include the standardized driver training course. In addition, the agency is working with the stakeholders to increase the number of hands-on trainings throughout the year.

# Northwest Oregon Transit Alliance

## Introduction

The North by Northwest CONNECTOR Alliance (the Alliance) is a partnership of five transit agencies in a 5-county area of northwestern Oregon. The Alliance was formed to:

- Foster collaboration;
- Improve transit connections;
- Share resources;
- Brand and market transit service in all five counties as a single service; and
- Promote environmentally-friendly conscious travel.



The Alliance manages the area's coordinated regional transit system, known as the North by Northwest CONNECTOR. The CONNECTOR is a national model for interagency partnerships and the use of private-public strategies to promote transit. The CONNECTOR is a partnership of Columbia County Rider, the Sunset Empire Transportation District, the Tillamook County Transportation District, Benton County Transit and Lincoln County Transit.

## Transit Service

Working together, the five transit partners that make up the Alliance have been successful in promoting environmentally conscious travel across service areas to diverse pools of customers. Strategic partnerships have allowed the Alliance to brand and market transit service as a single, seamless service across county lines, serving population and employment clusters, tourist attractions, and commuter and visitor markets.

The Alliance integrates transportation services and provides connections to the metropolitan areas of Portland, Albany and Corvallis, Oregon and Longview/Kelso, Washington. The CONNECTOR is comprised of three elements:

1. Partnerships- The CONNECTOR system includes a public-private partnership between the Alliance and a new non-profit organization, the North by Northwest Foundation. The Foundation is tasked with raising funds for transit service in the 5-county area.
2. Capital- Capital includes transit buses and other equipment, owned and operated by each of the five partners. The partners share some assets such as transit stop facilities.
3. Operations- The system includes all transit operations and services provided by the five partners. Each partner is responsible for operations in their own service area. The alliance works together to coordinate schedules, transfer locations, and even staff.

For local customers, fares are set by each transit agency in the CONNECTOR system. For visitors, CONNECTOR offers 3-day passes for \$25.00 and 7-day passes for \$30.00.

## History and Governing Body Representation

In 2010, five agencies joined to form The Alliance. The partners jointly applied for and were awarded a \$3.5M US Department of Energy (DOE) Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) for regional strategies to increase transit use.

Immediately following the grant award, Columbia County worked with the other four alliance members to create an intergovernmental entity according to Oregon statutes. The intergovernmental agreement was executed within eight months.

The alliance worked with a consultant to implement the tasks outlined as part of the grant. The first step was to establish baseline conditions and connection needs. Charette workshops were held in all five counties to identify needs. Route and service changes were implemented to improve connections.

Throughout the project, the Alliance met monthly and alternated between in-person meetings at a different location around the region and by teleconference calls by phone. Each partner agency had specific responsibilities throughout implementation.

The CONNECTOR is overseen by a Coordinating Committee consisting of one member representing each partner agency. Members include:

- Clatsop County (Sunset Empire Transportation District)
- Lincoln County Transit
- Columbia County Rider (CC Rider)
- Tillamook County Transportation District (The Wave)
- Benton County Rural and Special Transportation



Figure 1: OXO Regional Route Map

The Foundation is governed by a board of community members representing businesses, higher education, and other civic interests.

## Best Practices

### Regional Coordination

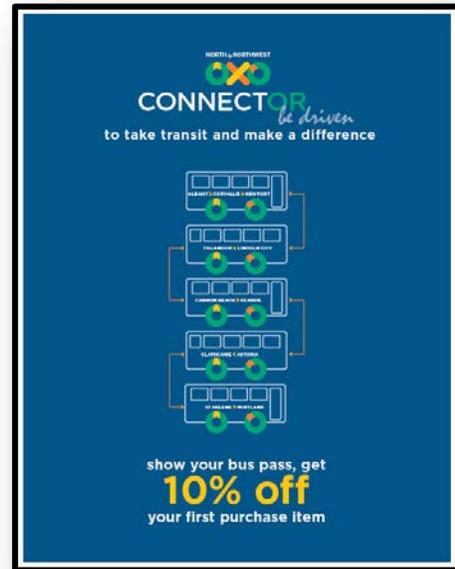
The Alliance took many steps to create unified service in the region. Centralization practices include:

- Single name and logo created.
- Centralized website created.
- Co-branding at stops implemented.
- Fare policy committee established.

## Marketing

The group's ability to pool available advertising space among the five transit agencies enhances bus advertising efforts. Pooling advertising space allows the foundation to attract larger advertisers and maximize potential revenue. The foundation also actively works to attract visitor information advertising through opportunities such as rack cards, posters and links from its website. Such opportunities allow the alliance partners to simultaneously promote transit ridership and local retailers, providing win-win revenue opportunities for the region.

One option for entities considering allowing advertising on their website is Google AdSense, a free program offered by Google that can be used for website advertising. A small piece of coding is added to an organization's website to allow advertising to appear. The types of advertisers invited to use the space can be selected and managed. Advertisers bid and win the right to advertise in the space provided. The host entity is paid a small amount each time someone visits the website and clicks on an ad. This type of advertising takes some time to generate significant revenue because the amount generated per click is relatively small — a few cents. However, website advertising is an innovative way to generate local revenue.



The Alliance works in concert with the North by Northwest Transportation Foundation to increase ridership and generate revenue using the following tools:

- Regional pass sales;
- Visitor pass sales with promotional fares (new riders mean new revenue, increased ridership numbers and farebox recovery);
- Employer support of transit (employers subsidize bus passes and offer other company-specific incentives to increase ridership);
- Hotel and motel industry partnerships ([Newport City Loop](#) had 30 hotels participating as of December 2011, generating \$90,000 annually for Lincoln County Transit);
- Tribal partnerships (tribes have access to additional federal funding opportunities, and tribal-run casinos provide a large source of employees and customers requiring transportation; tribal casinos are also a source of advertising opportunities); and
- Branding and marketing efforts of the CONNECTOR, which are used to generate additional ridership by area visitors.

## Lessons Learned

The consultant prepared a Final Report: Successes and Lessons Learned, available online here:

<http://www.nworegontransit.org/userfiles/FINAL%20CONNECTOR%20Successes%20and%20Lessons%20Report%202013-08-07.pdf>.

Coordination success and lessons learned include:

**Enlist the right partners-** All partners had to broaden their perspectives beyond the customer base in their individual service areas. Achieving a regional outlook required compromise, and sometimes challenging financial tradeoffs. Each transit agency participating in the CONNECTOR pilot project had its own “bottom line,” and some agencies were less accepting of change than others.

**Set a realistic timeline-** Due to grant requirements, the project schedule was shortened to 26 months. The condensed schedule meant that partners had to “share information about their needs and management practices, both good and bad. Several coordinating committee members had known each other prior to the project, which made it easier to share openly, and a non-judgmental approach by several initial members of the coordinating committee quickly became a cultural norm for the group. This environment of trust was foundational.” From a negative standpoint, although all CONNECTOR work tasks and programs were complete, there was not time to calculate a measurable benefit.

**Secure the right resources-** The partners “decided to retain an independent contractor for on-going administrative support after the pilot project, rather than using staff at one of the partner agencies. This heads off any perceived issues of undue influence by any member agency as collective decisions are made, avoids staff capacity conflicts, and ensures the CONNECTOR alliance administrative work does not fall by the wayside when individual agency workloads are heavy.

**Establish a regular forum for collaboration-** “A standing monthly meeting day and time allows participants to know meeting dates well in advance, which helps to avoid scheduling hassles and improves participation. Meetings should be publicly noticed and open to the public.”

**Largest Successes Occur Where Partners Embrace Change-** CONNECTOR ridership increases have resulted from partnerships to improve service. For example, a Tillamook County’s route was extended to Lincoln City in 2012 and ridership increased over 74% on weekends and 71% on weekdays. To implement the changes, Lincoln County “had to be willing to allow TCTD to operate within its service area, reduce its own service, and pay TCTD for increased operational costs.”

**Don’t be Discouraged by Early Returns-** “When it comes to performance measurement related to transit system changes, it is important not to be discouraged by near-term performance variability or even initial decreases in performance. Transit managers serving on the CONNECTOR Coordinating Committee have observed that it usually takes one to two years before the effects of transit service modifications stabilize.”



# Breakout Sessions: Strategies for Identified Goals and Priorities

## Connections



*Breakout sessions: strategies, goals, priorities* 1



<http://www.retailshakennotstirred.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/customer-centric.jpg>

# CONNECTING WITH CUSTOMERS AND THE COMMUNITY

*Led by Shawna*



*Breakout sessions: strategies, goals, priorities* 2

**Citizen Dashboard**  
The Citizen Dashboard provides access to information that is timely and relevant on important services.

<b>TRAFFIC INJURY RATE</b> 5.0 <small>INJURED/1,000 POPULATION</small> <small>▲ July 2013</small>	<b>TRAFFIC COLLISION RATE</b> 15.8 <small>COLLISIONS/1,000 POPULATION</small> <small>▲ July 2013</small>	<b>DATA ON-TIME PERFORMANCE</b> 95% <small>ON-TIME</small> <small>▲ September 2013</small>	<b>TRANSIT SECURITY</b> 0.58 <small>INCIDENTS/100,000 TRIPS</small> <small>▲ June 2013</small>
<b>SPRING STREET SWEEPING</b> PROGRAM COMPLETE	<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD SNOW BLADING</b> PROGRAM COMPLETED MARCH 25, 2013	<b>POTHOLES FILLED</b> 64,400 <small>POTHOLES FILLED YEAR TO DATE</small> <small>▲ September 2013</small>	<b>TRANSIT RIDERSHIP</b> 86.0 <small>WEEKLY ANNUAL RIDERS</small> <small>▲ August 2013</small>

▲ Meets or Exceeds Target    ● New Target    ▼ Needs Improvement

<https://data.edmonton.ca/dashboard/move>

## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN DATA, PERFORMANCE, AND SERVICE

*Led by Jonathan*

Breakout sessions: strategies, goals, priorities 3

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## CONNECTIONS WITH PARTNERS

*Led by John O*

Breakout sessions: strategies, goals, priorities 4



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“Someone calling themselves a customer says they want something called service.”

**CONNECTIONS:  
ENHANCING THE CUSTOMER  
EXPERIENCE; BECOMING SEAMLESS**

*Led by Linda*



Breakout sessions: strategies, goals, priorities 5



*Put your thinking caps on...*

**OKAY.....BREAKOUT!**



Breakout sessions: strategies, goals, priorities 6



## Next up...

5 minute break (snacks left?!),  
reconvene for group presentations  
from breakout sessions



*Breakout sessions: strategies, goals, priorities*

7

# Connecting with Customers and the Community

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Led by Shawna Russell



Throughout the history of coordination in East Texas, the commitment to “people first” and a strong customer focus has been a continued priority for the committee. This session will discuss innovative ways and new approaches for reaching out to the public, civic groups, the business community, and new and existing partners and customers alike. Join us as we discuss ways to raise awareness of the work of EasTexConnects and its many partners.

Potential topics include:

- targeted marketing campaigns
- telling transit’s story across East Texas
- changing demographics and messaging
- leveraging the support of business and civic groups, and
- creating opportunities for increased public awareness and media coverage



# The Connection between Data, Performance and Service

Led by Jonathan Brooks



Over the years the members of the EastTexConnects committee have worked to share information about transportation services, ridership, and performance. This session will discuss typical types of transit data, performance measurement, and service delivery in terms of how the region may harness the wealth of information that exists to improve public awareness and support, coordination, etc. by providing information in a clear, concise way tailored to the audience. Join us as we discuss ways to improve transit in East Texas via use of information.

Potential topics include:

- motivators for using information to illustrate role of transit in East Texas
- tailoring information and data use to the audience
- data dashboards



# Connections with Partners

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Led by John Overman



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Residents of East Texas are dispersed in rural and urban communities throughout the region. The members of the EasTexConnects committee represent transportation providers, types of riders, the public, and even elected officials. works diligently to connect people to the places they need to go. This session will include group discussion of the potential to provide increase regional and inter-regional connectivity – connections for customers to improve access and opportunities. Join us as we discuss the nature, interest in, and feasibility of continuing to improve connectivity in East Texas internally and externally.

Potential topics include:

- review of 2008 transfer study connections
- discuss motivations for new or changed connections
- creating opportunities for transfers between providers
- regional family of services to better meet customer needs
- mix of coordination and integration for service delivery



# Connections: Enhancing the Customer Experience; Becoming Seamless

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Led by Linda Cherrington



Throughout the history of coordination in the state of Texas, regions have discussed various paths toward making transit services more seamless for customers. This session will discuss how seamless transit principles and practices may improve transit services in East Texas by improving the customer experience and leveraging agency resources for marketing and other areas. Join us as we explore using aspects of seamless transit provision in East Texas.

Potential topics include:

- defining what seamless transit service means
- discussion of role and merits of seamless services in East Texas
- dialogue about potential ways to improve customer experience, ease of use





*Summary of discussion/decisions/interests*

[http://www.communicationworks.com.au/images/bulb\\_customers.png](http://www.communicationworks.com.au/images/bulb_customers.png)

# GROUP PRESENTATIONS FROM BREAKOUT SESSIONS



*Group presentations from breakouts* 1



<http://www.retailshakennostirred.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/customer-centric.jpg>

# CONNECTING WITH CUSTOMERS AND THE COMMUNITY



*Group presentations from breakouts* 2

**Citizen Dashboard**  
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TELEPHONE MOVE   TELEPHONE LIVE   TELEPHONE GREEN   TELEPHONE GROW   TELEPHONE PROSPER   TELEPHONE FINANCE

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## CONNECTION BETWEEN DATA, PERFORMANCE, AND SERVICE

*Group presentations from breakouts* 3

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## CONNECTIONS WITH PARTNERS

*Group presentations from breakouts* 4



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“Someone calling themselves a customer says they want something called service.”

## CONNECTIONS: ENHANCING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, SEAMLESS



Group presentations from breakouts 5



*not all That's Folks!*

<http://www.snoutypig.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/snouty-pride-thats-not-all-folks-snoutypig.png>



Group presentations from breakouts 6

## Common Themes Moving Forward: Identifying & Next Steps



<http://drlarafernandez.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Moving-Forward.jpg>



*Moving forward, next steps*

1



<http://www.commlawblog.com/uploads/image/coordination-1.JPG>

*Piece it all together*

### CLOSING THOUGHTS, OBSERVATIONS, DISCUSSION



*Moving forward, next steps*

2



**NOW**  
*That's all Folks!*  
Good work, pat yourself and your neighbor on the back (*gently*)!

[http://3.bp.blogspot.com/\\_gVwha6ZQ\\_0o/TMvrOOGijEI/AAAAAAAAABmc/gitwd5T5sI4/s1600/thats-all-folks.jpg](http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_gVwha6ZQ_0o/TMvrOOGijEI/AAAAAAAAABmc/gitwd5T5sI4/s1600/thats-all-folks.jpg)



**EastTexConnects**

*Moving forward, next steps*

3