A REFERENCE GUIDE AND STEP-BY-STEP PLAN FOR COORDINATING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Montana Coordinated Transportation Handbook©

Sponsored by:

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Montana Coordinated Transportation Handbook represents several years of diligent work by the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities, and its' contractor, the Western Transportation Institute, to produce a comprehensive and user friendly "how to" guide for coordinated transportation.

The Council would like to acknowledge and thank the members of the Project Oversight Committee for their input and recommendations to the Handbook. The committee was made up of a broad array of persons interested in transportation options, and included:

State Representative Bob Lawson, Whitefish

Janis Winston, Montana Department of Transportation

June Hermanson, Montana State University – Billings

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Members of the Montana Transportation Partnership

The Council further wishes to acknowledge and thank the Western Transportation Institute for their technical expertise and excellent work in adapting the Councils' vision for coordinated transportation, into this working Handbook.

The Council is confident you will find this Handbook a valuable resource as you pursue coordination efforts in your community.

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Part

A

Background Information

The chapters in Part A contain basic background information regarding Coordinated Transportation Systems; what is Coordinated Transportation and why is it necessary.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the problems that Coordinated Transportation is intended to address, details the scope of this project, discusses the purpose of the handbook, and outlines how to use the handbook and website.

Chapter 2: What and Why

Chapter 2 gives the "what" and "why" of coordinated transportation, defining what it is, what the benefits are, and the history of coordinated transportation.

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Chapter

1

Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces this handbook and the complementary website, including instructions for their use.

Across Montana and the United States, the increasing need for public and human services transportation continues to outstrip the funding available for these programs. The Montana Rural Passenger Needs Study, conducted for the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) in 2001, estimated that only 17% of the statewide need for transportation was being met. Those hit hardest by this transportation shortfall are the transportation disadvantaged, commonly defined as those with limited transportation options due to disabilities, age, or income status.

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To help meet the needs of the transportation disadvantaged, funding and informational programs in Montana and nationwide have been emphasizing the importance of coordinating public and human service transportation. Coordination involves multiple agencies working together to achieve more efficient delivery of service, thereby allowing transportation providers to do more with what they have. Measurable benefits in terms of cost savings and increased provisions of service have been achieved around the country in coordination programs of varying sizes, scopes, and goals. What coordination entails, the benefits, and challenges involved are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

About the Handbook

The Montana Coordinated Transportation Handbook was developed to be a resource for organizations seeking to coordinate transportation services across the state of Montana. It includes step-by-step instructions for planning and implementing a coordinated transportation program and extensive reference information to consult throughout the process.

Who Should Read

This manual is intended for use by any individuals or organizations interested in coordinating transportation services.

This manual is intended for use by any individuals or organizations interested in coordinating transportation services. This includes:

- Public or private agencies including:
    - Agencies that provide transportation as a primary service.
    - Agencies that provide transportation as a supportive service.
    - Agencies that provide transportation services for their customers by contracting or purchasing rides from other transportation providers.
    - Agencies that do not currently provide transportation services for their customers, but wish to do so in the future.
- Transportation disadvantaged individuals or advocates for transportation disadvantaged individuals.
- Local or tribal governments.
- Individuals or organizations that otherwise have a stake in the provision of transportation services.

Any transportation coordination initiative will need an individual or organization to take the lead in the program.

Any transportation coordination initiative will need an individual or organization to take the lead in the program. The leader of the initiative should ultimately have a copy of this Handbook. Additional copies can be obtained from the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities (MCDD) at 866-443-4332 or the manual is also available for download in printable format from MCDD's website at www.mtcdd.org.

As the audience of the Handbook will consist mostly of organizations involved in the provision of transportation services as a primary or secondary service, the Handbook assumes at least some experience with transportation issues. No background in transportation coordination is presumed.

How to Use

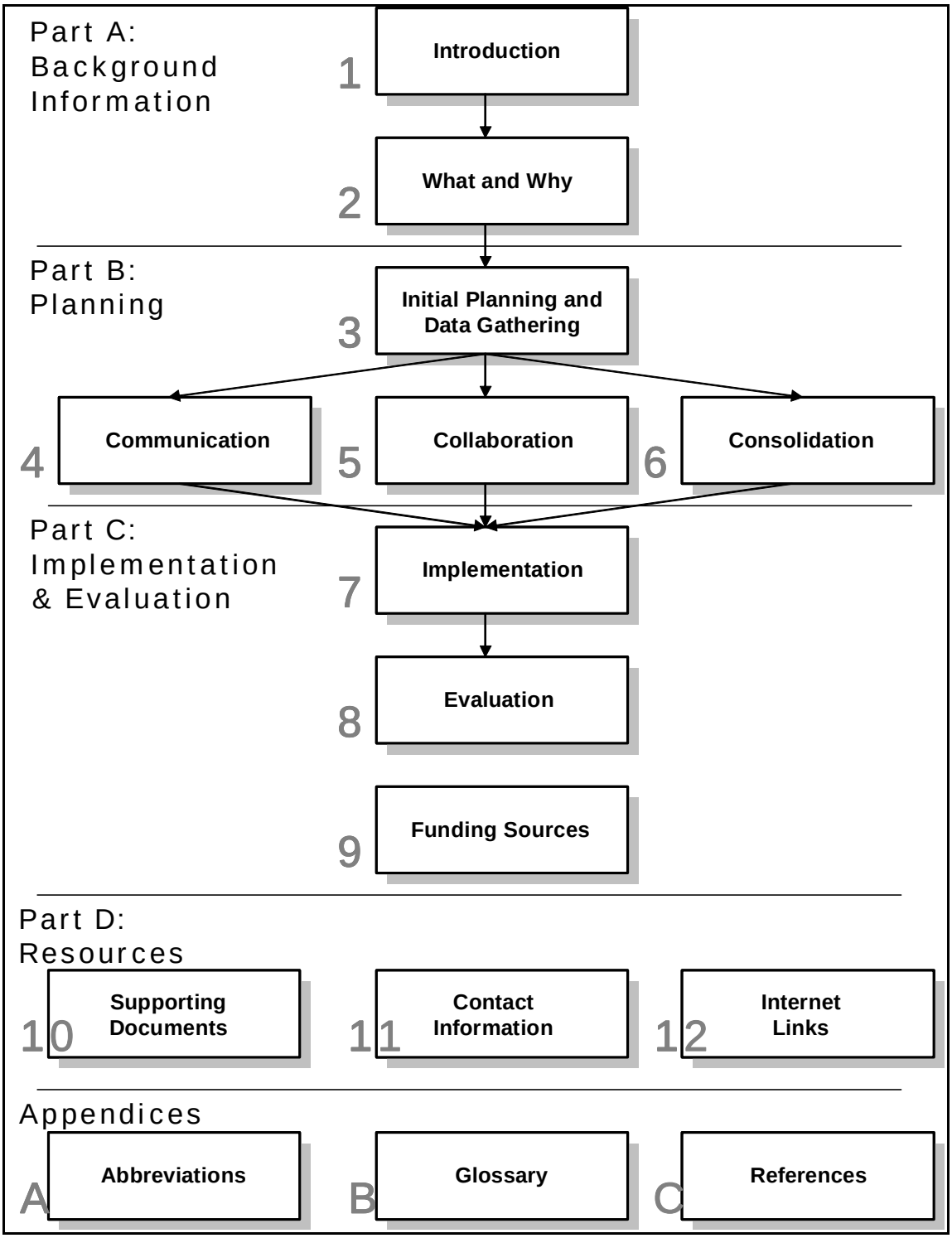

Figure 1: How to Use the Handbook

The Montana Coordinated Transportation Handbook is designed for use in two ways:

- **A Step-by-Step Guide**. For those new to coordination, starting a new coordination program, or otherwise wishing to develop a transportation coordination program from the ground up, you can work through this Handbook sequentially following the steps and instructions.

The Montana Coordinated Transportation Handbook is designed for use in two ways: a Step-by-Step Guide and a Reference Manual.

- **A Reference Manual**. For those with some background in coordination, revisiting an existing coordination program, or doing research on transportation coordination, this Handbook is organized to easily find information on specific topics. Search the table of contents or try browsing through the chapter related to your specific topic of interest.

The Handbook is divided into four parts. Part A, Background Information, includes basic information regarding transportation coordination and specific factors to be considered when coordinating transportation in Montana. Chapter 2 provides information including what coordinated transportation is, what the process entails, and what it can and cannot do for an organization. Chapter 2 concludes by discussing issues particular to coordinating transportation in Montana.

Part B, Planning, comprising the core of the Handbook, contains step-by-step instructions for planning a coordinated transportation system. Chapter 3, Initial Planning, will aid in determining which type of coordination is best suited for a particular program. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 discuss the planning process for the communication level, lay out the planning process for the collaboration level, and outline the planning process for the consolidation level, respectively

Part C is Implementation and Evaluation. Chapter 7 discusses issues pertaining to implementation of the coordinated transportation system plan developed in Part B. It is important to be thoroughly familiar with the issues discussed in Chapter 7 before beginning implementation. Chapter 8 explains methods for evaluating the success and progress of a coordinated transportation system once it has been implemented. Chapter 9 profiles some of the main funding sources traditionally used in transportation coordination.

Part D, Resources, contains supplemental information useful for planning and implementing coordinated transportation systems. These resources include sample documents, letters, resolutions, and applications; contact information for agencies and resources supporting coordinated transportation; and Internet links with additional information useful to coordinating transportation. The resources in Part D will be referenced throughout the manual.

When working through the Handbook, remember, there is no one "right way" to coordinate transportation services in an area.

When working through the Handbook, remember, there is no one "right way" to coordinate transportation services in an area. Any transportation coordination

program that works to provide improved efficiency, increased and better service, and lower costs in a community is a successful program.

About the Website

The Montana Transportation Coordination Website will be useful as both a supplement to this handbook and, independently, as a research tool for those interested in coordinated transportation.

The Montana Transportation Coordination Website will be useful as both a supplement to this handbook and, independently, as a research tool for those interested in coordinated transportation.

How to Use

You must have Internet access to view the Montana Transportation Coordination Website. If you do not have Internet access, many public libraries have computers available with Internet access.

The website can also be accessed by going to www.mtcdd.org and clicking on the appropriate link.

Transportation and human service agencies in Montana have been provided Agency IDs and passwords allowing them full access to the website. If your agency has been provided an Agency ID and you have lost your Agency ID and/or password, contact the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilties at 866-443-4332.

Figure 2: Montana Coordinated Transportation Homepage

The homepage contains six options:

- **Login as a Montana Agency**. Select this option to log into the system. Enter your Agency ID into the **Login** field and your password into the **Password** field and select **Continue to Login**. When you are logged in, you may complete the Montana Agency Transportation Survey and view full profiles of all agencies listed in the survey database.

- **Montana Coordinated Transportation Handbook**. This selection allows you to view the Handbook online. The online version of the handbook is fully searchable. You may also download a printable copy of the handbook.

- **Montana Agency Transportation Survey**. To complete or update your information in the agency database, select this option. If you are not already logged into the system, you will be prompted to log in before you complete the survey.

- **Find Transportation Providers in Montana**. To search for transportation providers and human services agencies in Montana, select this option. If you are not logged into the system, you will be able to see profiles of the agencies currently listed in the database. If you are logged into the system, you will also be able to view information about any vehicles operated by the agencies.

- **Currently Listed Transportation Providers in Montana**. This component lists all agencies in the database, by county.

- **Transportation Coordination in All States**. This option contains information on the current coordination programs occurring in all fifty states, with links to their transit web pages.

Agency Transportation Survey

The survey database is a good place to start when looking for stakeholders for a coordination program or for finding agencies with vehicles that may be available for coordination purposes.

Transportation providers searching for possible partners for coordination can use the survey database. Each agency that has responded to the survey has provided a profile of the agency's mission and transportation services. The survey database is a good place to start when looking for stakeholders for a coordination program. It is also useful as a means of finding agencies with vehicles that may be available for coordination purposes.

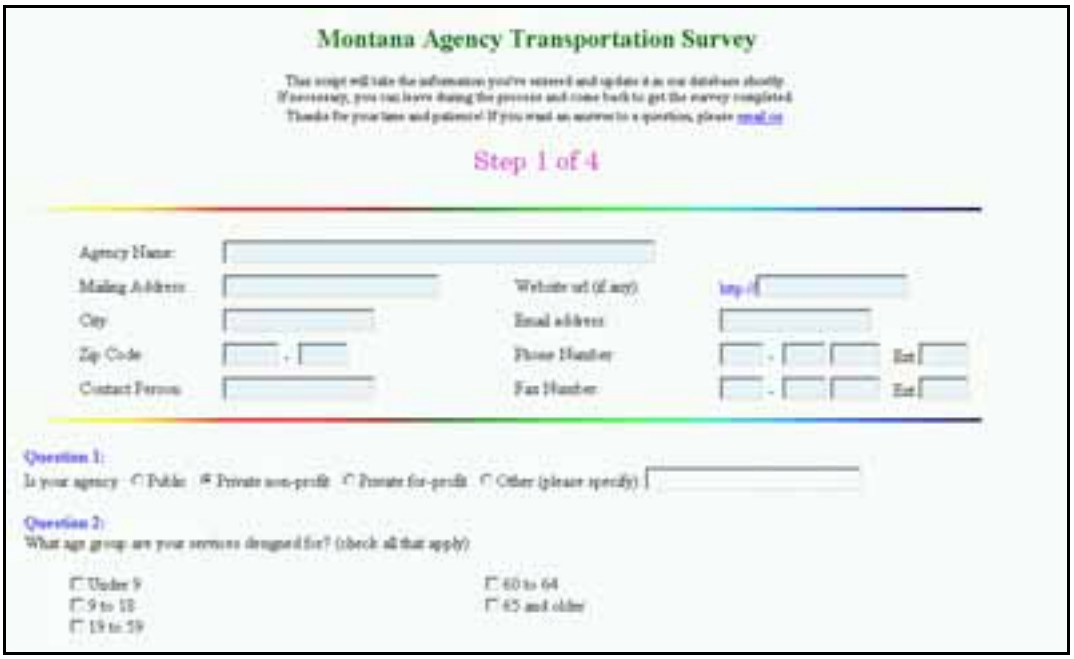

Figure 3: Agency Transportation Survey

To begin the survey, go to the Montana Transportation Coordination Website and click on the link to Montana Agency Transportation Survey.

If you have not already logged into the system, you will be prompted to log in. At the login screen enter your Agency ID into the **Login** field and your password into the **Password** field and click **Continue to Login**.

If you forget your Agency ID or password to log into the system, contact the Montana Council on Developmental Disabiltieis at 866-443-4332.

Once you have logged in, you will be taken to the Agency Transportation Survey. There are four steps and 27 questions in the survey. If your organization does not operate its own vehicles, the survey should take about 20 minutes to complete. If your organization does operate its own vehicles, the survey will take additional time, the length of which is dependent on the number of vehicles.

The survey should take about 20 minutes to complete if your organization does not operate its own vehicles.

If your organization operates its own vehicles, you will need to know the following information for each vehicle:

- Miles driven on a weekly basis,
- Hours driven on a weekly basis,
- Current mileage (odometer reading),

- Seating capacity,
- Age (model year of the vehicle), and
- Condition (good, fair, poor).

You may find it easier to complete a paper version of the survey before entering the data online.

Human service agencies and transportation providers are encouraged to update their information in the survey database on a regular basis.

Survey Database

The survey database is intended for use by transportation providers searching for possible partners for coordination.

Figure 4: Survey Database

If you are not logged into the system, you will not be able to view vehicle rosters or utilization schedules.

To search the survey database, select “Find Transportation Providers in Montana” from the Transportation Coordination Homepage. You have the option of searching by county or several other categories.

Figure 5: Searching the Database

If you select "Search by County," you will be able to select any county in Montana from a map of the state. Clicking on a county will give you a listing of the agencies in that county. For each agency on the listing, you may select "More About This Agency" to view the agency's profile.

The survey database can be searched by county or by a number of other categories.

The survey database can also be searched for agencies matching a number of other categories. On the main search page, below the "Search by County" selection, there are options to search for agencies based on fifteen different categories:

- Agency Name.
- Agency City.
- Zip Code.
- Agency Type.
- Primary Services Provided by Agency.
- Age Groups Served by Agency.
- Transportation Limitations Served.
- Transportation Service Area.
- Funding Restrictions.
- Trip Restrictions.
- Types of Trips Provided.
- Customers Charged (Yes or No)?
- Scheduling Method.
- Current Participation in Coordination.
- Interest in Participating in Coordination.

To search by one of these categories, make a selection or enter a keyword into the box to the right of the selection. Then click on the magnifying glass icon next to the

category. A listing of agencies meeting the criteria you selected will appear. For each agency on the listing, you may select "More About This Agency" to view its profile.

Handbook

The full text of this Handbook is also available in two formats on the website: HTML and PDF.

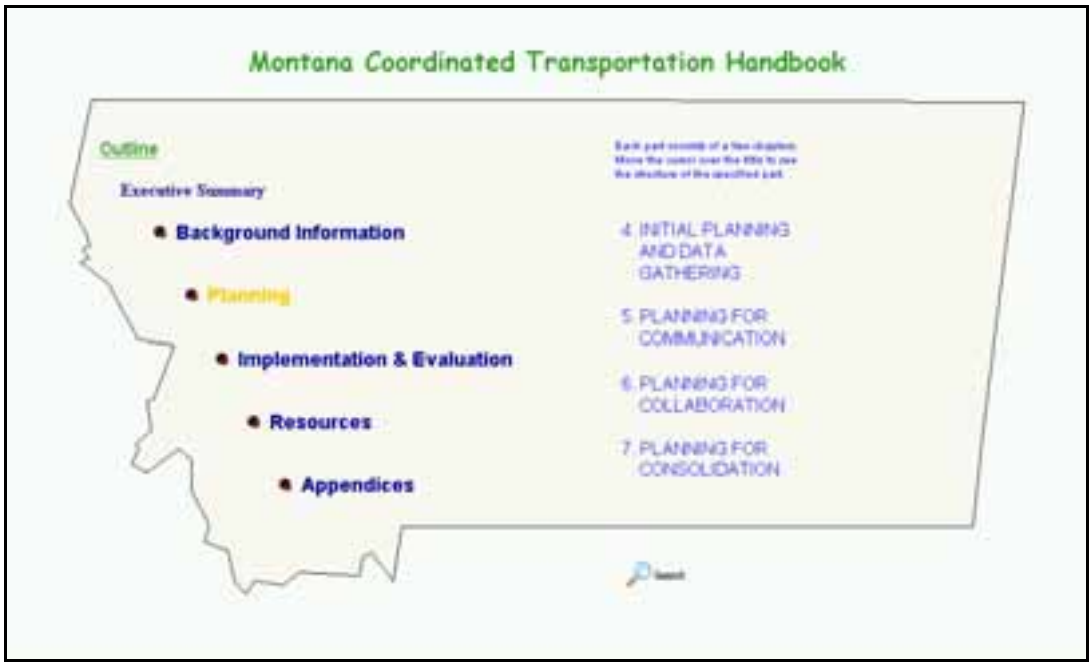

Figure 6: HTML Version of the Handbook

The full text of this Handbook is also available in two formats on the website.

- The **HTML version** of the Handbook is designed so that the handbook can be easily browsed and read straight from the Internet. The HTML version also has search functions, so that you can search for specific keywords or issues.

- The **PDF version** of the Handbook is an electronic copy of the paper manual. The PDF version makes it easy to print extra copies of the Handbook for project participants as needed. The Adobe Acrobat plug-in is required to view or print the PDF version of the handbook. It is available from www.adobe.com.

To access the Handbook from the web site, select "Montana Coordinated Transportation Handbook" from the home page. To browse the Handbook, navigate the parts by selecting links on the Handbook main page.

To search the Handbook, click on the magnifying glass icon with the label "Search" located underneath the Montana map on the Handbook main page. On the next screen, you will be able to search the full text of the Handbook by keywords.

To access the PDF version of the Handbook, for saving on your computer or printing extra copies, select the option for PDF Version from the Handbook main page.

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Chapter

2

What and Why

Chapter 2 discusses what transportation coordination is, what the benefits of coordinating transportation are, and why coordination is necessary. Chapter 2 concludes with a discussion of issues particular to coordinating transportation in Montana.

In recent years, coordination has become a topic of interest in the field of transportation services. Federal and state funding sources are increasingly requiring evidence of coordination. Federal and state policy officially encourages transportation providers to coordinate their services. But just what is Coordinated Transportation? Where did it begin? How can it benefit an organization? How can it benefit an individual who is transportation dependent?

What is Coordination?

Transportation coordination refers to two or more agencies working together to achieve more efficient, better quality service in an increased capacity–essentially, doing more with less. The concept of coordination encompasses a broad range of activities. While many people see coordination in terms of joint-use agreements or consolidation of services, coordination can be as simple as agreements to refer customers to other agencies or to form purchasing groups. However, coordination can also involve sharing vehicles and trips, information, training, and administrative functions. The key element of coordination is working together to improve services.

Transportation coordination refers to two or more agencies working together to achieve more efficient better quality service, in an increased capacity—essentially, doing more with less.

A resulting benefit of coordinating transportation services is increased efficiency, which leads to lower costs, more rides, and better services. Coordination programs reduce duplication of services and tap into economies of scale, saving money through bulk purchasing. Additionally, coordination can result in more access to funding by serving different passenger groups and utilizing funding sources that require commitment to coordination.

Most coordination efforts are undertaken to benefit a group of people generally known as being "transportation disadvantaged." The transportation disadvantaged are those people who are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation because of mental or physical disabilities, age, or income status.

Coordination efforts typically begin at the local level. State and federal programs provide frameworks through which coordination is encouraged to occur at local levels.

Coordination efforts typically begin at the local level. They are usually citywide or countywide programs, as transportation and social service providers usually operate on this level. State and federal programs provide frameworks through which coordination is encouraged to occur at local levels. In Montana, this framework is provided through funding sources requiring and encouraging coordination, such as FTA Section 5310 and 5311 and TransADE (see Chapter 9 for descriptions of these programs).

In recent years, increasing emphasis has also been placed on coordinating transportation services across entire states. Statewide coordination programs emphasize providing a seamless transportation experience for customers across the state to facilitate intercity travel. These programs emphasize standardizing customer access procedures, coordinating passengers and streamlining financial accounting.

Brief History

Although transportation coordination has occurred, to some extent, for more than 20 years, coordination came to the forefront in 1986, when the United States Department of Transportation and Department of Health and Human Services created the Coordinating Council on Human Services Transportation. The Secretaries of the two departments signed a memorandum of understanding to create a forum where coordination of transportation, sponsored by the two departments, could be pursued to improve mobility. In 1998, the Council was renamed the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) to better define its mission and encourage participation of other Federal departments. CCAM serves as an information clearinghouse for coordination related issues, funds studies of innovative coordination projects, and helps to clear interdepartmental barriers to coordination.

Sometimes, different agencies' vans would even be seen following each other along the same routes.

One early coordination effort began in 1983 in Wyoming. At the time, six different government agencies provided transportation services to customers in Sweetwater, a rural county in Wyoming. Transportation services were inefficient, with some agencies covering the same routes in the same areas, while other areas weren't served at all. Sometimes, different agencies' vans would even be seen following each other along the same routes. A local mother of a child served by the Child Development Center championed efforts to consolidate transportation services in the county. Today, the Sweetwater Transit Authority Resources (STAR) is the main public transportation provider in the county. STAR has contracts with public and private agencies, childcare centers, senior centers, nursing homes, the housing authority, and various

human services agencies agreeing to provide transportation to their customers. Today, STAR has a fleet of 14 buses, providing over 7,000 rides per month. An analysis of the economic impact of the consolidated program shows that it saves the county over $1.6 million per year, more than three times the annual cost of the system. (See the section on "Evaluating Intangibles" in Chapter 8.)

More programs, such as Ohio's Statewide Transportation Coordination Task Force, were initiated in the mid-1990's. The State Offices of Transportation, Aging, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, and Human Services participated in a February 1996 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) coordinated transportation and human services delivery workshop that lead to the establishment of the Statewide Transportation Coordination Task Force in July 1996. The participating agencies identified that they, and many other state agencies, served overlapping populations and provided overlapping services.

Montana continues to increase its efforts in coordination, and in 2001 enacted the Transportation Assistance for the Disabled and Elderly (TransADE) program, which provides operating funds for transportation services that serve persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Transportation coordination efforts continue to gain support in other states. Recent activities include Washington State's Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT), which was created in 1998 and revised and expanded in 1999. ACCT provides planning grants to local communities wishing to coordinate and serves as an information clearinghouse providing assistance to local coordination programs.

Montana is also continually increasing its coordination efforts. The Montana Transportation Partnership, founded in 1999 with a mission *to ensure Montanans, in their community of choice, have accessible, safe, affordable, and reliable transportation services through the development of coordinated systems*, is a coalition of partners, including persons with disabilities, seniors, other groups considered transportation disadvantaged, transportation service providers, transportation associations, and state human service agency representatives. The partnership has encouraged and facilitated numerous coordination projects across the state since its inception. It meets quarterly to discuss current transportation and coordination issues relevant to the participating agencies and serves as a resource for local communities throughout the state that need assistance with their coordination programs.

In 2001 the Montana Legislature enacted the Transportation Assistance for the Disabled and Elderly (TransADE) program (MCA 7-14-112). TransADE (discussed in greater depth in Chapter 9) provides operating funds for transportation services that serve persons with disabilities and the elderly. Funding comes from an account in the state special revenue fund. This program has a very strong emphasis on coordination.

Coordination efforts can be generally classified into three levels: communication, collaboration, and consolidation.

Levels of Coordination

Coordination efforts can be generally classified into three levels, as indicated by their depth and formality. These levels are communication, collaboration, and consolidation. Not all coordination programs fall neatly into these three categories; rather, many programs can be thought of as hybrid programs, as they incorporate aspects of more than one level. It may be beneficial to view these levels as benchmarks on a continuum of coordination. The three levels are detailed below.

Communication

With respect to transportation coordination, communication can be defined as informally working together toward common goals.

Communication is the most basic form of coordination; it is the exchange of information between parties. With respect to transportation coordination, communication can be defined as informally working together toward common goals. These efforts can be as simple as referring customers to another transportation provider, or working with another provider to form a purchasing group to lower the overall costs of services. Communication allows human service agencies, transportation providers, and the transportation disadvantaged to be aware of all transportation services that are available in a given area. This level of coordination is very flexible and easily adaptable because of the lack of any formalization of the coordination process.

Because the communication level is such an informal process, many organizations use this level of coordination as a natural extension of their services, perhaps having one or two more agencies to which they may refer their customers when they cannot meet their customers' needs. Often, these processes will occur without the organization identifying them as the most rudimentary level of transportation coordination. Practices such as this can serve as a foundation for a transportation coordination program and likely already exist around the state.

Collaboration involves the formalization of the process of two or more organizations working together.

Collaboration

Collaboration is perhaps the level that is most associated with the term coordination. Collaboration involves the formalization of the process of two or more organizations working together. Typically, collaboration will involve joint use agreements or other contracts and agreements that spell out how the various organizations will work together to enhance the transportation of their respective customers. This level generally includes two or more organizations sharing vehicles to provide more transportation services to their customers. The additional services may include more availability during current service hours, expanded hours of service during weekdays, or weekend service. Because collaboration may provide more benefits than communication, and is typically less complicated to initiate than consolidation, it is probably the most common level of coordination in use.

Consolidation

Consolidation occurs when two or more organizations join or merge their resources for the benefit of all participants.

Consolidation is the most complete level of coordination. Consolidation occurs when two or more organizations join or merge their resources for the benefit of all participants. Typically, consolidation takes place when two or more organizations give their resources (e.g., vehicles) to an "umbrella" organization, which may be an existing or new organization. The various agencies then contract with the umbrella organization to provide the transportation services for their respective customers. For some communities, consolidation offers the most potential benefits for coordination, but may also be the most complicated to initiate.

Benefits

Coordinated transportation is not a goal or end to be achieved; rather, it is a process that is undertaken to achieve specific benefits for a community and its residents.

Coordinated transportation is not a goal or end to be achieved; rather, it is a process that is undertaken to achieve specific benefits for a community and its residents, especially residents who are transportation disadvantaged.

Key Benefits

The benefits of coordinated transportation generally revolve around providing transportation services with greater efficiency. The benefits that a coordinated transportation system will provide depend largely on the goals established for the program, as identified in the initial planning phase (Chapter 3).

Increased Efficiency

The main benefit of transportation coordination is increased efficiency of transportation services. Coordination increases efficiency by minimizing overlapping services, by pooling and delegating resources so that organizations and individuals are responsible for the services they are most capable of undertaking, and by making use of economies of scale to lower overall costs.

Increased Rides

The most obvious benefit is the provision of more rides. More rides translate into greater flexibility and more opportunity to access jobs, medical services, and recreation. Increasing available rides also creates the prospect of service for a greater number of individuals, including those who may not have previously had access to the transportation they need.

Lower Costs

Another benefit of increased efficiency is lower costs. Typically this is measured in total costs divided by service provided, such as cost per mile or cost per ride. Contracting for service from an organization whose primary mission is transportation

may allow an organization to provide transportation to its customers at a lower cost than if it were to operate its own vehicles.

Freeing up Staff Time for Other Work

Many of the possible participants in a coordinated transportation program will be human services agencies that provide transportation for their customers only as an ancillary service. As such, they typically will not have staff dedicated to transportation services. Rather, transportation duties will be assigned to staff whose primary responsibilities are not related to transportation. Through coordination, these duties can be assigned to a full-time transportation coordinator or an agency whose primary responsibility is transportation, allowing staff to spend more time on their primary duties.

Increased Access to Funding

Funding for human services transportation is being tied increasingly to coordination.

Funding for human services transportation is increasingly tied to coordination. In Montana, state laws and regulations require that preference be given to projects showing a commitment to coordination when funding is awarded for transportation projects. MDT's new TransADE program and the FTA Section 5310 program in particular have a strong emphasis on coordination. Coordination may enable additional funding for a transportation program.

In addition to the increasing number of funding programs that require evidence of coordination, partnering with agencies serving different populations may also open funding sources for which an organization might not otherwise be eligible, such as for the elderly, persons with disabilities, or low-income..

Who Benefits

The transportation disadvantaged are dependent upon public and human service transportation to get to work, medical treatment, shopping, and recreation. When transportation providers can offer more rides, this translates to a quality of life improvement for the customer groups being served, whether it manifests itself inincreased access to destinations, orflexibility for customers who are tied to the limited service schedules of their transportation providers. Additionally, coordination can allow for more customers to beserved.

The community as a whole will also benefit from transportation coordination.

The community as a whole will also benefit from transportation coordination. Reduced costs for transportation mean better use of the community's money. The community will benefit from more reliable transportation services. The community will also see increased economic development, through improved access to jobs and shopping. Community activities will benefit from increased participation from individuals previously unable to access them.

Agencies providing transportation also benefit from transportation coordination through lower costs and increased access to funding. This allows transportation providers to better serve their current customers and to increase their capabilities to serve more customers.

What Not to Expect

While transportation coordination can have measurable benefits for a community and its residents, participants must maintain realistic expectations about what transportation coordination is and what it can do.

Coordination is a process, not a project. There is no endpoint at which coordination has been "achieved."

- Transportation coordination is not a cure-all. Coordinating transportation services can help transportation providers operate more efficiently, lower costs, increase services, and do more with what they have. It will not solve problems that are not related to the efficient delivery of transportation services.

- Typically, transportation coordination will not achieve immediate results. Particularly in the case of consolidated systems, initial startup costs for coordinating transportation can be high. Measurable benefits will occur if coordination is done properly, but it may take several months to a year or more before a return on investment becomes apparent.

- Transportation coordination is an ongoing process that requires long-term commitment from all parties involved to succeed. Coordination is a process, not a project. There is no endpoint at which coordination has been "achieved." The goal of coordination is increased efficiency, lower costs, and better services for customers. By making a long-term and continued commitment to coordination, communites will see results.

Challenges to Coordination

While transportation coordination can have extensive benefits for both transportation providers and their customers, there are a number of both real and perceived challengesthat could hinder or halt the progress of a transportation coordination program. With knowledge, creativity, and persistence, however, most challenges to coordination can be overcome.

Perceived, Imaginary, and Real Challenges

While it is important to be prepared for challenges when they arise, it is best to face them as they occur so that time and resources aren't wasted tackling imaginary challenges.

Common Challenges

There are no federal or Montana laws prohibiting coordination; both actually encourage coordination.

Restrictions placed on vehicle use by funding sources are one of the most common perceived challenges. *There are no federal or Montana State laws prohibiting coordination; both federal law and Montana law actually encourage coordination.* However, restrictions may be placed on the *extent* to which funds can be used for coordination. For example, a vehicle purchased with funds primarily intended for senior transportation may be used to provide rides for low-income individuals as well, but funding sources may require that the majority of rides be for elderly individuals or that assurances be given that all elderly individuals have access before low-income individuals are served. Check with funding sources prior to beginning the coordination program. For more information on funding sources, see Chapter 9. Knowing exactly how funding may be used in advanced is the best way to overcome this challenge.

Insurance can be a difficult obstacle to overcome, but coordinated transportation programs across the country have overcome this challenge time and time again.

Of all obstacles to coordinated transportation, insurance can be one of the most challenging to overcome. Many insurance providers are willing to assume the risk of transporting one group of passengers but may not be willing to assume the risk of more than one group of passengers or of mixed passenger groups. Work with the applicable insurance providers to find an equitable solution. Solutions may include changing insurance providers, perhaps to a provider specializing in paratransit, or trying more creative solutions, such as self-insurance or insurance pools. Insurance can be a difficult obstacle to overcome, but coordinated transportation programs across the country have overcome this challenge time and time again. For more information on insurance, see Chapter 7.

In practice, most coordinated transportation programs have had little or no problem with incompatibility among passengers. They have found that all passengers have one thing in common, the need for affordable transportation, and are generally grateful for the rides they receive, no matter with whom they ride.

Some providers may feel that because they have been working with their customer group for a long time, that they are the best qualified to handle their customers' special needs. As a result, they may be reluctant to have other agencies serve their customers. Conversely, some providers may feel that while they are qualified to handle the special needs of their customers, they are not qualified to handle the special needs of other customer groups. Training all drivers in the special needs of all passenger groups being served by your program will help to alleviate these concerns. For more information on training, see Chapter 7.

Agencies that have been providing transportation to their customers for some time may be reluctant to yield control of their funding and services, even if transportation is not their primary business. They are reluctant to allow others to encroach on their "turf." They may feel that by losing control over their customers' transportation, they are losing control over the high quality of service they have been providing. The

purpose of coordinated transportation is to better serve customers through more efficient delivery of transportation. All stakeholders can continue to be involved in the process, whether or not they still operate their own vehicles.

Overcoming Challenges

These and other challenges may make coordinated transportation seem like a difficult goal to achieve. However, these are challenges that coordinated transportation systems across the country have been tackling and overcoming for years. This is no guarantee that facing these challenges will be easy, but it can be done. The proper mindset is the key.

Knowing the facts about what coordination is, what it entails, and what the benefits can be will go a long way towards answering the questions and allaying the concerns of the stakeholders in the program.

Information and Education

Overcoming many challenges means effectively addressing the misinformed attitudes and perceptions of possible participants. The best way to do this is to be armed with correct information. Knowing the facts about what coordination is, what it entails, and what the benefits can be will go a long way towards answering the questions and allaying the concerns of the stakeholders in a program.

Creativity

Sometimes the solution to challenges will involve straying from the typical course of action. Finding innovative, creative, and better ways to do things is part of the spirit of coordination.

Persistence

Often, the biggest difference between a successful coordination program and one that doesn't get off the ground is persistence and commitment. Keep in mind the ultimate goals of the program because the long-term benefits of coordinated transportation are worth the extra efforts in the beginning.

The biggest difference between a successful coordination program and one that doesn't get off the ground is persistence and commitment.

Requirements for Successful Coordination

Coordinated transportation has been shown to be effective in increasing the availability of transportation while decreasing its costs in a variety of circumstances. However, there are several key needs to ensure that coordinated transportation is successful.

Impetus and Leadership

While the most basic transportation coordination (i.e., communications and referrals) frequently occurs on its own, some impetus must drive the initiation ofany coordinated transportation system. When transportation coordination is mandated by law, as it is

in some states, the legislation provides the impetus required to get the program started. In a non-legislated environment, such as Montana, a local "champion" or "advocate" who encourages all relevant groups to join in the effort typically provides this impetus. The local champion will usually take the reins of leadership through the course of planning to see the program through to implementation.

Stakeholder Participation

Effective transportation coordination relies on the participation of a broad base of stakeholders.

Effective transportation coordination relies on the participation of a broad base of stakeholders, including transportation providers, social services providers, and the customers themselves. Broader participation equates to broader coordination of services, which can translate to greater efficiency. Broader participation also ensures that the greatest number of individuals benefit from the coordinated transportation system.

Funding

Coordinated transportation systems require start-up and operating funds to get and keep their vehicles running. While the coordinated transportation system will eventually realize significant cost savings, the savings occur over time; extensive startup costs may be required initially, depending on the depth of the system. These costs may include significant investments in time and capital equipment. Likewise, operational costs will occur throughout the life of the system, though overhead for the system will generally be more than made up for by the cost savings and increased efficiency of the system. The State of Montana and the federal government show preference in giving transportation funding to coordinated transportation systems. This can be weighed against concerns over startup costs.

A long-term, well-planned, and committed coordinated transportation plan will show significant and measurable benefits over time.

Long-term Commitment

The coordination process is an ongoing effort to provide more efficient and effective transportation. A long-term, well-planned, and committed coordinated transportation plan will show significant and measurable benefits over time, but stakeholders must understand that their participation will be necessary well beyond the initial planning and implementation phases.

Coordination in Montana

While much of the lessons and procedures related to transportation coordination can be applied to any location in the country, the local and state characteristics and laws will change some of the specifics of coordinated transportation implementation. This section covers some of the issues specific to dealing with coordinated transportation in the state of Montana. Local characteristics and regulations should also be considered when coordinating transportation.

Local and state characteristics and laws will change some of the specifics of coordinated transportation implementation.

Statewide Characteristics

While Montana may be the "last best place" when considering its thousands of square miles of mountains, farms, and wildlife, coupled with a small but growing population; these wide expanses of space provide special challenges when it comes to coordinating transportation.

Rural vs. Urban Environments

While Montana has a large percentage of its population in rural areas, the state has three large urban areas (Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula) and several smaller urban areas (Bozeman, Butte, Kalispell, and Helena). These urban areas are important for the rural populations as they provide cultural, recreational, and shopping opportunities that may not be available in rural areas. More importantly, they are also home to the larger medical centers in the state, which provide more specialized medical care than is available from rural doctors, who are typically general practitioners.

The occasional trip into the city is taken for granted by a large portion of Montana's rural population. Those who are unable to own or operate their own vehicles are dependent upon others, either public transportation or family and friends, for their transportation needs. These people are also the most likely to be in need of the specialized medical services that are available in the larger urban areas.

Those coordinating transportation in rural areas face different issues than those coordinating transportation in urban areas. In rural areas, one of the biggest issues is that many people are not currently served by any public transportation. One of the main goals of coordination efforts in rural areas is to increase the area and population served by transportation. Rural transportation providers will often find that most of the rides that they provide are to and from larger urban areas with more medical, cultural, recreational, and shopping opportunities.

Rural transportation providers will often find that most of the rides that they provide are to and from larger urban areas with more medical, cultural, recreational, and shopping opportunities.

Providers in rural areas may also find that traditional boundaries of coordinated transportation systems, i.e., the city and the county, provide insufficient partners to make a coordination effort worthwhile. Coordinating with providers in several neighboring counties to provide weekly or monthly rides to the nearest urban areas is

one of the ways that rural transit providers have found works best to coordinate transportation.

In urban areas, on the other hand, there are typically several transportation providers. The goals regarding coordination in urban areas are usually more traditional, such as increasing efficiency by reducing duplication of services.

In Montana, many of the counties containing urban areas also contain significant rural populations. In these situations, coordination programs will often face the challenges of both rural and urban coordination: duplication of services in the urban areas with populations not being served in the rural areas. One strategy in this environment is to transfer some of the vehicles duplicating service in the urban area to rural areas not currently being served.

Population Characteristics

Those populations that are most likely to be transportation disadvantaged include persons with disabilities, seniors, and low income. The Montana Rural Passenger Needs Survey (MRPNS) found that the elderly population, defined as age 60 and over, is dispersed widely across the state, with denser populations in the Kalispell, Bozeman, Billings, and Miles City areas. Counties with the lowest per capita income are Big Horn, Roosevelt, and Glacier. The demographic data shows that those groups that are in most need of transportation services are widely dispersed across the state.

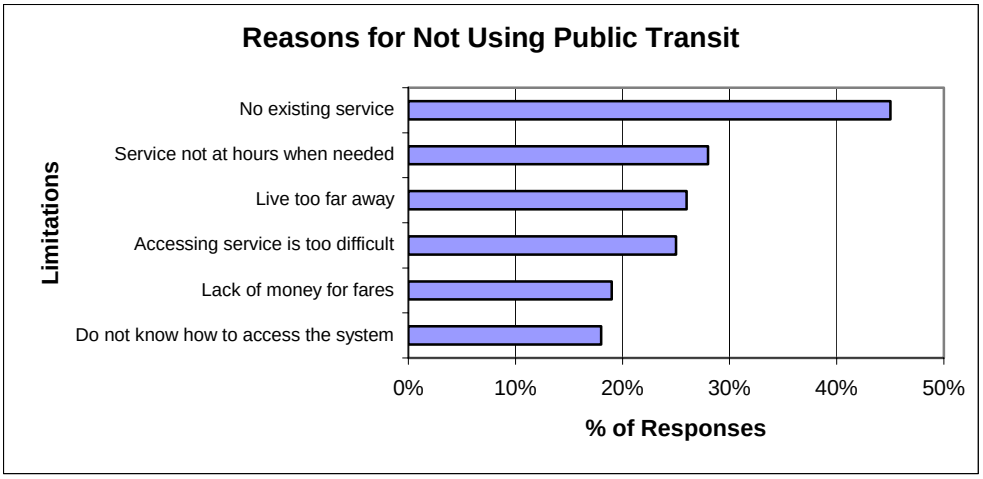
Table 2-1: Montana Demographics, 2000 Census

Montana Demographics, 2000 Census	
Population	902,195
Elderly	120,949
Below Poverty	128,355
Zero-Vehicle Households	21,016
Persons with Disabilities	145,732

The MRPNS found that, due in large part to the rural nature of Montana, only 2% of the general public relies upon general public transportation.

The MRPNS found that, due in large part to the rural nature of Montana, only 2% of the general public relies upon general public transportation. By contrast, 16% of those using social services use public transportation to access services. The major reason for lack of use of public transportation for social services was that it does not exist in the area being served. Other reasons included cost, hours, and not knowing how to access the system (see Figure 2-1).

Figure 2-1: Reasons for Not Using Public Transit (from MRPNS)



Native American Reservations/Tribal Governments

Montana is home to eight different Native American tribes on seven different reservations, many of which operate their own social services transportation systems. Native American reservations are eligible for certain special funding projects that other groups are not. These programs include Title VI of the Older Americans Act and the Native American Programs as managed by the Administration for Children and Families, under the Department of Health and Human Services. Reservations are typically home to large percentages of low-income and/or unemployed individuals, making these areas particularly susceptible to transportation dependence.

Reservations all have their own tribal governments, which have a certain degree of autonomy from state and federal government.

Legal Frameworks for Coordination

Most coordination programs begin at a local level, either city or county. State governments often provide initiatives and programs to support and encourage the implementation of coordination at a local level. Montana encourages coordination through several funding programs.

Montana encourages coordination through several funding programs.

FTA Section 5310 and 5311 Programs

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) administers the Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 and 5311 funding programs. Section 5310 imparts capital assistance to public and private organizations providing transportation to persons with disabilities and the elderly. Section 5311 supplies capital and operating assistance to public transit providers serving the general public in areas with less than 50,000 residents.

States have some leniency in the administration of these programs and many have used them to encourage coordinated transportation. In Montana, these programs both have an emphasis on coordination. Funding is awarded through a competitive application; those applicants that show a strong commitment to coordination are generally given preference.

For more information on the FTA Section 5310 and 5311 programs, see Chapter 9.

TransADE

In 2001, the Montana State Legislature enacted the TransADE program (Transportation Assistance for the Disabled and Elderly). Through MDT, TransADE provides operating assistance for transportation providers serving seniors and persons with disabilities. Like the FTA Section 5310 and 5311 programs, TransADE has an emphasis on coordination. One half of the points on the application for TransADE funding are for coordination. In addition, applicants must score at least 70% on the coordination category to be considered for funding.

For more information on the MDT TransADE program, see Chapter 9.

The main objective of the MDT TransADE and FTA Section 5310 and 5311 programs is to provide transportation to the transportation disadvantaged and rural general public. Coordination is emphasized as a means to ensure that these goals are carried out in the most efficient manner possible.

Local Transportation Advisory Committees

MDT requires FTA Section 5310 and TransADE applicants to form or be members of a local Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). Members of the TAC are encouraged to coordinate transportation planning for the service area in order to increase the efficiency of transportation services and to better meet the needs of their customers. Responsibilities of the TACs include:

The local Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) serves as the local transportation planning organization.

- Promoting and encouraging communication and coordination of transportation service within the service area;
- Serving as the local planning group for transportation related issues;
- Discussing community transportation issues including unmet transportation needs and how to improve transportation within the service area; and
- Reviewing, prioritizing, and approving all Section 5310 and TransADE applications prior to submittal to MDT.

Because passenger transportation issues differ from one area to another, each community must customize its TAC to address local transportation conditions. MDT

recommends that all TACs include representatives from the following groups or agencies:

- Seniors
- Persons with disabilities
- Disability organizations
- Hospitals, nursing homes, retirement facilities, and mental health centers
- Local elected officials
- Citizens interested in community transportation
- General public transportation providers

MDT recommends that the TACs meet quarterly to discuss transportation needs and resources in the service area. Only one TAC should exist per service area.

For more information on TACs, contact the MDT Transit Section (see Chapter 11 for contact information.)

Chapter Summary

What is coordination?

- Coordinated transportation entails agencies working together to provide more efficient transportation services for their customers.
- Coordination can be as simple as information and referral or as complex as a consolidated system.
- Coordination is typically undertaken to benefit the transportation disadvantaged.
- Coordination efforts usually occur at a local level with state and federal programs providing frameworks from which to work.

Historically speaking,

- Coordination has taken place for more than 20 years and,
- Since the mid 1990s, coordination has become progressively important as transportation resources become increasingly scarce.

There are three levels of coordination: communication, collaboration, and consolidation

- *Communication* involves more informal means of coordination, such as information and referral programs.
- *Collaboration* involves increased levels of formality, such as joint use of vehicles, joint training, and trip sharing.
- *Consolidation*, the most formal level, occurs when one system assumes all transportation responsibilities for a number of organizations.

What are the benefits of coordination?

- Coordination is intended to increase the efficiency with which transportation services are provided. Increased efficiency can translate into more rides and lowered costs.
- Customers, who typically include the transportation disadvantaged, benefit through increased access to rides and the increased flexibility that provides.

Transportation providers benefit through lowered costs the ability to increase the populations they serve.

- Transportation coordination *does not* fix problems not related to increasing the efficiency of transportation services and is a long-term process intended to show results over time.

What challenges exist to coordinating transportation?

- Challenges to coordination can be perceived, imaginary, or real.
- Common perceived challenges to coordination include restrictions on vehicle use by funding sources, insurance difficulties, incompatibility among passengers, special needs of passengers, and turfism.
- Most challenges to coordination can be overcome through persistence, creativity, and education.

Successful coordination programs require:.

- Impetus to get the program started, and leadership to see it through to implementation;
- Active participation by as many stakeholders as possible;
- Funding for both capital and operating expenses; and
- Long-term commitment to the process from all involved stakeholders.

Coordinating transportation in Montana involves the following issues:

- Trips to urban centers make up a large portion of rural system trips;
- Coordination in urban areas typically is undertaken to reduce duplication of service;
- The population of transportation disadvantaged people is spread throughout the state;
- Montanans currently do not utilize public transportation in large numbers;
- The FTA Section 5310 and 5311 programs and the MDT TransADE program are funding programs encouraging coordination; and

- Local Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs) across the state provide forums for the discussion of the most efficient utilization of transportation resources in many cities and counties in Montana.

Part

B

Planning

The chapters in Part B detail instructions for creating a plan for a Coordinated Transportation System.

Chapter 3: Initial Planning and Data Gathering

Chapter 3 contains instructions for the initial planning and data gathering phase, which determines the participating agencies, goals, and type of system to be implemented,.

Chapter 4: Planning for Communication

Chapter 4 includes instructions relevant to those planning a Coordinated Transportation program in which informal Communication activities will be implemented.

Chapter 5: Planning for Collaboration

Chapter 5 includes instructions relevant to those planning a Coordinated Transportation program in which Collaboration activities will be implemented.

Chapter 6: Planning for Consolidation

Chapter 6 includes instructions for implementing a Consolidated Coordinated Transportation program.

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Chapter

3

Initial Planning and Data Gathering

Chapter 3 contains instructions for the initial planning and data-gathering phase of a coordinated transportation program.

The first step in coordinating transportation services is the Initial Planning Phase. The process begins by meeting with stakeholders to gauge the interest in a coordinated transportation program. This phase of the program involves analyzing the current transportation situation to determine what services are presently being offered, what services are needed, and what can be improved. Finally, determine the level of coordination to be undertaken and begin to plan for coordination.

This chapter will reference several supporting documents contained in Chapter 10. To find these documents, turn to the first page of Chapter 10 and look for the documents indexed under Chapter 3.

Begin Documenting the Process

The planning process should be thoroughly documented from start to finish.

The planning process should be thoroughly documented from start to finish. Documenting the planning process will help to eliminate questions and confusion during implementation. Documentation may also be helpful as evidence of coordination when applying for funding programs that require such evidence, such as the MDT TransADE program.

Of particular importance is the creation of a written plan for the coordination program. Outline all of the important decisions made throughout the planning process. When the planning process is complete, having a written plan will help guide the implementation process.

Chapter 10 contains a list of the components to include in the written plan.

Identify Need for Transportation Coordination

It is important to determine if coordination is needed, why it is needed, and if coordination will be effective.

Before planning for a coordinated transportation program, it is important to determine if coordination is needed, why it is needed, and if coordination will be effective. Coordination is a means to help organizations deliver more efficient transportation services, reduce operational costs, and better serve their customers.

There are three conditions in which transportation coordination is particularly effective.

- **Substantial unused vehicle time** -- Organizations in an area may have vehicles that sit idle for blocks of time during the day. Often these vehicles will be used to transport customers to and from one specific place at a specific time, such as to the group meal site or to the Head Start center, and the vehicles will sit idle before, after, and between these trips. Other times, these vehicles will be used for occasional field trips, but not used regularly. Through coordination, other agencies that need to provide transportation but don't have the capital resources to purchase their own vehicles may make arrangements to utilize these vehicles at the times when they would otherwise be idle.

- **Substantial unused vehicle capacity** -- Organizations in an area may have buses or vans that are used to transport only a few customers at a time, leaving unused seating capacity. Some human services agencies that provide transportation with their own vehicles may not have a large enough customer base to fill their vehicles, but still need to operate the vehicles. Through coordination, other agencies that need to provide transportation but don't have their own vehicles can make arrangements so that their customers may utilize the unused seating capacity.

- **Lack of economies of scale in planning, administration, operations, purchasing, or maintenance** -- Although economies of scale can insinuate the purchasing of goods in bulk for lower unit costs, the same principle can also apply to planning, administration, purchasing, and maintenance. For instance, if several organizations agreed to contract with a shop to maintain their vehicles, perhaps ten in total, they may be able to negotiate a better price than if each individual agency negotiated separately for maintenance on the two or three vehicles that they own. As another example, one transportation planner may be able to manage a consolidated transportation system more efficiently than several managers working part time on transportation at individual agencies.

If *any or all* of these conditions exist in an area, coordination can be used to address the situation. If these conditions do not exist, coordination may still be beneficial on more informal levels. Successful coordination can be as simple as keeping the lines of communications open with other transportation providers in an area.

Coordination may already exist to some extent in your community, which may mitigate some of the factors listed above. If coordination is already occurring in your community, do not let this stop you from getting involved. Well-designed coordination programs are structured to allow new participants even after implementation. Contact your local Transportation Advisory Committee for information on the coordination efforts in your area.

Coordination may already exist to some extent in your community. If coordination is already occurring in your community, do not let this stop you from getting involved.

Identify Stakeholders

The first step in planning for a coordinated transportation program is to identify the stakeholders. Stakeholders could include essentially any organization or person with an interest in transportation. This may include:

- Public or private sector agencies, such as:
    - Agencies providing transportation as a primary or supportive service,
    - Agencies providing transportation services for their customers by contracting or purchasing rides from other transportation providers, or
    - Agencies that do not currently provide transportation services for their customers, but wish to do so in the future;
- Transportation disadvantaged individuals or advocates for transportation-disadvantaged individuals;
- Local or Tribal government; or
- Individuals or organizations that otherwise have a stake in the provision of transportation services.

(Examples of these organizations are listed in the next section)

Stakeholders could include essentially any organization or person with an interest in transportation.

A coordination program can exist with as few as two participants; however, the more stakeholders are involved, the more opportunities for coordination will be available.

Make a list of the organizations in your area that have some interest in transportation. Chapter 10 includes a list of possible organizations to start with when compiling the list.

Possible Stakeholders

The stakeholders in a coordinated transportation program can come from a wide range of organizations and interests. Cover all of the obvious stakeholders, but try not to overlook the less obvious ones, such as the private sector and citizens. Many people probably have an interest in transportation issues in your community.

Many people probably have an interest in transportation issues in your community.

The organizations listed here and in Chapter 10 are not intended to be a comprehensive listing. Use your contacts in the community to find out who else may be interested in a coordination program.

Local Transportation Advisory Committee Members

Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs) are formed to encourage coordinated planning of transportation services in the service areas they represent. Your local TAC is a good place to begin when searching for stakeholders in a coordination program because:

- The TAC should include many of the key players in local transportation in your area;
- The TAC members should be familiar with the main ideas behind coordination, and may already be involved in some coordination;
- The TAC members share some familiarity with the operations of the other members of the TAC; and
- The TAC already has some form of organization that could serve as a basis or a starting point for your coordination program.

Many communities in Montana have established TACs.

Currently TACs are located in over 40 different communities in Montana, covering service areas ranging from municipalities to entire counties. Contact information for your local TAC can be found by contacting MDT (see Chapter 11 for contact information).

If there is currently no TAC in your community, now might be a good time to form one, especially if the coordination program might apply for funding from the FTA Section 5310 or MDT TransADE programs.

Because of the importance of local TACs in reviewing applications for funding, keep the TAC abreast of the progress of the coordination planning, implementation, and operation throughout the life of the program.

Local Metropolitan Planning Organization

In Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula, the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) acts as the main planning body for transportation issues. The MPOs in these

cities must develop a comprehensive Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) outlining short- and long-term transportation plans for the area.

Because applications for MDT transit funding from these cities must be included in the TIP, the local MPO should be involved in the coordination program, or at least kept aware of the coordination activities.

Transportation Providers

The most obvious stakeholders in a coordination program will be the various transportation providers themselves, including public, specialized, and private transportation providers. Don't forget to include the local school district.

Taxi, coach, and bus companies can be invaluable partners in a coordination program, as they have resources, expertise, and the ability to operate with more flexibility than public and non-profit transportation providers.

Make every effort possible to include private sector providers in the coordination program. Taxi, coach, and bus companies can be invaluable partners in a coordination program, as they have resources, expertise, and the ability to operate with more flexibility than public and non-profit transportation providers. Beyond these reasons, FTA Section 5310, 5311, and MDT TransADE funds require evidence that the private sector has been given the opportunity to participate.

Social Service and Healthcare Providers

Many social service providers may have a stake in your coordination program. Because social services providers serve customer groups that are more likely to be transportation disadvantaged, they often have to arrange for transportation for their customers to participate in their services. Social services agencies may operate their own vehicles or contract or make arrangements with other transportation providers to transport their customers. Some social services agencies do not currently provide transportation services to their clients, but would like to do so. All of these agencies are potential stakeholders.

Social service providers may be public, private, or non-profit. They include senior centers, human service provider corporations, nursing homes, hospitals, mental health centers, centers for independent living, or charitable organizations.

Government Entities

Various government entities may have a stake in a transportation coordination programby providing transportation and social services through administration, regulation, and funding. Having these "insiders" as a part of the coordination program can facilitate some of the more complicated dealings with governmental regulations.

Elected officials may be interested in participating in the coordination process... and can be a resource for overcoming institutional obstacles or resistance.

In addition, elected officials such as members of local government, county commissioners, and state representatives may be interested in participating in the coordination process. County and municipal governments are the end providers of many social services, and have a vested interest in local transportation issues as well. Having local elected officials on the committee can help to illustrate to them the benefits of coordination. Elected officials may bring these issues to the attention of the public and can be a resource for overcoming institutional obstacles or resistance.

School Districts and Pupil Transportation

Coordination with local school districts is a preferential factor for those applying for funds under the TransADE program.

School buses provide an example of beneficial coordination. In much of Montana, the local school districts are the largest transportation providers in the area. Designed to carry many passengers, the buses are in use in the mornings and in the mid afternoons, five days a week, eight months per year, leaving substantial time during which these vehicles sit idle.

The requirements for coordinating with pupil transportation vary from state to state and from municipality to municipality, due to regulations and concerns with mixing passengers with school children. In Montana, state law leaves most of the control over pupil transportation in the hands of local school districts. State law (MCA 20-10-102) does require that if school buses are used to transport other passengers, all school bus markings must be covered. Coordination with local school districts is a preferential factor for those applying for funds under the TransADE program (see Chapter 9).

The actual customers and would-be customers of transportation in your area can offer a perspective from the other side of the driver's seat. Who better to tell what can be improved and what services are lacking than those who use the transportation system?

For specific regulations regarding coordination with pupil transportation, contact your local school district. Many school districts in Montana do not operate their own vehicles, instead contracting with an outside agency to provide pupil transportation. Even if specific regulations prevent you from coordinating vehicle use with your local pupil transportation provider, other options for coordination such as joint maintenance, training, and purchasing groups that can still offer benefits.

Customer Groups and the Public

Members from the public, the various client groups served, and the advocates for those groups can also participate in the coordination process. The actual customers and would-be customers of transportation in your area can offer a unique perspective: the passenger's. Who better to tell what can be improved and what services are lacking than those who use the transportation system?

Other Interested Parties

The parties discussed in the previous sections are some of the more apparent ones with interests in coordinated transportation. Do not limit the process to only these parties. Many other organizations may be interested in coordination, including:

- Local businesses,
- Religious organizations,
- Advocacy groups, and
- Organizations that provide funding, such as the United Way.

Finding Stakeholders

With all of the possible stakeholders in an area, how is it possible to track them down?

- **Montana Transportation Coordination Website**. The Montana Transportation Coordination Website, accessible by clicking on the correct link at www.mtcdd.org has a searchable database of a number of agencies that may have a stake in transportation coordination. For information on how to use the Montana Transportation Coordination Website, see Chapter 1.
- **Local Transportation Advisory Committee**. If there is a local TAC, it will be comprised of some of the key players in transportation in your area. Contact MDT for a listing of TACs statewide.
- **DPHHS**. The Department of Public Health and Human Services and your local Health and Human Services department may be able to help find social service and health care providers in your area that would be interested in participating in the program. For contact information, see Chapter 11.
- **MDT**. The Montana Department of Transportation may be able to help you locate public and specialized transportation providers in your area. For contact information, see Chapter 11.
- **Phone Book**. The phone book is a good place to look for private transportation and social services providers who would be likely stakeholders. Searching through the government pages may also help locate public social service agencies and government representatives.
- **Local Contacts**. Local contacts in transportation or social service provisions may have some ideas of possible stakeholders.

When adding to the list of stakeholders, include the name of a contact in the organization, an address, and a phone number. Chapter 11 contains contact information that can serve as a starting point.

Contact Stakeholders

After compiling a list of possible stakeholders, the next task is to contact the agencies and individuals on the list to recruit their involvement in a committee to discuss coordination in your area.

Before contacting agencies, understand the fundamentals of coordination that have been discussed thus far in this manual.

The purpose of the initial meeting is to *discuss* coordination; participation in the initial meeting does not commit anyone to participation in the actual coordination program.

Before contacting agencies, develop a thorough understanding of the fundamentals of coordination discussed thus far in this manual. Know generally how and why coordination works; what the benefits and limitations of coordination are; what some of the more common challenges are and how to overcome them. Potential participants may have questions and misconceptions may deter their participation. Similarly, building false hope in participants in the initial stages of coordination may cause problems as the process proceeds.

Invitation to Participate

Send a letter to the stakeholders inviting them to participate in an initial meeting to discuss coordination. Chapter 10 includes a sample letter. The letter explains the intent to form a Coordinating Committee to discuss possible coordination in your area, invites the recipient to send a representative to the first meeting, and solicits a response regarding whether the recipient is interested in participating in the committee and whether the recipient will send a representative to the initial meeting. Follow up the initial letter with a phone call. A follow up phone call will help keep the idea fresh in people's minds and will give participants a chance to ask questions about the meeting or coordination in general.

Keep respondents who are interested in participating in the committee on the mailing list. Remove those that indicated that they were not interested in participating in the committee, but keep their contact information on file.

Document participants and their responses in the written plan, and list those who do not respond. The letter sent should also be included in the documentation.

Meet with Stakeholders

It is now time to meet with the stakeholders who have responded to the letter and have agreed to participate in the initial meeting. A sample agenda for the initial meeting is included in Chapter 10.

The purpose of the initial meeting is to introduce the concepts of coordination to the participants, start a dialogue about how coordination can be used in your community, and establish organizational procedures for the coordination process. Select a person to run the meeting who is familiar with the concepts presented in this handbook and is prepared to answer questions from participants about how coordination will affect their current transportation system.

The purpose of the initial meeting is to introduce the concepts of coordination to the participants, start a dialogue about how coordination can be used in your community, and establish organizational procedures for the coordination process.

Discuss Coordination Concepts

Begin the meeting by familiarizing the participants with the basic concepts of coordination. The information presented will be similar to the information addressed in Chapter 2. Discuss what coordination is and how it works; the benefits of coordination; challenges to coordination, both perceived and real; the process of coordination; and what can and can't be expected from a coordination program. Also discuss current coordination activities occurring around both the state and country. The Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility website at www.fta.dot.gov/CCAM/www/ is a good place to research this information. Also, check Chapter 12 for other Internet Links. Sharing case studies is an effective way to illustrate how coordination works beyond the abstract concepts.

Discuss Coordination in Your Community

After discussing the basic concepts of coordination and some successful coordination programs around the country, dialogue about how coordination can be used in your community. This initial brainstorming session will help to illustrate to the participants that coordination is possible and can be effective almost anywhere. While ideas for setting goals will be generated in this phase of the meeting, the more formal goal setting process will not occur until after data collection has been completed.

Give participants the opportunity to discuss any coordination efforts in which they are involved. Participants may find that they are already involved in informal levels of coordination without labeling their activities as such. More formal coordination efforts can be built upon this existing framework.

Give participants a chance to discuss perceived challenges to coordination, and be prepared to discuss how these challenges can be overcome.

Establish Organizational Procedures

After discussing the basics behind general coordination and how coordination can work in your area, the next task is to establish the organizational procedures for coordination planning. Start by giving a brief overview of the entire coordination process, so that participants know what they are becoming involved in. Determine which participants in the initial meeting wish to continue planning for coordination. These representatives from the participating agencies will form the coordinating committee. If there is a local committee in place, such as your TAC or a governmental committee, the group may wish to work within that structure or form a subcommittee on coordination for the program.

If there is a local committee in place, such as your TAC or a governmental committee, the group may wish to work within that structure or form a subcommittee on coordination for the program.

Next, determine each organization's level of participation in the planning process, assigning responsibilities to participants throughout the planning process based upon the level at which they are able to participate.

Finally, set a schedule for meeting times and locations. During this planning process, the coordinating committee will need to meet regularly (monthly or bi-monthly) to keep the program moving.

Include the organizational structures established in the written plan.

Leadership

As the organization is initially being formed, remember that strong leadership is important to ensure the success of the program. The leader of the program needs to be someone who can keep the process moving and who can get things done. The planning and implementation processes may meet challenges and slow down, so seek a strong leader who knows how to work around and through bottlenecks and to keep participants motivated. A good leader can also facilitate active participation from all members and encourage new ideas.

Data Collection

When a core group of participants has been established, the next step in the initial planning phase is to start collecting data on the current transportation situation in your area. The data collection phase will help to identify what deficiencies exist in the current system and what can be done to correct those deficiencies.

Include in the written plan all of the data gathered in this phase of planning as well as any survey tools or interview questionnaires utilized. Examples of these data collection tools are described in further detail on the next page.

Agency Transportation Survey

The Montana Agency Transportation Survey (located on the Montana Transportation Coordination website at www.mtcdd.org, with a paper copy in Chapter 10) contains much of the information necessary for data collection, including service profiles, ridership profiles, vehicle inventories, and utilization charts. Many of the human service agencies and transportation providers in the state have already entered their data into the survey database. The survey database may be useful in identifying potential participants for the committee.

An easy way to undertake the data collection process is to simply have each of the committee participants update their information in the Montana Agency Transportation Survey Database.

An easy way to undertake the data collection process is to simply have each of the committee participants update their information in the Montana Agency Transportation Survey Database (see Chapter 1 for information on how to use the survey and database). When they have finished updating their data, their agency profiles can be printed out.

Alternatively, paper versions of the survey can be distributed to participants. A paper version of the survey is included in Chapter 10 and is also available for download and printing from the website.

Supplementary Survey

Also included in Chapter 10 is a supplementary survey that should be completed by members of the coordinating committee. This survey contains more detailed questions about funding sources, expenses, and staffing that are necessary for implementing coordinated transportation but are beyond the scope of the Montana Agency Transportation Survey. The supplementary survey should be administered if the information it contains is important; only participants that operate their own vehicles or purchase transportation for their customers will need to fill it out.

Route Maps

If possible, collect route maps or maps of customer locations from each of the participants in the program that operates or purchases transportation. The vehicle rosters and utilization charts tell what vehicles exist and when they are used, but they do not tell where the vehicles go. If the participating organizations don't have records of this information, ask their drivers to help with this.

Other Data as Needed

If there is information pertinent to the coordinated transportation efforts the committee is pursuing that is missing from the Montana Agency Transportation Survey and Supplementary Survey, conduct an additional survey or interviews of the committee members to obtain the information.

Difficulties in the Data Collection Phase

Those participants whose primary mission is not transportation may not keep detailed records of their transportation services, which may make filling out the surveys difficult.

Data collection is a crucial phase in the beginning of the coordinated transportation program. It is impossible to coordinate without having accurate information about the resources that are to be coordinated. The more detailed the information available, the easier it is to plan an effective strategy for coordinated transportation.

That said, for the participants, filling out surveys and vehicle utilization charts can be a chore. For many of the participants, transportation issues are not their main concern, and they will have other tasks that may seem more pressing than filling out forms. In addition, those whose primary mission is not transportation may not keep detailed records of their transportation services, which may make filling out the surveys difficult.

For those in charge of planning coordinated transportation programs, the data collection phase can be trying. It is important that all the information needed is collected, so this phase may take some time and effort. Be mindful and appreciative of the effort the participants in the project are making. Thorough completion of the process is a necessary part of coordination.

Continue Searching for Participants

While the committee is forming and starting the initial preparations for a coordination program, continue to search for organizations in your area that could be included in the program. The best programs will be open ended enough that other stakeholders may be included at any time throughout the planning process, or even during or following implementation. Inclusiveness is in the spirit of coordination; do not close the doors to other participants after the initial meeting.

Inclusiveness is in the spirit of coordination; do not close the doors to other participants after the initial meeting.

Analyze Current Services and Resources

After collecting data from the organizations on the committee, it is time to analyze the data to get a picture of the current transportation situation in your area. From this data, determine the deficiencies and goals that the coordination program will address. A sample profile of current transportation resources is included in Chapter 10. Some of the key results to look for are discussed in the following sections.

Vehicle Resources

Vehicle resources are often the primary focus of transportation coordination; after all, without vehicles, there would be no transportation to coordinate.

Each agency will have completed a vehicle roster and utilization chart while finishing the Agency Transportation Survey. Complile the vehicle rosters and utilization charts

from all participating agencies into a master vehicle roster and a master vehicle utilization chart. The master roster will list all of the transportation resources currently available to the program, including capacities and accessibility. The master vehicle utilization chart will show times when there are gaps or duplications in service and idle vehicles.

When comparing vehicle resources in this stage of the planning process, focus on the operational potential for coordination rather than costs and feasibility.

When comparing vehicle resources in this stage of the planning process, focus on the operational potential for coordination rather than costs and feasibility.

Services

Give careful consideration to the different services that participants provide, including the types of services they offer (e.g., fixed route or demand responsive), their differing fare policies, and the volume of service they provide (how many trips, how many passenger hours, how many vehicle hours). Consider the days and hours of operation of each participant. Analyze the service area. If participants provided route maps and/or maps of client locations, the analysis can be done visually, which may provide a clear picture of the situation. The Montana Agency Transportation Survey also asks respondents to describe their service area. By comparing route maps and client maps, it is possible to get a good idea of where services may be duplicated or lacking.

Passenger Demographics

Consider the different passenger groups served by each participant. Do they specialize in serving one particular passenger group or are they open to the general public? Are any groups being underserved in a particular area?

Finance and Administration

If data on funding, expenses, and staffing was collected, (such as information included in the supplementary survey from Chapter 10) it is possible to determine the cost of transportation operations in the area. Also determine which areas are costing the most money, and which areas can be operated more efficiently.

Determine which areas are costing the most money, and which areas can be operated more efficiently.

Identify Deficiencies and Set Goals

Based on the data collection and analysis from the previous sections, determine the deficiencies of the current transportation system and the goals of the coordinated transportation system. This is a four-step process entails:

- Determining the deficiencies in the current transportation system,
- Isolating the services that could be improved and expanded,
- Prioritizing the list of deficiencies and expansion proposals, and
- Seting the goals and plan of action based on the prioritized list.

Possible Deficiencies

The first step in setting goals for the coordinated transportation system is to determine its deficiencies.

The first step in setting goals for the coordinated transportation system is to determine its current deficiencies. Start by making a list of the deficiencies. Some of the most common deficiencies facing transportation providers are:

- **Duplication of Service**. When there are several human services agencies operating transportation in a given area, they often have overlapping customers and overlapping routes. Two half-full vans from two different agencies traveling the same route everyday is ***not*** an efficient means of transportation provision. Eliminating duplication of service enables vehicles to be used for other purposes, allowing for increased service without additional resources.
- **Areas not Served by Any Transportation**. It is common for providers in predominantly rural areas to have inadequate transportation resources to offer services to many peopleleaving people in outlying rural areas, those with the greatest need for transportation services, to fend for themselves.
- **Populations not Served by Any Transportation**. Sometimes human services providers offer transportation services only to their customers. This may leave certain customer groups in need of transportation
- **Vehicle Idle Time**. When transportation is provided for a limited number of riders, for limited purposes, and/or limited trips during the day, there may be substantial time periods when vehicles are sitting idle. Transportation coordination programs typically have little problem finding uses for idle vehicles.

Transportation coordination programs typically have little problem finding uses for idle vehicles.

- **Limited Fleet Size and Vehicle Capacity**. With the high cost of purchasing and operating vehicles, many transportation systems have to make do with what they have, even when those resources are inadequate to serve the needs of their customers.

- **Lack of Accessible Vehicles**. Many transportation systems lack enough wheelchair accessible vehicles or spaces on vehicles to meet the needs of their clients.

- **Excessive Travel Time**. Because a provider may have to run long, circuitous routes in order to serve all of its customers, riders may spend unreasonably long periods of time on the vehicles. Better planning of vehicle utilization can help in this regard. Reducing ride time is a good way to improve the quality of the transportation experience for your customers.

- **Significant Collateral Duties**. When transportation is not an organization's primary mission, administrators and case workers have to take time away from their primary duties for scheduling rides, dispatching, and even driving the vehicles.

- **Excessive Costs**. Providing transportation is expensive, especially when operating without the benefit of economies of scale. Capital expenditures, maintenance, insurance, and drivers can rapidly increase cost. Utilizing economies of scale in purchasing, training, maintenance, and administration can help lower transportation expenses.

When transportation is not an organization's primary mission, administrators and case workers have to take time away from their primary duties for scheduling rides, dispatching, and even driving the vehicles.

List all of the deficiencies in the current transportation system, even if they are minor. Prioritize this list later on.

Utilizing economies of scale in purchasing, training, maintenance, and administration can help lower transportation expenses.

Possible Improvements and Expansions

After determining the deficiencies in the transportation system, make a list of possible improvements or expansions that go beyond merely remedying the current set of deficiencies. Possible improvements and expansions include:

- **Increasing Service Area**. Expanding the geographical area covered allows more customers to be served, which is especially important in rural areas where it can be difficult to reach customers in outlying locations.

- **Serving More Customer Groups**. Expand services to groups that currently aren't being served or even to the general public. (for information regarding serving various customer groups, see the PSC Licensing and Regulations section page 7-3)

- **Increasing Trips Provided**. The benefits of increasing the number of trips provided can be twofold. First, increasing the number of trips enhances the number of people served by effectively increasing daily capacity. Second, increasing the number of rides gives customers more choices of when to travel, which can translate to a quality of life benefit.

Customers often desire service in the evenings and on the weekends, so that they have more opportunities for cultural and recreational activities.

- **Expanding Service Hours/Days/Weeks**. Often small public transportation and specialized transportation systems operate only during the morning and afternoon, and only on weekdays. While this is typically adequate service for customers needing access to crucial services such as healthcare and grocery shopping, customers often desire service in the evenings and on the weekends, so that they may attendcultural and/or recreational activities.

- **Providing Better Quality Service**. When transportation is operated as a supportive service, it usually does not receive all of the providing agency's attention. Through coordination, several agencies can pool their resources to create a dedicated transportation staff.

List all the possible expansions and improvements in the coordination program, as the next step involves prioritizing the list.

Prioritize Deficiencies and Expansions

At this point, there is a list of the deficiencies that are currently facing the system and a list of possibilities for improvement or expansion of the system. Compile these lists; then have participants in the program prioritize the items to determine the most important deficiencies to correct and expansions to implement. These priorities will become the basis of the coordination program's goals. A sample tally sheet for prioritization is included in Chapter 10. Include the finalized list of priorities in the written plan.

Decide Upon Goals

If a number of major deficiencies in the current system have been identified, concentrate on these in the initial effort.

When the lists of deficiencies and expansions have been prioritized, it is time to set the initial goals for the coordinated transportation program. Goals may include remedying some of the deficiencies in the current system and/or implementing some of the desired improvements or expansions. If a number of major deficiencies in the current system have been identified, concentrate on these in the initial effort. There will be opportunities to reevaluate the goals after the initial plan's implementation.

The following questions may helpdetermine which goals should be set for the coordinated transportation system.

- What are the most important deficiencies to remedy or expansions to implement?
- Which goals will have the most benefit for customers?
- Which goals are the most practical to implement?

Include the goals of the coordination program in the written plan.

Ensure Proper Authorization from Participating Agencies

The coordination committee has now recruited participants, analyzed current resources, and decided upon the goals for the coordination program. It is almost time to determine which level of coordination is right for the program and start on the detailed planning process.

Ensure that each of the participating agencies has the proper authorization to go forward with the coordination program. If they do not, they must get authorization from those in their organization who have that authority. Without proper authorization, participating organizations may be forced to back out in the middle of the program.

Ensure that each of the participating agencies have the proper authorization to go forward with the coordination program.

Agencies answering to a board or governmental agencies may need or want to pass a resolution to enter into the coordination program. A sample resolution supporting the creation of a coordination program is included in Chapter 10.

Begin Collecting "Before" Data

After the coordination program has been planned and implemented, the success of the program will be evaluated based upon improvement over the uncoordinated system. In order to make comparisons, data must be collected prior to implementation of the coordinated system. Necessary data includes the number of trips and rides provided, the time and miles vehicles spend on the road, and financial data including revenues and costs from transportation. Participating agencies are likely already collecting much or all of this data. Standardize the data collected by participating agencies and make sure all agencies are collecting data. Data collected during the planning phase of coordinating a transportation system can be used as "before" data when evaluating the success of the program after implementation. For more information on evaluation and data collection, see Chapter 8.

Determine Appropriate Coordination Program

Now that the goals of the coordination program have been determined, it is time to decide which model of coordination to follow.

In Chapter 2, the three levels of coordination were defined. They were:

- **Communication**, which involves informal means, such as information and referral programs;
- **Collaboration**, which involves increased levels of formality such as joint use of vehicles, joint training, and trip sharing; and
- **Consolidation**, the most comprehensive level, which occurs when one system assumes all transportation responsibilities for a number of organizations.

In addition to these three levels, it is also possible to form a **hybrid** system, in which more than one of these models is utilized.

Communication

There are two typical sets of circumstances that identify communication as the most appropriate level of coordination:

- **When agencies are unable to coordinate vehicle use**. Some challenges such as insurance or regulations may necessitate long-term efforts before vehicles can be used jointly. Occasionally, especially when a small number of participants are involved, vehicle utilization schedules make immediate coordination impractical. Or, the start-up effort and expense of coordination is more than the participants are able to handle at the current time. In these cases, working at informal levels can be the most effective means for the time being, and may result in opportunities for more formal and more extensive coordination efforts over time.

- **When agencies are reluctant to share vehicle use**. Over the long term, mere reluctance to share vehicles or vehicle capacity is not a legitimate reason to shun coordination. However, some agencies may want to witniss practical results of coordination before they are willing to make a full-fledged effort. Initiating the program with more informal means of coordination, or perhaps including the reluctant parties only on informal terms, can help to illustrate the potential benefits of coordination while keeping everyone involved. Establishing goodwill with possible stakeholders, whether they currently participate in the program or not, can only benefit the program in the future.

Establishing goodwill with possible stakeholders, whether they currently participate in the program or not, can only benefit the program in the future.

Be wary of the distinction between legitimate restrictions on coordination of vehicle use or reluctance to share vehicles and non-legitimate reasons, such as turfism and excuses. Persistence and education can help overcome the non-legitimate reasons. Sometimes the communication level is merely a stepping-stone to higher levels of coordination.

If it is determined that the coordination program will follow the communication model, proceed to Chapter 4.

Collaboration

The collaboration model is often chosen as a compromise when the benefits of the higher level of consolidation are desired, but the start-up effort and expense that go along with it are prohibitive in the short-term. Collaboration is also appropriate when organizations want a higher level of coordination than communication, but do not want to relinquish control over their vehicles and other resources.

The collaboration model is often chosen as a compromise when the benefits of the higher level of consolidation are desired, but the start-up effort and expense that go along with it are prohibitive in the short term.

Collaboration is beneficial because it provides flexibility and allows for the coordination of a wide range of activities. Participants are able to choose those activities that they want to coordinate and remain autonomous with respect to those that they do not. It is also possible for agencies to participate at different levels according to their needs and desires. Finally, collaborative agreements make it easy for participants to adjust their level of participation over time.

When coordinating at the collaboration level, several organizations may still have to shoulder the overhead costs that come with providing transportation, which may diminish some of the cost savings realized through coordination. The benefit of flexibility can also come with a cost: as participants each have different levels of participation, the overall structure of the coordination program may be confusing to administrators, participating organizations, and customers.

If it is determined that the coordination program will follow the collaboration model, proceed to Chapter 5.

Consolidation

Many agencies began offering transportation to their customers because there were no other options (or accessible options) available at the time. With the consolidated system in place, transportation no longer has to be a concern for their customers or a burden for their organization.

Consolidation is the highest level of coordination. It requires the most effort and start-up expense to implement; however, it also has the potential to offer the most benefits. Consolidation efforts typically come into place when several human services agencies offering transportation as a supportive service agree to give their vehicles to a new or established entity whose primary mission is to provide transportation. Consolidation has proven to be particularly effective in rural areas.

Consolidation works when the participating agencies want (or are willing) to give up their transportation services. Many agencies began offering transportation to their customers because there were no other options (or accessible options) available at the time. With the consolidated system in place, transportation no longer has to be a concern for their customers or a burden for their organization. A single entity devoted to providing transportation is able to provide more efficient service than several agencies that provide transportation as a supportive service. The result is lower costs, more and better service, and relief of the burden of providing transportation services.

If it is determined that the coordination program will follow the consolidation model, proceed to Chapter 6.

Hybrid

Many programs involve consolidating several operators into one operator, which in turn operates as a partial brokerage system.

While Communication, Collaboration, and Consolidation provide good conceptual models for understanding and implementing coordination programs, in practice, many programs have found that implementing characteristics of more than one of these levels, creating a hybrid system, is the most effective means for coordinating their systems. For example, many programs involve consolidating several operators into one operator, which in turn operates as a partial brokerage system, providing some rides with the consolidated system's vehicles and others through contracts with agencies wishing to retain control over their vehicles.

If it is determined that a hybrid system is the appropriate model for the coordination program, all three of the following chapters may need to be consulted. Follow the plans in the chapter corresponding to the highest level of coordination involved in the plan. As needed, consult the other chapters corresponding to the other levels of coordination. In the example in the last paragraph (a partially consolidated, partial-brokerage system) the system's organizers would follow the steps in Chapter 6 (Consolidation), while consulting Chapter 5 (Collaboration) to, for instance,determine the proper procedure for creating an agreement for joint-use of vehicles.

Chapter Summary

Thoroughly document the coordination process and prepare a written plan.

Coordination is particularly effective when there is:

- Substantial unused vehicle time;
- Substantial unused vehicle capacity; or
- Lack of economies of scale in planning, administration, operations, purchasing, or maintenance.

The first step in planning coordination is to identify possible stakeholders in your area. They may include:

- Local TAC members,
- Local MPO (in Billings, Great Falls, Missoula),
- Transportation Providers,
- Social Service Providers,
- Healthcare Providers,
- Government Entities, or
- Customers and the Public.

Contact all possible stakeholders and invite them to participate in an initial meeting discussing coordination in your area. Discuss:

- The basics of coordination: what, why, and how;
- How coordination can work in your area; and
- Organization procedures for forming a Coordination Committee.

Conduct a thorough data collection to analyze the current transportation situation in your area. Focus on:

- Vehicle resources,

- Services provided,
- Passenger demographics, and
- Finance and administration.

Based on the data collected, set goals concerning the areas that the coordination program can improve. This four-step process involves:

- Determining the deficiencies in the current transportation system,
- Isolating the services that could be improved and expanded,
- Prioritizing the list of deficiencies and expansion proposals, and
- Setting goals and the plan of action based on the prioritized list.

Finally, based on the current situation and goals, determine which model of coordination is right for the program..

- Communication works for more informal coordination and is often used when sharing vehicles is impractical or impossible.
- Collaboration is used when the benefits of consolidation are desired, but the initial efforts and expenses are prohibitive; or, when a higher level than communication is desired, but participants do not want to relinquish control of their vehicles.
- Consolidation occurs when participants give their vehicles to one agency that will handle all transportation. Many social services agencies prefer consolidation so that they can get out of the transportation business.
- Hybrid systems use more than one model of coordination in the same program. Hybrid systems often occur when participants desire different levels of formality.

Chapter

4

Planning for Communication

Chapter 4 contains step-by-step instructions for planning for a coordinated transportation system using the communication model.

This chapter is an invaluable guide to implementing a program following the *Communication* model of coordination. The least formal level of coordination, Communication is defined as informally working together to reach common goals. Proceeding through this chapter will guide you through the planning process for communication.

While coordination at the communication level can be successful in its own right, it is often intended as a starting point towards higher levels of coordination. By encouraging the spirit of cooperation, efficiency, and innovation that infuses all coordination activities, the communication level can pave the way for even greater coordination.

Coordinating at the communication level can pave the way for even greater coordination.

This chapter will reference several supporting documents contained in Chapter 10. To find these documents, turn to the first page of Chapter 10 and look for the documents indexed under Chapter 4.

Continue to compile documentation for the written plan begun in Chapter 3. Chapter 10 contains a list of the components of a written plan that will be included from Chapter 4.

Identify Existing Informal Cooperative Activities

In most cases, communication-level coordination is already occurringin your community; often, without the participants even realizing that they are coordinating.

Communication simply involves two or more agencies working together to improve transportation services. This could include communicating regularly with other transportation providers about services, needs, and plans.

In most cases, communication-level coordination is already occurring in your community; often without the participants even realizing that they are coordinating.

One example of communication is participation in alocal Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) or Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO – in Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula). The purpose of these organizations is to discuss and prioritize plans for transportation in the area. Simply participating in these organizations falls under the definition of communication.

The goal when implementing communication is to build off of a foundation of existing cooperative activities. The first step involves identifying these activities. Data collected should have included questions regarding current coordination activities in which participants are involved. Also, participants should have discussed current coordination activities during the initial meeting of the coordinating committee.

Determine Activities to Further Coordinate

When the activities utilizing informal cooperation in your community have been identified, the next step is to determine which of these activities could be built upon and which additional activities could be coordinated. Base the decision concerning which activities to coordinate upon the goals set for the coordination program at the end of the Initial Planning Phase. Refer to the written plan.

List of Possible Activities

There are many possible activities in which coordination can be easily implemented, even in the most informal level of communication. It is important to implement these activities now if the coordination committee is considering moving to a higher level of coordination in the future. Some of the most common activities are listed in the following sections. The coordination committee may be able to think of other possible activities.

List all possible activities for coordination in the written plan.

Information and Referral

The classic implementation of the communication model of coordination is the information and referral network. These networks can be very powerful and are easy to set up. The basic premise of the information and referral network is that each participant in the program provides all of the other participants with descriptions of the transportation and non-transportation services they provide. Include the following information:

The classic implementation of the communication model of coordination is the information and referral network.

- A brief description of the primary mission of the participant;
- Eligibility requirements for using the participant's service;
- Description of transportation services offered;
- Accessibility of the transportation services;
- Description of scheduling process, requirements, and phone number;
- Transportation fees; and
- Availability of assistants.

Information and referral networks allow participating agencies to quickly and easily refer customers to the agencies appropriate to meeting their needs, without any research or guesswork.

Information and referral networks can work in two ways. All participants can distribute their information to all other participants, or a central clearinghouse can be established. In the central clearinghouse model, one participanting organization is responsible for collecting and distributing information about the other participants. This organization becomes the contact point for all information requests.

Continually update all information that is distributed to the other participants or to the central clearinghouse. Submit data changes before they go into effect.

Cooperative planning can be as simple as bringing together all of the participants to discuss their current and future transit needs and plans.

Planning

Cooperative planning can be as simple as gathering all participants to discuss their current and future transit needs and plans. The Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula, and the local Transportation Advisory Committees (TACs) across the state are examples of cooperative planning already in action. These cooperative planning bodies are required for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding in Montana.

Cooperative planning has several benefits: it informs all participants of the current transportation situation of other agencies and the service area in general, it gives the participants a chance to share and discuss ideas, and it helps participants become aware of other activities in which coordination would be helpful.

Grant Applications

Coordinated planning can lead to coordinated grant applications. Coordinated grant applications at the communication level of coordination typically only involve capital purchases. Generally, one agency will take the lead role in a coordinated grant application. This agency will determine what the needs for all of the participating agencies are, and then file the application based on the combined needs. Because most funding sources encourage or require evidence of coordination, coordinated grant applications should receive favor.

In some cases, the coordinating committee that was formed in Chapter 3 may act as the lead applicant for grants. When considering coordinated grant applications, understand the specific agency eligibility requirements *before* applications are finalized.

Specification Development

Joint specification development involves setting uniform standards for such things as types of vehicles purchased and accessibility equipment, computer software, and communications equipment used. Specification development has many benefits.

- It helps to provide a uniform transportation experience for customers of multiple agencies.
- It facilitates joint training, as operators will only need to learn to use one type of equipment.
- It allows participants to share and exchange vehicle parts.
- It facilitates joint purchasing groups, since participants will be able to purchase larger quantities of fewer varieties of capital equipment, maintenance, equipment, and parts.

- It paves the way for future vehicle sharing. Drivers from different agencies will not need to learn how to operate new vehicles, and consolidating a fleet of vehicles will be much easier if all of the vehicles are uniform.

Policy Development

Joint policy development involves setting uniform policies for such things as fares, reservations, cancellations, no-shows, and customer eligibility profiles. With many agencies providing services in a service area, and with many customers receiving services from multiple agencies, joint policy development helps to simplify customer access to transportation.

With many customers receiving services from multiple agencies, joint policy development helps to simplify customer access to transportation.

Along with happier customers, joint policy development helps facilitate future coordination efforts at higher levels. Customers will be prepared for transitions to systems with vehicle sharing or a consolidated system when all of the transportation providers that currently serve them independently operate with the same policies. Likewise, the transition for administrators and drivers will be easier when they do not have to learn a new set of policies for a new organization.

Training

Joint training involves training employees from several organizations in one group. Joint training has several benefits.

- Training employees in larger groups can lead to lower individual costs for training programs.
- Training employees in larger groups can provide access to some training programs that may not be available to small groups or individuals.
- Joint training allows employees from different agencies to get together, share ideas, and network, which helps boost morale.
- Like policy development and specification development, joint training programs for different agencies ensure a consistent transportation experience for customers in the service area. Joint training can also pave the way for future coordination at higher levels.

Assistant Services

Many transportation-disadvantaged passengers require assistants to help them access transportation and other activities. Assistants may be drawn from a pool of volunteers, friends or family, or may be paid staff members.

One possible activity is to coordinate assistant services.

Participants should identify which customers are likely to ask for assistant services and what types of assistance they will need. Then the participating agencies can define

which of these services can be realistically provided by the coordinated transportation system.

Coordinating volunteer assistant services can be accomplished by two different methods. In the first method, one participant in the coordination program, preferably one with an established volunteer base, will become the coordinator for all assistant requests. Each agency should compile a list of their available assistants and their capabilities to give to the assistant coordinator. The assistant coordinator then becomes the contact point for all assistant requests.

The second method involves compiling a list of all available assistants from each agency's pool, which is then distributed to each participating agency. In this method, all agencies are responsible for procuring assistants for their customers from the combined pool.

Other Activities

It may also be worthwhile to look at the list of possible collaboration level coordination activities .

The activities listed above are not the only possible activities that can be coordinated at the communication level. Some brainstorming from the committee members may help to develop other activities. Depending on the depth and formality of participation that the committee members are willing to undertake at this point in the process, it may also be worthwhile to look at the list of possible collaboration level (Chapter 5) coordination activities .

Determine Interest in Participation in These Activities

Start by listing all of the activities identified for possible coordination. Have each participant list the name of their organization next to the names of those activities in which they would be interested in participating. Tally up the total number of organizations listed with each activity.

A sample tally form is included in Chapter 10. Include the completed tally form in your written plan.

Determine Activities to Further Coordinate

From the tally of participation interests, a picture of what cooperative activities participants have an interest in implementing will develop. Compare the list of activities with the list of goals compiled at the end of Chapter 3. Those activities that are most consistent with the goals should be given highest consideration.

Concentrate on those activities that have the most interest from participants: as the greater the level of participation, the greater the possible benefits.

However, don't implement only those activities with the highest priority. Coordination can be successful with as few as two participants. One of the benefits of the communication level of coordination is that participants can determine their level of participation in each activity to be coordinated. Some participants may want to participate in all activities, some in only one or two.

Any activity with enough participants indicating interest is a candidate for implementation. Those activities that do have high priority and high interest should be implemented first. List all activities that will be implemented in the written plan.

Concentrate on those activities that have the most interest from participants: as the greater the level of participation, the greater the possible benefits.

Administrative Decisions

The group must also make some administrative decisions about the organization and administration of the communication program. Who will be in charge? How will ongoing oversight be achieved? How will the program's success be tracked?

Organization

Determine how the communication program will be organized. It may be decided to keep the coordinating committee together to oversee the progress of the whole coordination program. Keeping the entire coordinating committee has the advantage that further coordination activities can be planned more easily in the future. However, it may also be helpful to form sub-committees for each coordinated activity . These sub-committees can then report to the full committee on the progress of their activity. . When the planning and implementation of the coordination program has been completed, the coordinating committee may only need to meet monthly or quarterly.

Leadership

The leader(s) must be people who can keep everyone motivated, on-task and moving forward. Leader(s) must be able to delegate work assignments and to commit the time and resources necessary to seeing the project through implementation and beyond.

The leader(s) must be people who can keep everyone motivated, on-task and moving forward.

Evaluative Procedures

The standard measures of effectiveness used for transportation systems (see Chapter 8) are based on the cost and efficiency of vehicle usage. Because coordination programs at the communication level generally do not directly effect the operation of

vehicles, such as through vehicle sharing, it may seem difficult to evaluate the success of a communication program.

However, it is possible to measure the success of the coordination program at this level. It is necessary to know what goals should be evaluated and how to evaluate them. Determine goals for each of the cooperative activities before implementation. It may be decided that the goal is to save $X per year on training through joint training programs, or to train 80% of staff in first aid through this program. Such goals can be used as measures of effectiveness.

At the communication level, many benefits from coordination involve non-monetary factors. These factors may seem more difficult to gauge than measuring cost savings. Refer to the section on "Evaluating 'Intangibles'" in Chapter 8 for ideas on how to measure these types of benefits. Do not limit benefits calculated to dollar amounts, remember the "human element" in coordination.

Determine who in the program will be responsible for tracking and evaluating the goals that have been set. Include the goals to evaluate, the data that will be tracked for these goals, and who will be responsible for evaluation in the written plan.

Determine Participation Levels

When it has been decided which activities will be implemented in the coordination program, determine who will participate in which activity, and to what level will they participate. Agencies may participate in various activities at different levels.

Agencies may participate in various activities at different levels.

In a joint training program, for instance, one participant may take the lead in organizing training sessions for various things such as drivers', First Aid, and sensitivity training. Most participants will send their employees to all of the training sessions, whereas one participant may decide only to participate in the drivers' training session.

For each activity to be implemented, list the names of the organizations that have agreed to participate. Include this list in the written plan.

Determine Responsibilities

Clearly define responsibilities for each activity. All participants should be accountable for financial and staffing participation in the program. Without explicitly assigning responsibilities for specific tasks and functions, the program stands little chance of successfully progressing through to implementation. Include the responsibilities for each participant in the written plan.

For Each Activity

Hold a meeting for participants in each activity to be coordinated to determine what tasks need to be completed and who will be responsible for completing each task for that activity. Distribute duties equitably; have the leader of the communication effort help delegate responsibilities. If, for example, joint training is being implemented, one participant may be responsible for determining the training needs of all the participants; one participant may be responsible for finding training courses and training materials; and one participant may be responsible for finding facilities in which to conduct the training.

Financial

Spread the costs of the program equitably among all of the participants.

While most coordination programs at the communication level will not involve large expenses, there may be some expense to bear in terms of employees working on coordination, materials and supplies. Spread the costs of the program equitably among all of the participants. This does not necessarily mean that each participant must make a monetary contribution; contributions in terms of work efforts, time, and materials should also be considered.

If cost-sharing is anticipated in the coordination program, agreements should be drafted (see the section entitled “Develop a Cooperative Agreement” later in this chapter). If one participant agrees to take on any up-front costs, all participants must honor their agreements to provide reimbursement in a timely fashion.

Staffing

Beyond financial resources, implementing a communication program will also require manpower. As with financial resources, ensure that all participants contribute their fair share of manpower. Some participants may have fewer financial resources than others but may have volunteer labor that can be contributed as an in-kind service to the program.

Develop a Budget

Most coordination programs at the communication level will not require a significant outlay of funds. Since all participants will retain their autonomy and the autonomy of their transportation services, a budget is typically not necessary. If this is not the case, a budget for the communication program will need to be developed.

Some participants may have fewer financial resources than others but may have volunteer labor that can be contributed as an in-kind service to the program.

A budget may be necessary if:

- The communication program is expected to incur significant costs;
- The program leader and other staff spend a significant portion of their working time on coordination, or if someone is hired to manage the coordination program; and/or
- It is necessary to document the costs spent on coordination to use as local match funds for federal grant programs or for other grant applications.

Create a budget for *each activity* undertaken in the communication program. If a budget is created, it should be included in the written plan.

For coordination programs at the communication level, the most common expenses incurred will be administrative expenses involving salaries. A sample administrative budget is included in Chapter 10. When creating the administrative budget, have each participant determine what portion of their costs in each of the categories in the sample budget (or other categories that may apply) is (or will be) allocated to the coordination program, whether through direct financial contribution or indirect contributions such as work and materials.

As participants in communications programs continue to operate their transportation services independently, there are typically no operating expenses involved. If there are any capital expenses, they will generally only involve office equipment, as new vehicles aren't usually jointly purchased at the communication level.

Develop a Cooperative Agreement

Depending on the level of formality desired by the participants in the communication program and required by the activities the program is undertaking, it may be necessary to develop a written cooperative agreement. The cooperative agreement spells out the details of the program, what activities are to be undertaken, what responsibilities each party has, and how financial issues will be resolved.

Depending on the level of formality desired by the participants in the communication program and required by the activities the program is undertaking, it may be necessary to develop a written cooperative agreement.

In many cases, when the activities to be coordinated are informal, such as an information and referral network, a simple oral agreement or informal written agreement such as a letter or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will suffice. In contrast, the cooperative agreement is a formal contract.

Include any cooperative agreements, informal written agreements, or Memorandums of Understanding in the written plan.

Is a Cooperative Agreement Needed?

If any of the following apply to the program, a cooperative agreement may be necessary:

- Money is to be exchanged between participants at any point in the program,
- There are substantial monetary costs and/or benefits expected,
- There are a large number of participating agencies, and/or
- Any participants desire a more formal agreement.

How to Create and Execute the Agreement

Chapter 10 contains a document illustrating all of the essential parts of the cooperative agreement. Base the plans agreements upon this document. Ask the leader of the communication program to draft the document. Use clear, concise, precise language so that the meaning of the agreement cannot be misconstrued or misinterpreted.

Use clear, concise, precise language in cooperative agreements so that the meaning of the agreement cannot be misconstrued or misinterpreted.

Because of the varying state and local laws regarding contracts and agreements, have an attorney review the document to ensure that it meets all legal requirements. After it has been reviewed by an attorney, and edited to reflect the attorney's comments, give it to all other participants in the program for their review (and by their attorneys if they desire). When all participants agree on the language, it is time to execute the document.

The document should be signed by a representative from each participating agency (one with the authority to do so). Produce enough copies so that each agency can have a signed original.

Consider having a public signing as a way to generate publicity for the coordination program and its participants. The local media is often interested in innovative projects to improve services and cut costs. If a public signing is planned, invite representatives from participating agencies, funding sources, and local officials. Give the media advanced notice and prepare a brief fact sheet about the project to provide to the media at the event.

Consider having a public signing as a way to generate publicity for the coordination program and its participants.

Now What?

Planning for communication is now complete; it is time to move on to Chapter 7 – Implementation, which will detail how to put the coordination program into action.

Chapter Summary

Base the program on existing informal coordination when possible.

- Often coordination is occurring without participants realizing it.
- Identify these activities from the data collected and conversations held during the initial meeting.

Decide on activities to further coordinate. Typical areas for coordination at the communication level include:

- Information and referral networks,
- Joint planning,
- Grant applications,
- Joint specification development,
- Joint policy development,
- Joint training, and
- Coordinated assistant services.

Make administrative decisions about your coordination program, including:

- How will the program be organized?
- Who will lead the effort?
- How will the success of the program be evaluated?

Determine the level of participation of each agency in each activity to be coordinated.

- Different agencies may participate in different activities at different levels.

Delegate responsibilities.

- Determine which tasks need to be completed for each activity.
- Determine which participants will be responsible for completing each task.

- Determine who will be responsible for financial and staffing needs.
- All responsibilities should be delegated equitably.

Consider developing a budget, if:

- The communication program is expected to incur significant costs;
- The program leader and other staff spend a significant portion of their working time on coordination, or if someone is hired to manage the coordination program; and/or
- It is necessary to document the costs spent on coordination to use as local match funds for federal grant programs or for other grant applications.

Considerations for developing a budget:

- A budget should be created for each activity,
- Budgets at the communication level typically involve only administrative expenses; and
- Each participant should calculate the amount of each budget line item that is allocated for coordination.

Consider developing a cooperative agreement, if:

- Money is to be exchanged between participants at any point in the program;
- There are substantial monetary costs and/or benefits expected;
- There are a large number of participating agencies;or
- Any participants desire a more formal agreement.

Otherwise, verbal agreements or informal written agreements, such as letters or memorandums of understanding may be used.

Purpose of the cooperative agreement:

- The cooperative agreement is a formal contract identifying the roles and obligations of each participant in the coordination program.

Chapter

5

Planning for Collaboration

Chapter 5 contains step-by-step instructions for planning a coordinated transportation system using the collaboration model.

Proceeding through this chapter will guide you through the planning process for collaboration, a coordination model that entails increased levels of formality such as joint use of vehicles, joint training, and trip sharing.

This chapter will reference several supporting documents contained in Chapter 10. To find these documents, turn to the first page of Chapter 10 and look for the documents indexed under Chapter 5.

Continue to compile documentation for the written plan initiated in Chapter 3. Chapter 10 contains a list of the components of the written plan that will be included from Chapter 5.

Decide Which Activities to Coordinate

The first step in developing a coordination system at the collaboration level is to decide which activities to coordinate. These activities can range from simple activities--such as information, referral and assistant services--that are also coordinated at the communication level to more complex activities--such as vehicle and ride sharing--that are the heart of the collaboration level.

Have the participants in the program decideon the activities that they are most interested in implementing. Some of the most common activities to coordinate include:

- **Marketing**. Marketing activities to increase public knowledge of all the services available from the various providers.

- **Assistant Services**. Customers from many participating agencies may require assistants to help them access transportation and other activities. Volunteer assistance programs can be coordinated among several participants.

- **Shared Training**. Coordinated training can result in lowered costs and standardized training programs.

- **Information and Referral**. Information and referral programs ensure that participants are aware of the services provided by all participating agencies and can direct customers to the appropriate agency for their needs.

- **Grant Applications**. Evidence of coordination is required for many transportation-related funding programs.

- **Joint Purchasing**. Through bulk discounts, joint-purchasing agreements can save money for all participating agencies.

- **Joint Maintenance**. Joint maintenance saves money through economies of scale. Joint maintenance can involve operating a single maintenance shop for the coordination program, or contracting maintenance to a local shop for participants.

- **Safety and Risk Management**. Coordinated safety and risk management can involve insurance purchases and development of joint procedures and specifications.

- **Shared Communication and Technology**. Communication and technology solutions can be expensive components of a transportation operation. Coordinating these aspects saves money and facilitates communication among participants.

- **Vehicle and Trip Sharing**. Vehicle sharing involves one agency allowing other agencies to use its vehicles when they would otherwise be unused. Trip sharing involves customers from different agencies sharing rides among all participating agencies' vehicles. Vehicle and trip sharing can be among the most productive forms of coordinated transportation.

Do not limit the coordination plan to these ideas; the committee may come up with other activities that can be coordinated as well.

Review the possible areas to coordinate in the collaboration program, and decide which activities the participating agencies are interested in coordinating. Start by listing all of the activities identified for possible coordination. Have each participant list the name of their organization next to the names of those activities in which they would be interested in participating. Tally up the total number of organizations listed with each activity.

A sample tally form is included in Chapter 10. Include the completed tally form in the written plan.

The tally process should give a good idea of participants' priorities and interests. Before determining which activities to implement, go back to the list of goals compiled at the end of Chapter 3. Compare the list of activities with the list of goals. Give highest consideration to those activities that best match up with the goals.

Concentrate on those activities that have the most interest from participants: the greater the level of participation, the greater the possible benefits. However, don't implement only those activities with the highest priority. Coordination can be successful with as few as two participants. One of the benefits of the collaboration level of coordination is that participants can determine their level of participation in each coordinated activity. Some participants may want to participate in all activities, some in only one or two.

Concentrate on those activities that have the most interest from participants: the greater the level of participation, the greater the possible benefits.

Any activity with enough participants indicating interest is a candidate for implementation. Implement those activities that have high priority and high interest first. List all activities that will be implemented in the written plan.

Administrative Decisions

When the activities to be included in the coordination program have been decided upon, set up the policies and procedures through which the program will be administered. Establishing good organization in the beginning will go a long way towards ensuring smooth operation through the life of the coordination program.

Develop the Administrative Structure

Set up an administrative structure to oversee the coordination program. The coordinating committee established in Chapter 3 may act as the main administrative body for the program. Another possibility would be to choose a lead agency to be in charge, depending on the level of participation that each participant is willing to

undertake. With more complex arrangements, participants may wish to hire a transportation coordinator to oversee the day-to-day operations of the program. Include the administrative structure in the written plan.

Be aware of what types of decisions can be made autonomously by the administrator of the coordination program and what types of decisions the boards or directors of participating agencies will need to agree to before proceeding.

Assign Responsibilities

For each activity to be undertaken by the coordination program, assign an individual or sub-committee to be in charge.

For *each activity* to be undertaken by the coordination program, assign an individual or sub-committee to be in charge. The leader of each activity will be responsible for the overall progress of the activity. The activity leader will delegate responsibilities for the individual tasks required to implement the activity and will oversee the progress of these tasks. List the parties responsible for each activity in the written plan.

Cost Allocation

Distribute the costs of all activities equitably, not necessarily equally, among the participants. Each agency should assume costs proportional to the gains they receive from the system. Equitable cost allocation is not strictly in monetary. Agencies with fewer dollars may be able to contribute in-kind services, such as labor and office space, as their share of the system costs. In any case, detail the cost allocation explicitly in the joint use agreements that are developed.

Develop Joint Use Agreements

For coordination at the collaboration level, it is assumed that more formal agreements will be made.

For coordination at the collaboration level, it is assumed that more formal agreements will be made. This typically involves drawing up a Memorandum of Understanding or a contract *for each activity to be implemented*. The joint use agreement spells out the details of the program, what activities are to be undertaken, what responsibilities each party has, and how financial issues will be resolved. Use clear, concise, precise language so that the meaning of the agreement cannot be misconstrued or misinterpreted. Chapter 10 contains a document illustrating the parts of a joint use agreement. Each party participating in the activity must agree to the language of the agreement and have an opportunity for their attorneys to review the document. When all participants accept the language of the agreement, the document can be executed. Include all joint use agreements in the written plan.

Make Preparations for Activities in Joint Use Agreement

Simple Activities

Marketing

Encourage all agencies to make an effort to create goodwill in their community. Local public support can often translate into local political support.

Marketing for transportation systems comes in two forms: marketing intended to sell services and increase a customer base, and marketing intended to create goodwill for an agency in the community. Most small transportation providers do not have the resources or the need to sell their services, particularly when they are serving only specific transportation disadvantaged groups. Encourage all agencies to make an effort to create goodwill in their community. Local public support can often translate into local political support.

Joint marketing efforts can take place in a number of ways, depending on which marketing strategies the participating agencies use and how much effort and expense is desired for the coordinated activity. Some possibilities for joint marketing efforts include: joint press releases; brochures about the coordination programs; brochures listing each participant's services and costs; brochures about the activities of all agencies; sharing newsletter articles between participants to keep customers aware of what is going on with other transportation providers in the area; or hiring a marketing coordinator.

Assistant Services

Many transportationdisadvantaged passengers require assistants to help them access transportation and other activities. Assistants are often friends, family members, or volunteers. Others may be paid staff members.

Coordinating volunteer assistant services can be done utilizing two different methods. In the first method, one participant in the coordination program, preferably one with an established volunteer base, will become the coordinator for all assistant requests. Each agency should compile a list of their available assistants to give to the assistant coordinator. The assistant coordinator then becomes the contact point for all assistant requests.

The second method involves compiling a list of all available assistants from each agency's pool, which is then distributed to each participating agency. In this method, all agencies are responsible for procuring assistants for their customers from the combined pool.

Participants should identify which customers are likely to ask for assistant services and what types of assistance they will need. Then the participating agencies can define which of these services can be realistically provided by the coordinated system.

Shared Training

Joint training involves simultaneously training employees from several organizations. Joint training has several benefits.

- Training employees in larger groups can lead to lower individual costs for training programs.
- Training employees in larger groups can provide access to some training programs that may not be available to small groups or individuals.
- Joint training allows employees from different agencies to get together, share ideas, and network, which helps boost morale.
- Joint training can help simplify vehicle and trip sharing arrangements by preparing drivers from participating agencies to operate vehicles from all other agencies and understand the special needs of customers from all other agencies.

Training can involve many different areas including driving, defensive driving, and passenger-handling techniques, emergency first aid, and adverse weather driving.

Information and Referral

Information and referral networks can be very powerful and are easy to set up.

The information and referral network is a classic component of the communication level of coordination, but it can also be effective at the collaboration level. Information and referral networks can be very powerful and are easy to set up. The basic premise of the information and referral network is that each participant in the program provides all of the other participants with descriptions of the transportation and non-transportation services they provide. Include the following information:

- A brief description of the primary mission of the participant;
- Eligibility requirements;
- Description of transportation services offered;
- Accessibility of the transportation services;
- Description of scheduling process, scheduling requirements, and phone number;
- Transportation fees; and
- Availability of assistants.

Information and referral networks allow participating agencies to quickly and easily refer customers to the appropriate agencies to meet their needs, without any research or guesswork.

Information and referral networks can work in two ways. All participants can distribute their information to all other participants, or a central clearinghouse can be established. In the central clearinghouse model, one participant is responsible for collecting and distributing information about the other participants. This organization becomes the contact point for all information requests.

All information distributed to the other participants or to the central clearinghouse should be frequently updated. Changes to data should be submitted *prior* to going into effect. All information and updates must ultimately be available to the person who is responsible for answering the phones at each agency or the central clearinghouse.

Plan for the Activity

Information and referral, joint marketing, assistant services, and joint training programs are all fairly simple to plan. The information contained in the first sections of this chapter provides the questions that need to be asked and decisions that need to be made in order to implement an activity. Those participants who are responsible for implementing each activity must get together to determine which tasks need to be completed in order to implement the activity.

Assign Responsibilities

In the section entitled "Administrative Decisions," responsibilities were assigned for each activity to be implemented in the coordination program. The individual who is in charge of the activity must assign responsibilities for each of the tasks to be completed. Take into account each participant's level of participation in the activity and the coordination program as a whole when assigning responsibilities. List the assigned responsibilities in the written plan.

For each activity, develop *specific* policies and procedures that outline how the activity will be implemented and how the activity will work once it has been implemented.

Develop Policies and Procedures

For each activity, develop *specific* policies and procedures that outline how the activity will be implemented and how the activity will work once it has been implemented. Policies and procedures should define the responsibilities of those operating, or participating in, the activity; specific information that will be required, and who will receive that information; and the sequences of actions that will take place to operate the activity. Policies and procedures can either be developed by the participant in charge of the activity or cooperatively by everyone who is participating in the activity. List the policies and procedures for each activity in the written plan.

Grant Applications

Because most other grant programs are intended for specific groups and purposes, concentrate joint grant applications on those programs specifically intended for transportation.

The first step in creating joint grant applications is to determine the funding sources that all participants are currently using *for transportation*. Some funding sources, such as FTA funds, are used specifically for transportation, while others, such as those from many Department of Health and Human Services programs, are awarded as block grants, which permit recipients to use portions for supportive transportation services as needed. This section is intended primarily as a guide to the process of applying for joint grant applications for those programs *specifically intended for transportation.* Because most other grant programs are intended for specific groups and purposes, concentrate joint grant applications on those programs specifically intended for transportation.

Enough information about participating agencies funding sources may have been collected using the data collection tools from the Initial Planning Phase, particularly if the supplementary survey was utilized. If not, survey participants regarding their current funding sources. A sample funding source survey is included in Chapter 10.

Identify Potential Funding Sources

Make a list of all of the funding sources currently used for transportation by each participant in the coordination program. Under each funding source, list all the agencies that are currently receiving these funds. Consult Chapter 9 for lists of some ofthe more common sources of transportation funding.

- Are there funding sources being used by multiple agencies? These may be a good starting point for joint applications, as evidence of coordination is either required or favorably received by most funding sources.

- Are there funding sources for which some agencies are eligible but that they are not currently receiving?

- Are there funding sources that no agencies are currently using for which the coordination program may be eligible?

List the potential funding sources in the written plan.

Decide Which Grant Applications to Coordinate

When the above questions have been answered, there should be an idea of which applications could be successfully coordinated. It may be decided to coordinate one, several, or all of these possible grant applications. Base your decision upon:

- The amount of staff time available for grant preparation,

- The availability of funding,

- Whether or not preference is given to coordination programs, and
- The number of participating agencies eligible for each funding source.

List the grants that will be coordinated in the written plan.

Assign Responsibilities

After determining which grant applications will be coordinated, the next step is to assign responsibilities for completing the applications. To save duplication of effort, assign data collection for all applications to one agency. This agency may be responsible for completing all of the grants, or it may pass the data on to other agencies that have been assigned the responsibilities for completing applications for individual grant programs. List the participants responsible for each activity in the written plan.

To save duplication of effort, assign data collection for all applications to one agency.

Collect Data

For data collection, a list of all of the information required for each application should be compiled, since much of the information on one application will be duplicated on other applications. If data was collected recently, information from the Montana Agency Transportation Survey and the supplementary survey for your grant applications may be usable as well. Create a questionnaire asking for any additional information and send to each participant in the joint application process. Allow enough response time to be able to complete the application before the deadline. Accurate information is important for grant applications, so if any answers need clarification, contact the source.

Implement

When data collection is completed, the only step remaining is for the assigned participants to fill in the individual grant applications. Include copies of each completed grant application in the written plan.

Joint Purchasing Agreements

Joint purchasing agreements harness the power of economies of scale to save money through bulk purchasing. Joint purchasing can also save time, as it is usually just as easy to order 100 items, as it is to order 10.

Identify Needs

The first step in setting up joint purchasing agreements is to identify the items that the participating agencies purchase on a regular basis. These can be either goods, such as parts and supplies, or services, such as transportation, legal work, and accounting. Chapter 10 includes a sample survey of purchasing needs. Ask each agency to fill out the survey. Include the completed surveys in the written plan. From this information,

determine which goods and services could be purchased in bulk. Consider items that are purchased in large quantities or are common purchases for many participating agencies. Some items that are rarely purchased may not need to be included in the joint purchasing arrangement.

Now is a good time to develop specifications for the items to be purchased.

Now is a good time to develop specifications for the items to be purchased. Specifications can be developed for anything from auto parts to computer paper. By developing joint specifications, agencies will eventually be able to purchase larger quantities of fewer varieties of products. Instead of each five agencies buying 20 quarts of a different variety of oil, they could make one purchase of 100 quarts of the same variety, which may make better prices available.

Establish Procurement Procedures

Joint purchasing agreements work best if there is one lead agency that coordinates all of the purchases. In this arrangement, all agencies submit their purchase orders to the lead agency; the lead agency then compiles all of the purchase orders to make purchases at regularly scheduled intervals.

Joint purchasing agreements work the best if there is one lead agency that coordinates all of the purchases.

When the goods and services to be included in your joint purchasing agreement have been identified, establish procurement procedures. For more information, review the FTA's *Best Practices Procurement Manual* (Available from the FTA or on the internet, see Chapter 12.) This manual will help agencies to comply with procurement requirements for FTA grantees.

The participating agencies probably already have their own procurement procedures and requirements. Start by reviewing the requirements and procedures from each participating agency. Also, take into account any requirementns from funding sources, such as the FTA. Set procurement procedures for joint purchase agreements based upon the requirements and procedures already in place, making compromises among the participants as necessary.

There are many different methods through which procurement takes place. Participants may use several of these in the procurement processes, depending upon the situations. Establish procedures for each method of procurement that is used. Some of the common distinctions and methods are:

- **Outright purchase**. A certain quantity of items is purchased for a certain price. This price is only good for the current purchase.

- **Contract price**. A price is negotiated that will be good for all purchases for a certain period of time, usually a year.

- **Competitive bid**. The bidding process involves a solicitation of offers from prospective contractors. The FTA requires competitive bids for any purchases over $2,500 made with grant money.

- **Negotiation**. Negotiation involves solicitations of prices or making initial offers to contractors. Establish criteria for the number of quotes needed before making a purchase.

If purchases are made on a regular basis, send out reminders to all participants giving them advanced notice before the next purchase occurs. Schedule purchases with enough lead-time to ensure items will be available when they are needed. Include the procurement procedures in your written plan.

If purchases are made on a regular basis, send out reminders to all participants giving them advanced notice before the next purchase occurs.

Administration

Some administrative decisions must also be made:

- Under competitive bidding processes, how will bids be awarded? By price, quality, or both?

- Procedures for payment from participants must be set. Will payment be required with the purchase order or upon delivery?

- Procedures for delivery will also need to be set. Will items be kept in inventory? Will participants pick up items from the lead agency when they are received or will they be delivered to participants?

Include these decisions in the written plan.

Joint Maintenance

Joint maintenance agreements are primarily implemented through outsourcing or in-house maintenance provisions. To decide which option is right for participants, determine whether the overhead costs of operating a maintenance department would be less than the savings realized in terms of parts and labor costs from outsourcing maintenance needs. Consider the convenience of having a dedicated maintenance staff giving priority to the vehicles in your transportation system. Additional savings may be realized by getting vehicles back on the road faster. A third option would be performing routine maintenance in-house, such as oil changes and tire rotations, and outsourcing major repairs. If any of the participants in the coordination program currently have their own maintenance shop, the start-up costs may be significantly lower.

Joint maintenance agreements are primarily implemented through outsourcing or in-house maintenance provisions.

To decide which joint maintenance option is appropriate for agencies; determine the current maintenance costs for all participating agencies' vehicles. While routine

maintenance costs will remain fairly steady, major repair costs can vary from year to year, so it may be wise to take an average. Then estimate how much it would cost to service vehicles in-house over a typical year. If no participants currently service their own vehicles, estimate the start-up costs that come with procuring space, stocking parts, and buying shop equipment. Local motor pools in your county or nearby counties may be a good source of information on the costs of operating a shop.

Joint Policies and Specifications

Whether it is decided to perform maintenance in-house or to outsource, develop joint maintenance policies for the vehicles in the system. Joint maintenance policies should include routine maintenance schedules, part specifications, and major and emergency repair procedures. Standardizing these policies can help streamline the maintenance process. Include the joint specifications in the written plan.

Outsourcing Maintenance

If outsourcing maintenance is decided to be most cost-effective, negotiate contracts from auto shops or other maintenance providers in the area. Before soliciting bids, take stock of maintenance needs, including:

- A roster of all vehicles from participating agencies, including make, model, age, condition, and recent repair work (not including routine maintenance);
- Details of routine maintenance requirements; and
- Anticipated major repairs.

With these specifications, solicit competitive bids with prices for routine maintenance and rates for major and emergency repairs. Renew the contract and revise rates annually or bi-annually. Include outsourcing contracts in the written plan.

In-house Maintenance

The complexity for setting up in-house maintenance will depend upon whether any participating agencies currently operate maintenance shops. Starting with an existing shop will save the time and expense of having to initiate an operation. Whether or not a maintenance shop exists, the cost savings should make up for the expenses in the long term.

There are essentially four things needed to set up and operate a maintenance shop:

There are essentially four things needed to set up and operate a maintenance shop: tools, labor, parts, and space.

- **Tools**. Everything from large machine tools such as ramps and jacks to screwdrivers and wrenches are needed. Specialized diagnostic machines and tools may be required for the different vehicles to be serviced.

- **Labor**. Hire at least one service technician, possibly more depending on the number of vehicles being operated. In addition to maintaining the vehicles, the technician is the heart of a maintenance shop and should be a valuable source of information on shop operations.

- **Parts**. To keep the maintenance moving efficiently, develop an inventory of the parts that are commonly used for maintenance of vehicles in the system, from filters to belts and tires.

- **Space**. Room will be needed to house both the vehicles that are in for service and the parts in inventory. It may be possible to procure a large enough space to combine a maintenance shop with a vehicle storage facility.

Include detailed plans for opening or augmenting a maintenance shop in the written plan.

Share the costs of the joint maintenance program equitably among all the participants.

Billing Procedures and Cost Allocation

Share the costs of the joint maintenance program equitably among all the participants. If maintenance is outsourced, this will likely necessitate each participant paying for repairs to their own vehicles at the contracted rate. When vehicle or ride sharing is also included in the coordination program, build the cost of maintenance into the cost of sharing the vehicles.

When performing in-house maintenance, it may be easiest to implement a billing procedure similar to that of a commercial shop, billing each agency for service to their vehicles, at cost. Once again, if vehicles or trips are shared it is easiest to allocate maintenance costs through the costs of vehicle sharing. Include details for billing procedures and cost allocation in the written plan.

Coordinating insurance can be one of the most difficult coordination tasks to implement, but it can also save significant money and make coordination of vehicle joint use much easier.

Safety and Risk Management

Safety and risk management can be coordinated on different levels. Coordinating insurance can be particularly frustrating, but it can also save significant money and make coordination of vehicle joint use much easier. Policies and procedures for safety and risk management can also be jointly developed.

Insurance

There are several options when implementing joint insurance policies.

- **Purchase insurance from a commercial vendor**. Buying insurance through a commercial vendor transfers liability from the purchaser to the insurance company. Coordinating insurance purchases through a commercial vendor can be complicated. Different participating agencies may have policies that cover only passengers with the specific conditions that the agency serves. When coordinating insurance, ensure that vehicles will be covered regardless of who the passengers are. Also ensure that coverage applies regardless of the drivers. Joint training specifications may be necessary in order to ensure that all drivers will be covered. Get quotes from multiple insurance companies prior to purchasing insurance from a commercial provider. Insurance providers specializing in paratransit are often the best option, as they are less likely to be concerned about mixing different customer groups.

When implementing self-insurance or an insurance pool, many transportation systems choose to have extra insurance from a commercial vendor in case of excessive or catastrophic claims.

- **Self-insurance**. Agencies that are self-insured set aside a certain amount of money to pay for liability claims. Most human services agencies are not large enough, and do not have the financial resources, to self-insure. However, many county and municipal governments use self-insurance. If local governments are involved in the coordination program, discuss ways to get involved in their insurance program, perhaps as a means of payment for transportation services other agencies may provide for the government.

- **Insurance pools**. Insurance pools involve several agencies paying into a collective fund to pay for liability claims. When any of the participating agencies has a claim, the claim is paid from the collective insurance pool.

When using self-insurance and insurance pools, many transportation systems choose to have extra insurance from a commercial vendor in case of excessive or catastrophic claims. Before implementing joint insurance, consult with an insurance expert or professional risk manager to discuss the specific needs of the coordination program. For more information on implementing joint insurance, see Chapter 7. Include any policies, contracts, or agreements for joint insurance in the written plan.

Policies and Procedures

Whether or not a joint insurance program is implemented, joint policies and procedures for safety and risk management can be coordinated. Areas that can be coordinated include:

Whether or not a joint insurance program is implemented, joint policies and procedures for safety and risk management can be coordinated.

- Insurance Specifications,
- Incident Procedures,
- Accident Investigation,
- Supervision, and

- Discipline.

Often, joint policies and procedures for risk management can be developed in a few steps.

- **Review participants' policies and procedures**. All participants operating vehicles should already have policies and procedures for safety and risk management. After reviewing these policies, determine what policies participants have in common and where there are discrepancies. Consider which of the participants' policies are firm and which can be changed.

- **Review applicable laws and funding source requirements**. Federal and state laws govern such things as commercial drivers' license requirements and minimum insurance requirements. Funding sources may have requirements that go above and beyond the laws. Policies should, at a minimum, cover the laws and applicable funding source requirements.

Policies should, at a minimum, cover the laws and applicable funding source requirements.

- **Set policies and procedures**. Based on participants' current policies and minimum requirements set by law and funding sources, set the policies and procedures for safety and risk management for the coordination program.

Include the joint safety and risk management policies in the written plan.

Shared Communications and Technology

Implementing a communication system can be expensive and time consuming, but through coordination, some of the costs and time may be reduced. Transportation systems currently have two main communication options: two-way radio and cell phones.

Cell Phones

Cell phones have recently become a popular communication choice for small transportation systems due to the low start-up costs and ease of set up. However, cell phones can be inconvenient, as phones have to be dialed to make contact, and the dispatching center can onlyspeak with one vehicle at a time. Cell phones are best suited for arrangements where communication between drivers and the dispatching center is only necessary occasionally or in emergencies. Cell phone use is also dependent on cell tower locations. Some regions in Montanaare not covered. Cell phone coverage may also be sporadic while driving through mountainous areas.

Cell phones are best suited for arrangements where communication between drivers and the dispatching center is only necessary occasionally or in emergencies.

If cell phone service is right for your communication systems, begin determining the needs of the system. At minimum, one phone per vehicle that is on the road is necessary. When needs have been determined, solicit quotes from cellular service providers in your area. Most providers offer bulk and business discounts. Pay

attention to the specific requirements of the plans offered, not just the price. Include quotes and contracts for cell phone service in the written plan.

Two-Way Radio

Two-way radio systems are the standard communication option for transportation providersbecause they are easy to use and offer substantial flexibility. They can be expensive and complicated to set up, but if substantial communication between drivers and dispatching centers is required, two-way radios are essential. If any of the providers in the coordination program currently has a two-way radio system, it may be possible to build off of their system instead of starting from scratch.

Two-way radio systems have three main components:

- **Antenna**. The antenna allows the radio signals to travel from unit to unit. A system must have at least one antenna, but can have more. In addition to the cost of the antenna, there must be a location to mount the antenna. Because they are most effective when mounted up high, many systems will rent space on transmitters from local radio stations.

  Because they are based on similar technologies, two-way radio and cell phones share similar geographic disadvantages such as sporadic coverage in mountainous areas. The advantage over cell phones is that by placing antennas, the two-way radio system can set its own service area.

- **Base Unit**. A base unit needs to be installed in the dispatching center for each participating agency.

- **Mobile Units**. Each vehicle will need to have a mobile unit installed for communication with other vehicles and with the dispatching center.

Expect an initial investment in required communication equipment in the thousands of dollars.

Expect an initial investment in required communication equipment to cost several thousand dollars, including $1,000-$3000 for a base unit, and $500 or more per mobile unit. The Federal Communication Commission must license two-way radio systems. For information on obtaining FCC licensing, contact the FCC (see Chapter 11) or view the FCC's two-way radio web page (see Chapter 12).

When establishing a coordinated two-way radio system for a transportation system, establish "talk groups" for each participating agency, so that they may communicate only with their vehicles. Communication between agencies is also possible and especially useful when joint vehicle use is implemented. Include the details of the two-way radio system and the license in the written plan.

Other Technology

Additional technology options may include software for reservations, scheduling, and dispatching. Software programs may include numerous integrated features, including accounting and passenger management, and automatic vehicle location (AVL) systems. Integrated scheduling and accounting software have the potential to greatly increase the efficiency of small transportation providers, many who still schedule with pencil and paper. AVL systems utilize mapping software, global positioning system (GPS) units, and transmitters to locate vehicles. These systems have the potential to not only increase the efficiency and accuracy of dispatching, but also have implications in terms of safety, particularly in rural areas.

The Transit Cooperative Research Program has identified several steps for implementing technology in small transportation systems:

- **Conduct a Self-Assessment**. The first stepinvolves identifying problems in the current system that technology could address to produce desirable outcomes.

- **Match Needs and Technologies**. Determine which available technologies can address the current needs, taking into account the characteristics of your system. Also identify areas where these technological solutions may be included in the coordination program.

- **Investigate Functionality and Costs**. After identifying the technologies that may be beneficial to your system, establish which options are available and compare the costs against the benefits of each possible solution.

- **Research Financing Technology Systems**. After deciding which options to implement, determine how to finance them. Even those solutions with a rapid return on investment may require substantial preliminary costs. As with all other transportation funding problems, be creative in order to determine how to fund these projects.

Even those solutions with a rapid return on investment may require substantial preliminary costs.

- **Implement Technologies**. Develop an implementation plan for each technology and utilize the coordinated systems' procurement process.

For further information, see TCRP's *Guidebook for Selecting Appropriate Technology Systems for Small Urban and Rural Public Transportation Operators* (Chapter 12).

Vehicle Joint Use

Vehicle joint use can entail vehicle sharing, trip sharing or both. A vehicle sharing policy allows multiple agencies to use one agency's vehicles. Trip sharing involves the use of vehicles to simultaneously transport customers from different agencies.

Vehicle and trip sharing are the most complicated joint use arrangements to set up, but they also have the greatest potential to increase efficiency and decrease costs.

Data Analysis

Vehicle and trip sharing are the most complicated joint use arrangements to set up, but they also have the most potential for increasing efficiency and decreasing costs.

Data collection and analysis from the Initial Planning Phase should give an indication of whether and where vehicle and trip sharing would be feasible. Remember:

- Vehicle sharing works best when there is substantial unused vehicle time, and
- Trip sharing works best when there is substantial unused vehicle capacity. Trip sharing also works best when participants operate along similar routes.

Initial data collection and analysis should have included vehicle rosters and utilization charts. If route and/or customer location maps were not collected at that time, it is essential to do so now. If participants in the program do not keep route and/or customer maps, their drivers may be able to assistance in completing the maps.

Based on review of the vehicle rosters, utilizations charts, and route maps, it should become apparent if vehicle and trip sharing would work.

Setting Specifications

In order for vehicle joint use to occur, set specifications for a number of operating procedures for the vehicles.

In order for vehicle joint use to occur, set specifications for operating procedures for the vehicles. These include:

- **Insurance**: minimum requirements or joint insurance policies; all drivers and all passengers must be covered in all vehicles
- **Incident and Emergency Procedures**
- **Driver training, qualifications, and certifications**
- **Maintenance**: preventative maintenance, pre-trip inspections, major maintenance
- **Record keeping**: vehicle logs, passenger accounting
- **Passenger policies**: late policies, no show policies

For more information on risk management and insurance, see Chapter 7. MDT also has examples of all of these policies; see Chapter 11 for contact information.

Establish procedures for billing and billing rates before implementing vehicle joint use. Include the joint specifications and policies for vehicle use in the written plan.

Public Service Commission Licensing

The Public Service Commission (PSC) licenses private transportation providers in Montana. Private non-profit carriers serving only seniors and/or persons with disabilities, municipal transit systems and urban transportation districts are exempt from this requirement. Any agencies in the coordination program that are currently exempt from this requirement may lose their exemption by carrying passengers other than seniors and/or persons with disabilities in vehicle joint use arrangements. If this is the case, these agencies will need to be licensed by the PSC. For more information on PSC licensing in Montana, see Chapter 7.

Planning for Vehicle Sharing

A vehicle-sharing plan may include as-needed, on-going, or both types of vehicle sharing. Develop policies for each type of sharing that will be implemented.

- **As-needed**. As-needed vehicle sharing involves temporary arrangements that can occur for several reasons: agencies need additional capacity, back-up vehicles are needed for mechanical reasons, for special events, or when agencies need a larger vehicle, such as for field trips.

- **On-going**. On-going vehicle sharing arrangements are more permanent arrangements designed to increase capacity and provide more efficient service.

Data Analysis

To determine which vehicles are available for sharing at which times, consult the vehicle rosters and utilization charts that participants filled out during the Initial Planning Phase. Some vehicles may be needed as back-up. Remember to factor in the time for transporting vehicles between agencies: anhour of idle time on one agency's vehicle in the middle of the day may not be enough time for another agency to utilize that vehicle, even if the other agency only needs the vehicle for half an hour. Identify all vehicles available for sharing and when each vehicle will be free. Keep an updated list of available vehicles for each participating agency to review. Include applicable information about the vehicle, such as: vehicle type, age, and condition; seating and accessible seating capacity; special equipment; availability; and restrictions on use.

As-needed Sharing

If as-needed vehicle sharing is implemented, develop a formal policy outlining how the program will work. Include the policy in the written plan. The key components of this policy will include:

- **Reservation Policy**. The reservation policy will state how participants will go about reserving vehicles. Important aspects to consider in developing a reservation policy include whom the participants will call (vehicle owner, coordinator, lead agency) and how far in advance reservations must be made (24 hours, 48 hours).

- **Courtesies and Responsibilities**. Determine exactly what will be expected of the party using the vehicle. Will they be expected to clean the vehicle before returning it? Fill the gas tank? Perform pre-trip vehicle inspections? Maintain the vehicle logs? If joint specifications for vehicle use have been developed, the responsibilities of the party using the vehicle may simply be to follow the specifications.

- **Cost**. Determine the cost structure for shared vehicle use prior to implementing the program. The easiest way to address cost is to charge per mile. Ask vehicle owners to examine their vehicle operating costs to determine an equitable per-mile rate. A daily cost may be developed to discourage participants from tying up vehicles when they are not actually being used. Allow participants to deduct the cost of any documented operating expenses (fuel, oil, repairs) that they pay while using the vehicle from their cost.

On-going Sharing

On-going sharing involves more permanent arrangements than as-needed sharing.

On-going sharing involves more permanent arrangements than as-needed sharing. Develop policies and procedures for the on-going sharing program and include these policies in the written plan.

- **Vehicle Administration**. When vehicles are passing between agencies, determine who will be responsible for administrating the vehicles (paying bills, maintaining the vehicles). This responsibility may be delegated to the vehicle's owner, the lead agency in the coordination program, or the transportation coordinator, if one was hired. Make decisions about issues such as who will drive the vehicles and where the vehicles will be stored.

Determine exactly what will be expected of the party using the vehicle.

- **Courtesies and Responsibilities**. Determine exactly what will be expected of the party using the vehicle. Will they be expected to clean the vehicle before returning it? Fill the gas tank? Perform pre-trip vehicle inspections? Maintain the vehicle logs? If joint specifications for vehicle use were created, the responsibilities of the party using the vehicle may simply be to follow the specifications.

- **Record Keeping**. Require each participant operating the vehicle to be responsible for keeping vehicle logs. Information to be contained in the vehicle logs should have been determined when joint specifications for vehicle

use were set. Vehicle logs should contain relevant information about the passengers riding the vehicles, including the number of passengers and their agency sponsors. Vehicle logs should also contain information about the vehicle use, including total miles, passenger miles, total hours, and passenger hours. Also include preventative maintenance, fuel consumption, and repair information in the logs.

- **Cost**. As with as-needed sharing, establish cost allocation and billing procedures to ensure that the costs of vehicle use are shared equitably among the participants. Charging a flat rate per mile is a simple way to allocate costs. Have the vehicle administrator determine an equitable cost-per-mile based on previous operating costs. Beyond operating expenses, consider including administrative expenses, depreciation expenses, and allowances for major repairs in the cost allocation. Credit users for any expenses, such as fuel and emergency repairs that they pay while using the vehicle.

Planning for Trip Sharing

Planning for trip sharing can be more complicated than planning for vehicle sharing. The data collection and analysis process can be long and complicated, and the requirements for passenger accounting and record keeping can be extensive. Trip sharing, however, involves the highest level of efficiency that can be achieved from coordination.

Trip sharing, however, involves the highest level of efficiency that can be achieved from coordination.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process for trip sharing is a three-step process, and may require additional data collection. Include the data analysis in the written plan.

- **Identify excess capacity**. Identify all of the routes each participating agency serves, the capacity of the vehicles serving each route, and the typical number of customers carried on that route. When the capacity of the vehicle is greater than the number of customers carried, there is excess capacity on that route that can be used for trip sharing.

- **Identify unmet needs**. Ask each participating agency to provide details of their customers' transportation needs, including information on their customers' origins and destinations, the times their customers need rides, and any special needs the customers have. Have them specify their customers' current transportation providers.

- **Match capacity and need**. Attempt to match any unmet transportation need with any available seating capacity. Systematically compare each customer with a transportation need to each route with available capacity. Trip sharing also works if there are multiple participants operating similar routes, and all

vehicles on those routes are operating with low capacity. The goal is to increase efficiency and reduce unmet transportation needs, not necessarily ensuring that every seat is filled.

Passenger Accounting and Record Keeping

When mixing agencies' customers, develop a method to distinguish which agency is sponsoring which trip to ensure that the appropriate agency is billed.

In order to implement vehicle joint use, set procedures for the various aspects of vehicle use. When planning for trip sharing, it is of particular importance to set joint procedures for passenger accounting and record keeping. When mixing agencies' customers, develop a method to distinguish which agency is sponsoring which trip to ensure that the appropriate agency is billed.

The passenger accounting and record keeping procedures must take into account the records that need to be kept by all participating agencies. Keep track of the agency sponsoring each passenger's trip and the appropriate measures to determine how much the sponsoring agency will be billed. Include the passenger accounting and record keeping procedures in the written plan.

Billing

When developing a trip-sharing plan, ensure that each agency is billed equitably and appropriately for the rides provided to their customers. Include the billing policies in the written plan. Depending on the types of trips provided, there are several options for establishing billing procedures:

- **Per trip**. Per trip billing, the simplest method, determines an equitable billing fee by finding the systems cost per trip (see Chapter 8). Billing per trip works best when all customers take trips of similar lengths.

- **Per mile**. Billing per mile may be the most equitable means of billing when there is significant variance in the mileage of customer trips. Billing per mile can be done several ways: per passenger mile, which is easy when mileage is kept on vehicle logs; per vehicle mile required for the trip, which may be appropriate if vehicles have to go out of their way to pick up or deliver passengers; or by calculating direct mileage between customers' origins and destinations, which may be more appropriate if customers have to travel to several out-of-the-way stops before arriving at their destination.

Billing by zone is popular because it is fair and allows for easy rate calculations.

- **Per zone**. Another common billing method is determined by zones. The service area for the system is divided into zones, the size of which depends on the size and density of the area (often, zones consist of half-mile or mile squares). Sponsoring agencies are billed depending on the number of zones crossed, regardless of the actual route driven. Billing by zone is popular because it is fair and allows for easy rate calculations.

Develop a Budget

Because participants in coordination programs at the collaboration level typically retain their autonomy, most of the expenses of the coordination program will be allocated through the costs of vehicle sharing, and thus will only need to be reflected in the budgets of the individual agencies.

Develop a budget if:

- The collaboration program is expected to incur significant costs,
- The program leader and other staff spend a significant portion of their working time on coordination or if someone is hired to manage the coordination program, and/or
- It is necessary to document the costs spent on coordination to use as local match funds for federal grant programs or for other grant applications.

Create a budget for *each activity* undertaken in the collaboration program. If you develop a budget, include it in the written plan.

Transportation budgets fall into three main categories: administration, operations, and capital expenses. For coordination programs at the collaboration level, expenses may be incurred in any of these categories, though administrative expenses are the most commonly incurred. Major administrative expenses most often involve salary. If participants continue to operate their own vehicles, these operating costs should be reflected in their budget, not the coordination program's budget. Likely capital expenses incurred by the coordination program may include office equipment, communications equipment, and computer software. Sample administrative and operating budgets are included in Chapter 10.

When creating the administrative budget, have each participant determine what portion of their costs in each of the categories in the sample budget (or other categories that may apply) is (or will be) allocated to the coordination program, whether through direct financial contribution or indirect contributions like work and materials.

Transportation budgets fall into three main categories: administration, operations, and capital expenses. For coordination programs at the collaboration level, expenses may be incurred in any of these categories, though administrative expenses are the most commonly incurred.

Notify Funding Sources

Involve the agencies that provide funding to the participants of the coordination program early in the planning process. This will assist in identifying and/or removing any challenges that may be faced in the implementation phase.

Now What?

At this point, the steps for planning for collaboration should be complete. It is time to move on to Chapter 7 – Implementation, which will explain how to put your collaboration program into action.

Chapter Summary

Planning for collaboration begins with determining which activities are to be coordinated. Typical activities coordinated in a collaboration program include:

- Marketing
- Assistant Services
- Training
- Information and Referral Services
- Grant Applications
- Joint Purchasing Agreements
- Joint Maintenance
- Safety and Risk Management
- Communication Systems
- Vehicle and Trip Sharing

After deciding which activities to coordinate, make administrative decisions regarding the organization of the coordination program.

- Initiate an administrative structure to oversee the coordination program. Administrative structures may include the initial coordinating committee, a lead agency, or a hired transportation coordinator.
- Assign responsibilities for each activity to be coordinated.
- Make arrangements so that costs are equitably distributed among the participants of the program.
- Develop joint use agreements spelling out the procedures of the coordinated activities and the responsibilities of the participants.

Simple joint use agreements, such as marketing, assistant services, training, and information and referral can be implemented by the following steps:

- Plan for the activity, determining which tasks need to be completed to implement it.
- Assign responsibilities for each task among the participants.
- Develop specific policies and procedures for the operation of the coordinated activity.

To plan for joint grant applications:

- Identify the funding sources currently used by participants and those for which the program may be eligible.
- Determine the grants for which it would be best to apply.
- Collect the data required and fill out all grant applications. One agency should be responsible for collecting data.

To plan for joint purchase agreements:

- Determine which items members of the program frequently purchase,
- Establish procurement procedures, and
- Establishment management and payment procedures.

To plan for joint maintenance:

- Determine maintenance needs, developing joint policies and specifications.
- If it is decided to outsource maintenance, solicit bids from auto shops and other maintenance providers in your area.
- To perform in-house maintenance, a shop can be started from scratch, or built off of an existing participant's shop. To operate a shop, four components are necessary: tools, labor, parts, and space.
- Develop billing procedures to equitably allocate the costs of maintenance.

To implement joint insurance, participants may:

- Purchase a joint policy from a commercial vendor,
- Self-insure or participate in a local government's self-insurance program, or

- Form an insurance pool.

  Participants may wish to purchase additional coverage for emergencies if the program utilizes self-insure or an insurance pool.

To implement joint policies and procedures for safety and risk management:

- Decide which areas to implement joint policies and procedures (typical areas include insurance specifications, incident procedures, accident investigation, supervision, and discipline),
- Review the current policies and procedures of participants,
- Review applicable laws and funding source requirements, and
- Set policies and procedures.

There are two choices for implementing shared communication systems.

- **Cell phones** offer low prices and are good for emergency and occasional communications, with discounts offered for bulk and business purchases.
- **Two-way radio** is the standard for transportation communications. Establish a two-way radio system that can be shared by all of the participants in the coordination program.

Initial planning for vehicle joint use involves:

- Reviewing data to determine where vehicle sharing and/or trip sharing will be worthwhile and
- Setting joint specifications and policies for vehicle use.

If it is decided to implement vehicle sharing:

- Determine times when vehicles are sitting idle. Determine if any participants need to use vehicles at these times.
- Vehicle sharing can be on an as-needed basis. To develop as-needed vehicle sharing, set policies for reservations, vehicle use responsibilities, and costs.
- Vehicle sharing can be on an on-going basis. To develop on-going vehicle sharing, set policies for vehicle administration, vehicle use, record keeping, and cost.

If trip sharing will be implemented:

- Analyze data to match unused vehicle capacity with transportation needs,
- Set up passenger accounting and record keeping procedures, and
- Set up billing procedures and costing mechanisms.

Develop a budget, if needed.

Notify funding sources of all changes incurred by the coordination program. Include funding sources in the initial planning phases to identify and address any challenges.

Chapter

6

Planning for Consolidation

Chapter 6 contains step-by-step instructions for planning a coordinated transportation system using the consolidation model.

The *Consolidation* model in the coordination program, offers the highest level of coordination possible. Consolidation is the process of two or more agencies merging their transportation services into one agency. Because consolidation is the highest level of coordination, it has the greatest potential benefits. It also requires the greatest effort and expense to implement. This chapter provides information on the planning process for consolidation.

This chapter will reference several supporting documents contained in Chapter 10. To find these documents, turn to the first page of Chapter 10 and look for the documents indexed under Chapter 6.

Continue to compile documentation for the written plan begun in Chapter 3. Chapter 10 contains a list of the components of the written plan that will be included from Chapter 6.

Establish an Entity to Manage the Consolidated System

The planning process for the communication and collaboration levels of coordination each begins with the participants of the program determining which activities to coordinate. When planning for a consolidated transportation system, that decision has already been made. *Everything is to be coordinated*. One agency will handle all of the transportation responsibilities for all participating agencies.

When determining the agency to fill the role of sole transportation provider, there are two choices: selecting an existing agency or creating a new one.

Base the type of administrative entity selected to operate the consolidated transportation system on several factors:

- The size and complexity of the system,
- The varying operators in your area,
- Resources needed and available from providers in the area,
- Time and effort available to expend in creating the entity,
- Willingness and ability of participating agencies to operate the consolidated transportation system, and
- Requirements of funding sources, laws, and regulations.

When determining the agency to fill the role of sole transportation provider, there are two choices: select an existing agency or create a new one.

Existing Entity

Existing agencies save the trouble of forming a new agency and may have resources in place; however, they may also be reluctant to take on the management of the new system.

Choosing an existing entity to operate the consolidated transportation system has several advantages over creating a new entity. The existing agency already has some organization and resources in place. Also, the existing agency may already be managing some transportation services, and have name recognition in the community.

The challenge with choosing an existing entity is that it may be hard to find an entity that is willing to take on the additional burden of managing the consolidated transportation system. Existing agencies may also have some internal resistance to providing time and resources towards this new enterprise.

Determine where in the organization of the existing entity the consolidated transportation system will fit. If the existing entity currently provides transportation as their primary service, this may simply involve enlarging the agency. If the existing entity has another primary service, such as human service providers or local governments, a new division or sub-entity may need to be created. A governmental agency or private agency with a board of directors may need to pass a resolution to establish the consolidated transportation entity. A sample resolution is included in Chapter 10. All documentation that is needed to have an existing entity manage the consolidated system should be included in the written plan.

If it is decided to have an existing entity operate the consolidated transportation system, there are several options.

Transit Provider

An existing transit provider, such as a general public transit provider or a specialized transit provider may be the best option to operate the new consolidated system. Transit providers generally have the most experience in managing larger transportation operations and have the infrastructure and resources--maintenance and storage facilities, communications systems, and dispatching software--to manage the largest number of vehicles..

An existing transit provider, such a general public transit provider or a specialized transit provider may be the best option to operate the new consolidated system.

General public transit providers may not currently have the resources to operate paratransit services. Many general public transit providers currently contract with specialized transportation providers to meet the paratransit requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Selecting a transit provider is often the best choice when there is a large transit provider in the area that is willing to participate in the system.

Human Services Provider

Human services providers may not have as much experience with managing large transportation operations, but they will have experience dealing with the specialized needs of their customers, including transportation needs.

Local Government

The county or municipal government in your area may be an option to manage the consolidated transportation system. Local governmental bodies will have more substantial resources than most of the other possibilities, and not just in terms of monetary and vehicle resources. Local governments have a well-established organization, including human resources, purchasing, public relations, and insurance. Tapping into this organization may help to ease some of the requirements of consolidation.

Local governments have many, well-established resources.

The incentive for the local government to participate in the transportation program is its stake in local transportation issues. However, the local government may lack the flexibility to make quick decisions and changes that a smaller, autonomous agency would have.

Private Provider

Another option is to contract with a private source to manage the consolidated system. Private transportation providers have experience, resources, and more flexibility than public agencies or agencies operating with mostly public funding.

Some restrictions apply to private for-profit transportation providers receiving grant money under many governmental transportation programs. For instance, private for-profit operators are not eligible for FTA Section 5310 or TransADE funding, and they

are only eligible for FTA Section 5311 funding when under contract with a private non-profit agency or public body.

New Entity

If it is decided to create a new entity to operate the consolidated transportation system, there are two main options: create a private non-profit corporation or create an Urban Transportation District.

If a new entity is created to operate the consolidated transportation system, there are two main options: create a private non-profit corporation or create an Urban Transportation District (UTD). While there are other options, such as a private for-profit agency, state law gives preference in funding to private non-profit corporations and public transportation providers. All documentation that is required when forming a new entity should be included in the written plan.

Private Non-Profit Corporation

Non-profit organizations offer tax-exempt status, are simple to establish, and are eligible for most transportation funding sources. Non-profit organizations are governed by the Internal Revenue Code and Montana state law. Contact information for all agencies listed in this section can be found in Chapter 11; Internet sites are listed in Chapter 12. The steps for creating a non-profit corporation in Montana (as defined by the Secretary of State's Office) are as follows:

- **Determine and reserve name**. The name of the proposed organization must be set before creating the corporation. The name of the corporation can be reserved for up to 120 days before actually filing Articles of Incorporation.

- **File Articles of Incorporation with Secretary of State**. File Articles of Incorporation for Domestic Nonprofit Corporation with the Secretary of State's office. The form is a simple, one-page document. The organization will be classified as a Public Benefit Organization. The filing fee is $20 and forms can be obtained from the Secretary of State's office or website.

- **File for Tax-Exempt status with IRS**. To be recognized as a non-profit corporation in Montana, the organization must file for tax-exempt status with the IRS under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code. There are several classes of tax-exempt, non-profit organizations under the IRC. The organization will likely classify as either a charitable organization or a social welfare organization. For more information on filing for tax-exempt status and for forms, contact the IRS or visit the IRS website.

- **Apply for Tax ID numbers**. Obtain federal and state tax ID numbers. Contact the IRS and the Montana Department of Revenue.

- **Apply for local business licenses**. Check with your county and municipal governments as to what licenses may be needed to operate. Contact your county or municipal courthouse or offices for more information.

- **Obtain worker's compensation insurance**. Any organization hiring labor in Montana must provide for worker's compensation insurance. For more information, contact the Montana Department of Labor.

After the non-profit corporation has been formed, it must file an annual report by April 15 of each year to the Secretary of State's office. For forms and more information regarding starting a business in Montana, contact the Secretary of State's office or view the Secretary of State's web page at sos.state.mt.us.

Urban Transportation District

Urban transportation districts are public bodies created for the purpose of supplying transportation services to the residents of the district. Forming an urban transportation district is more complicated than forming a non-profit corporation. Urban transportation districts have the advantage of having the authority to levy property taxes and issue bonds for revenue. Urban transportation districts are also exempt from Public Service Commission licensing requirements, regardless of the passengers they carry. As a public body, however, there are greater restrictions on the state and federal grants for transportation funding that the district may receive.

Urban transportation districts are public bodies created for the purpose of supplying transportation services to the residents of the district.

In order to create an urban transportation district, the help and support of local government officials is necessary. The procedure for creating an urban transportation district is as follows:

- **Petition**. Twenty percent of the registered voters in the proposed urban transportation district must sign a petition to create the district. The petition must include a map of the area to be included in the district. The completed petition must be filed with and certified by the election administrator.

- **Public Hearing**. When the petition is certified, the county commission must call for a public hearing on the creation of the district. The hearing must give an opportunity for all interested parties to give testimony in favor of or against creation of the district.

- **Election**. After the public hearing, the question of creating an urban transportation district will be put before the voters. The county commission will determine whether the vote shall occur by mail ballot, special election, or during the next general election. The measure must be passed by a majority of voters.

- **Selection of Board Members**. A board governs the transportation district. The governing bodies (i.e., city and county governments) of the areas included in the transportation district will select the initial members of the board who will serve until the next general election. Afterwards, board members will be selected in the general election to serve terms determined by the governing

bodies of the areas to be included in the district. A resolution may be passed at any time altering the method by which the board members are selected. Most urban transportation districts have found that selection of board members through appointment is the most effective manner.

The board has the power to make all decisions relating to the operation of the transportation district. The board must also hire a qualified administrative officer to manage the district.

The laws governing urban transportation districts are outlined in MCA 7-14-2. The complete Montana Codes Annotated (MCA) can be found at: data.opi.state.mt.us/bills/mca_toc/7_14_2.htm

Staffing

Establishing the management team early will help provide smooth transitions from planning to implementation to operation.

When creating a new organization, try to fill the key management positions as soon as possible. Establishing the management team early will help provide smooth transitions from planning to implementation to operation. Most of the management team will likely come from those agencies already participating in the consolidation program.

Develop a Capital Needs Plan

After establishing the entity to operate the consolidated transportation system, the next step is to develop a capital needs plan. This involves identifying all current capital equipment, including vehicles, office equipment, and computer equipment; determining the current vehicle use and needs; and determining short- and long-range replacement and expansion needs. Include the capital needs plan in the written plan.

Current Vehicle Needs

The first step in developing a capital needs plan is to determine what vehicles the system will need to begin operations. This step will involve a systematic analysis of the data collected in your Initial Planning Phase.

- **Identify Current Vehicle Use and Transportation Need**. During the Initial Planning Phase, data collected included vehicle rosters, utilization schedules, and route maps from each participant. Information regarding the unmet needs of customers of the participating agencies should also be available.

- **Identify Benefits of Consolidation**. Based on the current routes, vehicle usage, and passenger needs; determine the benefits of consolidation. Are there times when vehicles are sitting idle, and could be used to meet unmet need? Are there times when vehicles are operating with low capacity, and the same number of passengers could be served more efficiently with fewer vehicles? Are there times when different vehicles are running similar routes at the same time? Could one larger vehicle pick up the passengers on both routes? This step has duel purposes: to eliminate inefficient service and to ensure that all potential customers' needs are being met.

Based on the current routes, vehicle usage, and passenger needs; determine the benefits of consolidation.

- **Identify a Potential New Vehicle Schedule**. Based upon current vehicle usage, put together a tentative vehicle schedule for the consolidated system. The purpose of this step is to approximate the vehicle needs for the consolidated system.

- **Assign Current Vehicles to Routes**. Assign the vehicles the consolidated system currently possesses to the routes in your tentative schedule. Assign the newest and most reliable vehicles to regular duty as much as possible. Take accessibility requirements into account when assigning vehicles to routes.

- **Determine Back-up Fleet Needs**. After vehicles are assigned to regular duty, determine the expected need for back-up vehicles. The estimated back-up need will be based upon the past experience of the current owners of the vehicles and your procedures for preventative maintenance.

- **Assign Current Vehicles to Back-up Fleet**. Remaining vehicles not scheduled to regular duty will be assigned to the back-up fleet. Depending on the vehicle condition some may be available for back-up use at any time and some for emergency back-up purposes only.

- **Determine Need for Additional Vehicles**. After completing these steps, it will be necessary to determine if the system has immediate needs for additional vehicles. If there are not enough vehicles to operate the tentative schedule, either obtain additional vehicles or revise the schedule.

Long Term Vehicle Needs

Long-term vehicle needs will include those vehicles that need to be replaced and any vehicles needed for planned expansion.

Long-term vehicle needs will include those vehicles that need to be replaced and any vehicles needed for planned expansion.

Determine Use Rates for Current Vehicles

To determine annual use rates, divide the number of miles on the vehicle by the age of the vehicle. This will give you the use rate of the vehicle in miles per year. For example, the calculation for a vehicle that has been in service for three years and has 75,000 miles on it would be:

Annual Use Rate = **Vehicle Mileage** / **Years of Service**

Annual Use Rate = 75,000 miles / 3 years of service

Annual Use Rate = 25,000 miles/year

Determine Expected Lifespan and Remaining Lifespan for Vehicles

Determine the expected lifespan of each vehicle in the consolidated system. Start by estimating the mileage at which each vehicle will need to be replaced. Take into account their current condition. If the system has policies setting a maximum mileage for vehicles in use (such as 200,000), use this number.

To determine the expected lifespan of a vehicle, divide the miles at which the vehicle will be replaced by the use rate in miles per year. This will give the expected number of years that this vehicle will be in service.

For example, the calculation for a vehicle that has a use rate of 25,000 miles per year and an expected life of 200,000 miles would be:

Lifespan = **Expected Life** / **Use Rate**

Lifespan = 200,000 miles / 25,000 miles per year

Lifespan = 8 years

To determine the remaining lifespan of a vehicle, subtract the number of miles the vehicle currently has from the number of miles expected at replacement. Then divide this number by the use rate in miles per year. This gives an estimate of the number of years that this vehicle will be able to remain in service. For example, the calculation for a vehicle that has 80,000 miles, a use rate of 25,000 miles per year, and an expected life of 200,000 miles would be:

Remaining Lifespan = **(Expected Life – Current Miles) / Use Rate**

Remaining Lifespan = (200,000 miles – 80,000 miles) / 25,000 miles per year

Remaining Lifespan = 4.8 years

Develop Replacement Schedule

After calculating the remaining lifespan for the systems' vehicles, develop a replacement schedule for the system. The replacement schedule will list all of the vehicles in the system, estimating when they need to be replaced. The replacement schedule can also include estimated costs and funding sources to provide an at-a-glance estimate of capital costs for the near future. A sample replacement schedule is included in Chapter 10. Update the replacement schedule yearly, as estimated lifespans of vehicles and their use rates will vary in practice.

After calculating the remaining lifespan for the systems' vehicles, develop a replacement schedule for the system.

Determine Expansion Needs

If expansion of service is among the goals set for the consolidation program, estimate the additional vehicles needed based on the expansion plan. This will be easiest if the expansion goals are in concrete terms, such as adding 2,000 rides per year or increasing the service area to cover the whole county. Based on current use rates, estimate how the expansion goals will translate into additional vehicle needs. Find opportunities to use vehicle and ride sharing to meet the expansion goals *before* adding new vehicles.

Determine Lead-Time Required to Secure Funding for Replacement Vehicles

To replace vehicles in a timely fashion, allow plenty of lead-time to complete grant applications and await awards. For example, the timeline for applying for vehicles through the FTA Section 5310 program in Montana is as follows:

To replace vehicles in a timely fashion, allow plenty of lead-time to make grant applications and await awards.

- **October** – Grant Application Workshops
- **February 1 (or first working day)** – Grant Applications Due
- **March 15-31** – Notifications Mailed to Successful and Non-successful Applicants
- **May – October** – Vehicle Specifications Written and Bids Placed
- **November – February** – Vehicles Delivered

It could be up to a year after an application is submitted and almost a year and a half after preparing the application before a vehicle is delivered.

In this scenario, it could be up to a year after an application is submitted and almost a year and a half after preparing the application before a vehicle is delivered. If a vehicle was needed at the beginning of 2005, plan to start preparing the application at the end of 2003. Know when local match funds will be required. Check with each funding source for their timeline.

Vehicle Painting and Lettering

When creating a consolidated system, it is preferable to have all of the vehicles look the same so that they will be identified with the new consolidated system. Vehicle painting and lettering will help to establish the "brand" for the new consolidated system. If the system receives funding through the FTA 5311 program, vehicles cannot be marked in any way that would indicate that only certain passenger groups are allowed.

Communications Equipment

Next to vehicles, communications equipment can be one of the most expensive capital investments required of a transportation system. Transportation systems currently have two main communication options: two-way radio and cell phones.

Cell Phones

Cell phones have recently become a popular communication choice for small transportation systems due to the low start-up costs and ease of set up. The downside of cell phone use is lack of convenience: phones have to be dialed to make contact, forcing drivers to remove their hands from the wheel, and the dispatching center is only able to speak with one vehicle at a time. Cell phones are best suited for arrangements in which communication between drivers and the dispatching center only occasionally or for emergency purposes. Some areas in Montana, particularly in the rural areas in the northeast part of the state, are not capable of supporting cell phone use as availability is dependent upon cell tower locations. . Cell phone coverage may also be sporadic while driving through mountainous areas.

If cell phone service is right for communication services, determine the systems needs. At a minimum, have one phone per vehicle that is on the road. Solicit quotes from the cell providers in your area. Most providers offer bulk and business discounts. Understand the specific requirements of the plans offered, not just the price. Include quotes and contracts for cell phone service in the written plan.

Two-way Radio

Two-way radio systems are the standard communication option for transportation providersbecause they offer ease of use and great flexibility. If the system requires substantial communications between drivers and dispatching centers, two-way radios are essential. If any of the providers in the program currently have a two-way radio system, it may be possible to build off of their system instead of starting from scratch.

Two-way radio systems are the standard communication option for transportation providers.

Two-way radio systems have three main components:

- **Antenna**. The antenna allows the radio signals to travel from unit to unit. There must be at least one antenna in the system, but there can be more. Find a location to mount the antenna. Because they are most effective when mounted up high, many systems will rent space on local radio station transmitters.

  Because they are based on similar technologies, two-way radio and cell phones share similar geographic disadvantages such as sporadic coverage in mountainous areas. The advantage over cell phones is that placing antennas allows the two-way radio system to set its own service area.

- **Base Unit**. A base unit will need to be installed in the dispatching center for each participating agency.

- **Mobile Units**. Each vehicle will need to have a mobile unit installed for communication with other vehicles and with the dispatching center.

Expect an initial investment in required communication equipment to cost several thousand dollars. Seek bids from local providers.

Two-way radio systems must be licensed by the FCC. For information on obtaining FCC licensing contact the FCC (see Chapter 11) or view the FCC's two-way radio web page (see Chapter 12).

Computers

There is a wide variety of software available to assist a transportation provider, ranging from standard office suites to integrated scheduling, dispatching, and accounting software.

There is a wide variety of software available to assist a transportation provider, ranging from standard office suites to integrated scheduling, dispatching, and accounting software.

To determine the needs for computer hardware and software:

- **Inventory current software and hardware**. Inventory all of the hardware and software *that will be available for the consolidated system*. This may include hardware and software from participants that will become part of the consolidated systems and any in-kind contributions.

- **Determine which software programs the consolidated transportation system will use**. There are a myriad of choices for software that can help automate and increase the efficiency of your transportation system. Some of the types of programs commonly used are outlined later in this section.

- **Determine the system requirements to operate this software**. Determine the minimum system requirements to operate all of the software selected. This will help determine if any hardware upgrades are necessary.

- **Identify purchasing needs**. A decision will need to be made if the consolidated system has all of the software necessary to aid in managing the system. In addition, be sure that there are enough adequately equipped workstations for all of the employees to have access to the software.

Some types of software and hardware commonly used by transportation systems and considerations for purchasing them are discussed in the following paragraphs. Before purchasing software, ensure that it will run on the current hardware.

Before purchasing software, ensure that it will run on the current hardware.

- **Office Software**. At a minimum, have an office software package containing a word processor and a spreadsheet program. The word processor can be used for typing various communications; the spreadsheet can be used for budgets and for tracking system statistics.

- **Scheduling, Dispatching, and Accounting Software**. Several companies currently develop software packages for transportation systems that can automate the scheduling and dispatching processes. Some of these programs also contain integrated accounting and passenger accounting units. Some software can even help manage payroll. Larger systems with many vehicles, drivers, routes, and passengers may particularly benefit from these programs.

- **Routing/Mapping Software**. Software is available to help determine and map out the optimum routes for your vehicles, given passenger locations and destinations. One source to find information on scheduling, dispatching, accounting and routing/mapping softare is on APTA's website. Go to http://apta100.apta.com/advdynvir/webcompscover.asp and click on the "Computer Hardware, Software & Accessories" listing.

- **Internet/Email**. The internet provides a great deal of readily available information, from grant applications, to business and tax forms, to transportation news and advocacy information, that can be useful for transportation systems.

Buildings, Storage, and Office Space

Transportation systems have the potential to use a large amount of space: office space for administration and dispatching, and storage space for your vehicles, spare parts, and supplies. If maintenance will be performed in-house, space will be needed for a maintenance building, with room for tools, parts, and vehicle storage.

To determine current space needs, document what space currently owned or used by participants will be available for the consolidated system. If there is less space available than will be needed, the discrepancy should be reflected in the capital needs plan.

Office Furniture and Equipment

Determine the needs for office furniture and equipment, as well as what furniture and equipment from participants in the coordination program will be available for the consolidated system. Any need in excess of what is available should be reflected in the capital needs plan.

Budget Background

It is now time to develop a budget for the consolidated system. In actuality, three different budgets will be developed:

- A start-up budget,
- A first-year budget, and
- A long-term budget.

The written plan should include documentation of all budgets created.

Developing the initial budget is important, as it will become the basis for contract rates and fares. It will also establish a basis of how the coordination program will affect the transportation situation in your area.

Developing the initial budget is important, as it will become the basis for contract rates and fares.

Developing an initial budget is complicated because there is limited data upon which to base the budget. Rely on the information based on transportation costs from recent

years provided by the agencies participating in the consolidated program. There will also be limited information to assist in determining how the consolidated program will affect the costs of providing transportation. It is anticipated that the consolidated system will result in lower costs and/or more efficient use of the system's current resources. Base the initial budget on some assumptions about how the changes in the transportation system resulting from the consolidation program will affect the system's bottom line. These assumptions should be stated explicitly within the budget.

Develop a Start-up Budget

The majority of start-up expenses will be one-time expenses.

Consolidated transportation systems can require substantial start-up costs. After developing the capital needs plan, determine the start-up costs for the system. Start-up expenses are all of those costs that occur before the system is put into operation. The majority of start-up expenses will be one-time expenses. Start-up costs for consolidated systems fall into three categories:

- **Capital**. Typical start-up expenses in the capital category will include office equipment, communications equipment, and vehicles. Analyze the capital needs plan to determine what purchases are essential before the new consolidated system is fully implemented. Most of the time, a new consolidated system will have enough vehicles from participating agencies to operate.

Administrative expenses will likely make up the bulk of start-up expenses.

- **Administrative**. Administrative expenses will likely make up the bulk of start-up expenses. The main administrative start-up expenses will be salaries and benefits for the people planning and implementing the system. Other administrative expenses may include rent for office space and utilities for the time before the consolidated system is underway.

- **Operating**. The system will not likely incur any start-up expenses in the operating category, unless it provides on-the-road training for new drivers. In this case, the expenses related to operating the vehicles and training the drivers will be counted as an operating expense.

The planning and implementation process for a consolidated transportation system can take six months to a year or longer. Keep initial start-up costs at a minimum during this time. Rely as much as possible on volunteer labor from existing staff members throughout the planning phase; do not bring paid, full-time staff on-board until they are needed; keep outlays for capital expenses and supplies to the minimum required to operate.

Develop First-Year Budget

The first-year budget will list, by line item, all expected expenses and revenues for the first year of operation of the coordinated transportation system.

Estimate System Expenses

The first step in developing the first-year budget is to estimate the expenses falling under each of the three categories of transportation expenses.

The first step in developing the first-year budget is to estimate the expenses falling under each of the three categories of transportation expenses.

Capital

Capital expenses include purchases of large-scale items for long-term use, such as vehicles and office equipment. Typical capital expenses include:

- **Vehicles**. Vehicles will be the major capital investment. If the fleet will be expanded during the first year, budget for this investment in the capital budget.
- **Communications Equipment**. Two-way radio equipment and cell phones are the typical choices for communications equipment. The capital needs plan outlines the type of communications equipment to be used and the equipment that needs to be purchased.
- **Office Equipment**. Large office equipment such as desks, chairs, phone systems, and copy machines are a capital expense.
- **Land and Buildings**. If it is necessary to purchase land or buildings for office space, vehicle storage, or maintenance space, instead of renting or leasing, include these purchases under capital expenses.

Capital expenses may be harder to estimate than other system expenses because they are long-term investments, and are not typically purchased on regular schedules, but rather, to expand or replace current facilities. Consult the capital needs plan to determine which capital purchases are likely to be needed the first year.

The majority of administrative expenses will need to be estimated based on previous years experience from the participants in the program.

Administrative

Administrative expenses include those items that are needed for the day-to-day operations and management of the consolidated system. Most of these expenses will be estimated based on previous years experience from the participants in the program. Administrative expenses typically include:

- **Salaries and Benefits**. Include salaries and benefits of administrative personnel and managers in the administrative budget. Determine what salary and benefits will be offered as compensation for these positions. To determine this, compare transportation systems across the state and the region.

- **Facilities**. If the system is renting or leasing office space, these costs are included in the administrative budget. Also included in the facilities categories are utilities such as: heat, water, and electricity.

- **Phones**. The cost for office phones is an administrative cost. Include local and long-distance coverage. Determine how many lines are needed, whether it's just one for the whole system, or separate lines for the main office, scheduling, and dispatching.

- **Insurance**. *Vehicle insurance is not included in this category*. There are, however, many other types of insurance to consider, including building-related insurance and officer/director liability insurance.

- **Office Supplies**. Include office supplies and office equipment that is too small to be considered capital equipment as an administrative expense.

- **Professional Services**. Professionals such as lawyers and accountants will likely work with the consolidated system from time to time. Include these charges under administrative expenses.

- **Marketing**. Include the costs of any marketing efforts for the consolidated transportation program under administrative expenses.

- **Travel**. If management staff travels to meetings or conferences to represent the transportation system, include all travel and conference registration expenses under administrative expenses.

Operating

Operating costs are those directly tied to the operation and maintenance of the vehicles in the transportation system. Operating costs typically include:

Wages, salaries, and benefits for drivers are the main operating expenses for a transportation system.

- **Salaries and Benefits**. Wages, salaries, and benefits for drivers are the main operating expenses for a transportation system. Pay for new drivers can be determined based on the wages offered by similar transportation systems in the state and the region. Pay for drivers hired from the participating agencies in your consolidated program can match what they were earning with their previous agency. Hiring preference should be given to current drivers for the participating agencies in the consolidated system.

- **Fuel**. Fuel is the largest recurring cost for vehicle use and maintenance. Fuel expenses can be estimated based on the number of miles vehicles are used in a year. To calculate fuel costs for a vehicle, divide its yearly miles by the average miles per gallon it receives, and multiply by the average price per gallon of fuel.

Fuel Cost = (**Yearly Vehicle Miles** / **Miles per Gallon**) **X Cost of Fuel per Gallon**

- **Vehicle Licensing**. Include license and registration fees for vehicles under operating expenses. For information on vehicle licensing fees, contact your local Motor Vehicle Department or county treasurer.

- **Maintenance**. All maintenance costs, including preventative maintenance, major repairs, and parts, are included in the operating budget. If performing in-house maintenance, the salaries and benefits of maintenance workers will be included under the operating budget. However, shop tools, land, and buildings for the maintenance shop should be included as capital expenses.

- **Insurance**. Vehicle insurance is an operating expense. For more information on insurance, see Chapter 7.

- **Communications**. Include the operating fees for communication equipment under operating expenses. For two-way radio systems, this may include phone lines, tower rental for mounting antennas, and licensing fees. For cell phones, this will include monthly bills.

- **Training**. All driver training expenses, including initial training and refresher courses, are included under operating expenses.

Estimate System Revenues

The next step in the budget process is to estimate system revenue from all sources.

Contract Services

For transportation systemssupplying transportation primarily to human service providers, the bulk of revenue will come from contracts.

For transportation systems supplying transportation primarily to human service providers, the bulk of revenue will come from contracts. Develop contracts, setting service rates, with each agency for which transportation will be provided. Estimate the quantity of service to be purchased from previous years' experience. Multiplying the quantity estimate by the contract cost will give an estimate of contract service revenue. (See the section on "Setting Contract Rates and Fares" later in this chapter for more information on determining contract rates.)

Revenue may also be estimated based on past transportation costs from those agencies that will be purchasing contract services from the consolidated system. However, participants' transportation costs in the past may have included overhead from operating their own transportation, and this overhead should not be included in the purchase of service estimates for the current budget.

Direct Grants

Determine which funding sources the consolidated system will continue be eligible to receive and which funding programs will be utilized.

Many human service transportation providers receive the bulk of their funding from government grants. Inform funding sources of the purpose, goals, and status of the consolidation program; the funding sources will, in turn, be able to assist you in making decisions maximizing your potential funding availability as you implement the consolidation program.

Compile a list of all of the grant sources that the participants currently receive. Of these, determine for which funding sources the consolidated system will continue to be eligible and which funding programs will be utilized. Based on experience from previous years, estimate the system's revenue from grants.

Passenger Fares

Farebox revenue can be calculated by estimating the total units to be consumed by fare-paying customers and multiplying by the cost per unit.

If services will be provided to the general public, or the system will be collecting partial transportation costs from some agency clients, estimate your revenues from passenger fares. Calculate farebox revenue by estimating the total units to be consumed by fare-paying customers and multiplying by the cost per unit. For example, if the fare is based on individual passenger trips, multiply the total number of trips for fare-paying customers by the fare per trip to determine the estimated farebox revenue. For more information on setting passenger fares, see the section on "Setting Contract Rates and Fares" later in this chapter.

Community Contributions

Local community sources may finance the system to some extent. This may range from community organizations such as the United Way to local government funding to individual charitable donations. Based on experience from previous years, determine the consolidated system's revenue from these sources.

In-Kind Contributions

Contributions of time, labor, and materials from other sources, either as donations or in exchange for services should be listed in the budget as revenue, with approximate values of their worth. These in-kind contributions must also be accounted for as an expense, based on accounting principals.

Other Revenues

Other revenues may make up a portion of income. This does not include revenue from other operations that the consolidated entity may perform. Rather, only non-transit revenues directly related to the transportation service, such as selling advertising space on the outside and/or inside of buses or creating partnerships with local newspapers to sell copies of their papers on buses, are applicable.

Revenue Reserves

Due to the possible lag time between delivery and payment of contract services and the normal fluctuation of funding and system usage, develop reserve funds, such as a cash reserve or line of credit, that can be utilized for short periods when cash flow is lower than needed to operate the system.

Due to the possible lag time between delivery and payment of contract services and the normal fluctuation of funding and system usage, develop reserve funds.

Create a Formal Budget

After estimating the system's expenses and revenues, create a formal budget. The budget should include specific line-item expenses. If participating agencies do not have a formal budget, follow the sample budget included in Chapter 10.

Develop A Long-Term Budget

Develop a long-term budget for the next five years. The process for creating a long-term budget is essentially the same as that for creating the first-year budget. Budgets for the outlying years will be "rough estimates." Long-term budgets are used for future planning and should be based on the goals and plans of the consolidated system. Additionally, long-term budgets should be adjusted every year to reflect the actual situation from the previous year.

Initially, contract rates and fares will be based upon estimates of service consumption from the transportation system in place prior to implementation of the consolidated system.

Setting Contract Rates and Fares

Initially, contract rates and fares will be based upon estimates of service consumption from the transportation system in place prior to implementation of the consolidated system. Include the contract rates and fare structure in the written plan. When

significant data from the consolidated system is collected, adjust the billing rates to reflect the actual costs of the system.

Contract Rates

Develop contract rates that *fully recover* the cost of services provided. This policy reflects the new goals of the consolidated transportation system as a transportation provider. Each participating agency that will purchase transportation services will be responsible for procuring the necessary funding to finance their transportation needs. Set a contract rate structure that is equitable to all participating agencies.

Contract rates should be developed that *fully recover* the cost of services provided.

Set one rate, based on the costs of providing the service, rather than setting rates for each agency depending upon what they can afford to pay. This method prevents the better-funded agencies from paying for the costs of service for less funded agencies, and shifts the burden for finding funding for transportation services to the consuming agencies. Depending upon the needs of the participating agencies, it may be necessary to develop rates based on different units of service: per trip, per mile, and per hour.

- **Per Trip**. A billing rate per trip can be determined by dividing the total expenses by the total number of trips. Use a per trip rate structure when trip lengths are relatively similar.

- **Per Mile**. A billing rate per mile can be determined by dividing total expenses by the total number of revenue miles. When billing per mile, allocate costs for deadhead miles equitably. For instance, if you have to drive an empty van ten miles outside of the normal operating area to pick up one agency's customers, then this agency is adding cost to the system in terms of deadhead miles. Develop a method for allocating the cost when customers from more than one agency are on the same vehicle at the same time, such as by dividing the cost by the percentage of customers from each agency on the vehicle.

- **Per Hour**. A billing rate per hour can be determined by dividing the total expenses by the total number of revenue hours. When billing per hour, allocate costs for deadhead hours. In addition, develop a method for allocating the cost when customers from more than one agency are on a vehicle at the same time.

Distinguish between the costs of providing general public services and the costs of providing agency services, so that billing rates are based strictly on the costs for providing agency services.

General Public Fares

Unlike contract rates, which should recover the full cost of the transportation service provided, general public fares are typically set lower so as to encourage public use. Funding sources such as FTA Section 5311 and local governments are the typical funding sources for general public fare subsidization. Determine general public fares based on the amount of funding you receive for fare subsidization. The difference between this amount and the total cost for general public transportation needs to be recovered through farebox revenue. Calculating this fare will depend upon the structure (single rate, per zone, etc.) set for general public fares.

Unlike contract rates, which should recover the full cost of the transportation service provided, general public fares are typically set lower so as to encourage public use.

To calculate general public fares, first estimate general public ridership. If none of the agencies participating in your consolidation program currently serve the general public, estimating this ridership can be challenging. A suggested formula is included in Chapter 10. For more detailed information, see: SG Associates, *Demand Forecasting for Rural Passenger Transportation*, prepared for the Transportation Cooperative Research Program, February 1995. (The report is available online, see Chapter 12 for the link.)

Establish general public fares that are simple to understand and affordable.

Establish general public fares that are simple to understand and affordable.

- **Single Rate**. For a small service area, a single rate per one-way trip, regardless of distance, is a simple and effective way to set the fare. A rate can be determined by dividing the percentage of the total cost of general public transportation that is to be recouped through farebox revenue by the total number of trips that are to be provided.

- **Per Zone**. Charging per zone is a simplified way of charging by distance. In this method, the service area is divided into grid squares, with each square representing a zone. (Grid squares can be of any size, depending on the service area, though 1-square mile zones are common.) Customers are charged based on the number of zones between the origin and destination of their trip. Determining a zone fare is not as simple as determining a single rate fare. Look at the typical origins and destinations and average trip lengths of your customers to determine an equitable zone fare.

- **Per Zone plus Base Fare**. Charging per zone plus base fare is similar to charging per zone, except that an additional base fare is charged no matter how many zones a customer's trip goes through. For instance, a system may charge a 50-cent base fare plus 25 cents per zone. Calculating fares utilizing this fare structure should be done in a similar fashion to calculating per zone fares.

While general public fares are typically set low to encourage patronage, beware of the phenomenon known as "client dumping."

Client Dumping

While general public fares are typically set low to encourage use, beware of the phenomenon known as "client dumping." If agencies are being charged the actual cost of providing service, whereas general public passengers have their fares subsidized, agencies may cease contracting for service, instead using their transportation funds to buy general public fares for their passengers. While this saves money for the agencies, it places the burden of finding additional funding to make up for the cost on the transportation system.

While the only sure way to end all client dumping would be to either charge the full cost of service to the general public or not serve the general public at all, you can help by explaining the philosophy for the billing procedures to your participating agencies. Just as they are subsidizing rides for their customers, funding sources for general public transit are subsidizing the fares for the general public. Widespread client dumping will force increases in general public fares, which will decrease the benefit of client dumping. Strike an equitable balance when establishing the intial fares.

Capital Replacement Surcharges

It may be decided to to include a capital replacement surcharge in the contract rates and general public fare. Capital replacement surcharges can be implemented to cover some or all of the cost of replacing capital equipment. To determine what the capital replacement surcharge should be:

Capital replacement surcharges can be implemented to cover some or all of the cost of replacing capital equipment.

- Determine the depreciation cost of the vehicle in terms of the units charged. For instance, if customers are charged based on mileage, determine the depreciation cost by dividing the cost of the vehicle by the total number of miles in the vehicle's lifespan.
- Multiply this number by the percentage of vehicle cost to be recouped.
- Charge the customers for every mile they are billed for riding.

If, for example, a vehicle is funded through the FTA 5310 program and a replacement vehicle will be funded through the 5310 program, use a capital replacement surcharge of 20% to generate the required local match. In this case, assuming the vehicle cost $60,000 and is expected to be used for 200,000 miles:

Surcharge = (**Vehicle Cost / Total Expected Mileage**) **X % to recoup**

Surcharge = ($60,000 / 200,000 miles) X 20%

Surcharge = $0.06 / mile

Develop Operating Procedures

The consolidated system will have to have one set of operating procedures. The basic steps for setting operating procedures in a consolidated system are:

- **Review participants' policies and procedures**. All participants operating vehicles should already have operating procedures. Start by going over these policies. Determine what policies participants have in common and where there are discrepancies; which of the participants' policies are firm and which can be changed.

- **Review applicable laws and funding source requirements**. Federal and state laws govern many aspects of transportation from insurance requirements to ADA requirements. Funding sources may also have specific requirements that will influence the way the consolidated system is operated. The policies must, at a minimum, cover the laws and applicable funding source requirements.

The policies must, at a minimum, cover the laws and applicable funding source requirements.

- **Set policies and procedures**. Set the operating policies and procedures for the coordinated system based on participants' current policies and minimum requirements set by law and funding sources.

Include all policies and procedures for the consolidated system in the written plan.

The policies and procedures necessary to operate a system are discussed in the following sections. Sample policies are included in Chapter 10.

Service and Administrative Policies and Procedures

These policies deal with how the system will operate and when the system will be available to work with customers.

When setting operating and office hours, try to strike a good balance between maximizing convenience for customers and minimizing costs.

- **Operating Hours**. Operating hours are the times vehicles are running or available for use. Try to strike a good balance between maximizing convenience for customers and minimizing costs.

- **Office Hours**. Office hours are the times when offices are open for business with customers; they do not necessarily include all the hours when someone will be in the office.

- **Contacts**. Who will customers contact for reservations? Determine policies for after-hours contacts. Are reservations by voicemail acceptable?

- **Weather Cancellation**. Snow and ice are a fact of life for winter in Montana. Decide the standards for weather cancellations. In what conditions is it unsafe to operate? Decide what procedures will be used for notifying customers of cancellations.

While working to provide the best service possible, complaints are inevitable

- **Complaints**. While working to provide the best service possible, complaints are inevitable. Develop procedures for dealing with complaints. What documentation will be required? How will complaints be investigated? How will complaints be resolved?

Driver Policies and Procedures

Driver policies and procedures help ensure that drivers are able to provide the safest, most efficient transportation experience possible for customers.

Drivers make a transportation system run. The following policies and procedures help ensure that drivers are able to provide the safest, most efficient transportation experience possible for customers.

- **Training Procedures**. There are various types of training for drivers, including driver training, passenger handling, sensitivity training, and first aid. Determine what the consolidated system's training requirements will be. For any person driving a vehicle with 16 or more passengers (including the driver), a commercial drivers license (CDL) is required. Information on obtaining CDLs in Montana can be obtained from your local Motor Vehicle Division or the Motor Vehicle Division web site (see Chapter 12 for links.)

  The Montana Department of Transportation provides training, such as Passenger Service and Safety (PASS) training, defensive driving training, and training on preventive maintenance and emergency procedures. Contact the Transit Section of MDT for more information on training (see Chapter 12).

- **Drug Testing**. Both the Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration have strict drug testing requirements for anyone operating vehicles purchased with their funds. The system must implement a drug-testing program that meets these requirements. For more information, see Chapter 7.

- **Cash Handling**. If fares are collected directly from passengers, develop cash handling procedures for the drivers. Drivers do not have to be bonded to collect fares and handle cash.

- **Radio/Communications Usage**. Set procedures for proper usage of radio or communications devices. If using radio codes, determine what they will be.

- **Driver Reviews and Supervision**. Plan for periodic performance reviews for the drivers in the system. Also plan to have a supervisor ride along for a

certain period of time with new hires or with current drivers after an incident. Determine these policies before operations begin.

- **Emergency Procedures**. Emergency situations can include accidents, vehicle malfunctions, or passenger illness/injury. Establish procedures that detail how drivers are to take care of passengers, what emergency contacts must be made (e.g., police, fire, ambulance, and insurance carriers), and what documentation must take place.

Trip Scheduling Policies and Procedures

Communicate to customers and the contracting agencies the importance of abiding by these policies.

Trip scheduling policies detail how customers interact with the consolidated system to receive transportation. These procedures help to ensure smooth and efficient scheduling. Communicate to the customers and the contracting agencies the importance of abiding by these policies.

- **Reservation Policies**. If offering demand response services, develop reservation policies. Reservation policies will depend upon the types of trips that the system offers: call-in, standing order/subscription rides (e.g., every Monday at noon), or both.

  For call-in orders, determine how far in advance reservations must be made. Typical requirements include the day before the ride, 24 hours in advance or 48 hours in advance. Many systems also set a maximum time period, such as two weeks in advance, before which reservations cannot be made.

  For standing orders/subscription rides, set a maximum percentage of trips that can be scheduled as standing orders, as a high number of subscription rides may cause denial of call-in orders.

- **Cancellation Policies**. Short notice cancellations adversely affect the operation of transportation, causing scheduling difficulties and tying up vacancies that could be used by other passengers. Determine the minimum notice required for cancellations (such as two or four hours), and what penalties will be imposed for those who cancel after the minimum notice. For service purchased by human service agencies through contracts, include a cancellation penalty fee (such as a percentage of the fare) in the contract. Determining penalties for the passenger will be their responsibility. If serving the general public, try a demerit system, whereby, after a certain number of late cancellations, a person is suspended from using the system or charged a higher fare.

Short notice cancellations adversely affect the operation of transportation. Determine the minimum notice required for cancellations and what penalties will be imposed for those who cancel after the minimum notice.

- **No-Show Policies**. Determine what penalties will be assessed when passengers fail to show up at their scheduled time. These policies will likely be similar to the cancellation policies.

- **Driver Scheduling**. Develop procedures for scheduling drivers to specific routes. Pay attention to which drivers have CDLs and which drivers have been trained to work with specific customer groups.

It is particularly important that adequate and specific policies and procedures for maintenance are established, because many funding sources that pay for capital equipment will request a copy of the maintenance policies and procedures with their application.

Maintenance Policies and Procedures

Maintenance policies and procedures spell out how vehicles will be maintained and how major repairs will be handled. It is particularly important that adequate and specific maintenance policies and procedures are established because many funding sources that pay for capital equipment will request a copy of maintenance policies and procedures with their application.

- **Pre-Trip Inspections**. Pre-trip vehicle inspections by drivers are a way to keep problems from occurring and to keep small problems from becoming large problems that can be costly and dangerous. Establish policies for pre-trip inspections that detail what will be entailed in the inspection (e.g., checking fluids, tires, lights, and safety equipment) and how often drivers must perform the inspections (e.g., every trip, every other trip, once a day, or twice a week).

- **Preventative Maintenance**. Preventative maintenance includes oil and filter changes, tire rotations, and tune-ups. Develop a schedule for preventative maintenance detailing what procedures will take place and how often. Also determine who will perform the service. Will it be done in-house or at an auto shop? Is there a contract with a local auto shop to provide preventative maintenance service? Are the vehicles eligible for warranty service?

- **Major Maintenance**. Major maintenance includes large repairs, unscheduled repairs, and emergency repairs. Determine where these repairs will take place: either in-house or at a contracted facility. Is there a dollar limit for repairs?

Passenger Accounting Policies and Procedures

When contracting with human service agencies, passenger accounting procedures will be the key to ensuring that each agency is billed appropriately for the rides the consolidated system provides.

Passenger accounting procedures will be the key to ensuring that each agency is billed appropriately for the rides the consolidated system provides.

- **Eligibility**. Eligibility involves determining which passengers are authorized to use the system for various programs and ensuring that only eligible passengers use the system. Confirming the eligibility of passengers should be the responsibility of the agency sponsoring the rides. In turn, they should provide the consolidated system with frequently updated lists of eligible passengers. Decide whether dispatchers or drivers will determine if the passengers they are picking up are on the eligible passengers list.

- **Record Keeping**. Drivers will need to keep a list of the passengers that they pick-up and the length and duration of their rides. The details of the passenger log kept by the driver will be dependent upon the manner in which agencies are billed for their customers' rides; for example, if charging by trip regardless of length, there is no need to record the passenger's trip length. (may still be done for evaluation purposes.)

- **Billing**. Compile passenger logs and bill each agency according to the rate structure set. Prepare invoices that will meet the billing data needs of the participants in the system. Set a billing schedule, typically monthly, determining the dates invoices will be sent out, on which days payments will be due, and the nature of penalties for late payments.

Hire Operational Staff

As the consolidated system approaches implementation,, begin to hire the operational staff. Assign the hiring responsibility to a sub-committee of the planning board.

Give employees previously involved in transportation orperations with participating agencies the opportunity to apply for positions in the new consolidated system. This loyalty will be good for morale, but more importantly, it will aid the new system by employing members who are already familiar with the services and clients in the area.

Give employees previously involved in transportation operations with participating agencies the opportunity to apply for positions in the new consolidated system.

The operations staff will be responsible for hiring subordinate positions. Again, give preference to those who have been working with the transportation services previously provided by the participating agencies in the consolidation program.

If it is planned to contract out the management and operations of the program to another agency, such as a private management firm, use a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to solicit offers.

Notify Funding Sources

All funding sources should have been notified in the Planning/Budgeting Phase of the plan to form a consolidated system. Contact all relevant funding sources to inform them of the implementation of the consolidated transportation system.

Now What?

At this point, the steps for planning for consolidation should be completed. It is time to move on to Chapter 7 – Implementation, which will illustrate how to put theconsolidation plan into action.

Chapter Summary

The first step in establishing a consolidated transportation system is to institute the administrative entity to manage the system. There are two choices:

- An existing entity such as
    - Transit providers,
    - Human service providers,
    - Local government, or
    - Private providers;
- Or a new entity in the form of
    - A private, non-profit corporation, or
    - An Urban Transportation District.

Next, develop a capital needs plan for the system. Iidentify your current and future needs for:

- Vehicles;
- Vehicle Painting and Lettering;
- Communications Equipment;
- Computers (Hardware and Software);
- Buildings, Storage Space, and Office Space; and
- Office Furniture and Equipment.

Complete budgets for the consolidated system, including a:

- Start-up budget,
- First-year budget, and
- Long-term budget.

Budgets for transportation systems typically fall into three categories:

- Administrative,
- Operating, and
- Capital.

The start-up budget will include all of the initial expenses that occur before the system is implemented and becomes operational.

The first-year budget will list, by line item, all expected revenues and expenses for the first year of the consolidated system's operation.

- Start by estimating system expenses for each of the three categories.
    - Capital expenses may include vehicles, communications equipment, office equipment, land, and buildings.
    - Administrative expenses may include salaries, facilities, phones, insurance (non-vehicle), office supplies, professional services, marketing, and travel.
    - Operating expenses may include driver salaries, fuel, vehicle licensing, maintenance, vehicle insurance, communications equipment, and training.
- Estimate system revenues. They may come from:
    - Contract services,
    - Direct grants,
    - Passenger fares,
    - Community contributions,
    - In-kind contributions, and/or
    - Other revenues.
- Put this information into a formal budget format.

Developing a long-term budget will follow procedures similar to those for developing a first-year budget.

Set contract rates and passenger fares.

- Contract rates should be set to recover full operating costs.
- Passenger fares for the general public are typically set to encourage patronage.

Standard operating procedures must be set for the consolidated system. These will include procedures for:

- Service and administration,
- Driver procedures,
- Trip scheduling,
- Maintenance, and
- Passenger Accounting.

Hire the operations staff and inform funding sources that the consolidated system is ready to begin operations.

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Part

C

Implementation and Evaluation

The chapters in Part C contain instructions on implementing and evaluating the coordinated transportation system that was planned in Part B.

Chapter 7: Implementation

In Part B, a plan was developed for a coordinated transportation system. Chapter 7 gives instructions and resources for implementing that plan.

Chapter 8: Evaluation

Chapter 8 details the measures and procedures that can be used as tools for evaluating and monitoring the success of a system once it has been implemented.

Chapter 9: Funding Sources

Chapter 9 lists many of the state, federal, and private funding sources available for transportation, along with eligibility and application information.

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Chapter

7

Implementation

Chapter 7 contains instructions and issues for implementing the coordinated transportation system that was planned in Part B.

When the planning process has been completed, it is time to implement the new coordination program. This chapter discusses some of the issues faced during the implementation of a new coordination program.

Develop an Implementation Plan

Depending on the complexity of the coordination plans, implementation could take as little as a few months or as long as a year or more.

For larger and more complex coordination programs, consider hiring a consultant to assist in implementation.

Depending on the complexity of the coordination plans, implementation could take as little as a few months or as long as a year or more.

Confirm Participation

Before taking any major steps towards the implementation of the coordination program, solicit one final confirmation of participation from each participating member. Allow all participants to look over the materials gathered in the written plan. Avoid a situation in which the participants in the program back out in the middle of implementation as a result of misunderstandings about the nature of the coordination program.

Throughout the implementation process, the goal should be to make the transition from uncoordinated services to coordinated services as smooth as possible.

Continuity of Service

Throughout the implementation process, the goal should be to make the transition from uncoordinated services to coordinated services as smooth as possible. When implementing only small changes, this should not be difficult. However, when implementing large changes, such as vehicle joint use or total consolidation, there are bound to be some disruptions to the normal routine. The goal is to minimize these disruptions to the greatest extent possible.

Generating negative first impressions for the coordination program upon implementation of the new system can create lasting damage that may take years to overcome. The best way to prevent this is to prepare customers for possible glitches and problems beforehand. Most people will understand that the initiation of a new system will involve some preliminary wrinkles to be ironed out. If they are prepared for this and have not been given unrealistic promises about levels of service that will be offered, public relations problems may be avoided or mitigated.

Phased Implementation

When undertaking more complex changes, particularly vehicle joint use arrangements, consider phased implementation. Phased implementation is the process of executing a coordination program a few activities at a time or including few organizations at a time. Phased implementation can have the benefit of simplifying the process, resulting in fewer complications to deal with when moving toward coordination. Phased implementation will give participants and practice in the early phases of implementation, so that they will be more prepared to deal with the potential challenges encountered in the latter phases of implementation.

Implementation Schedule

The implementation plan details the tasks, determined during the planning phases, necessary to putting the coordination program into action. At this point, it is possible to estimate the duration of each task and determine the order in which the tasks should be completed. From this information, create an implementation schedule.

A simplified implementation schedule might look something like this:

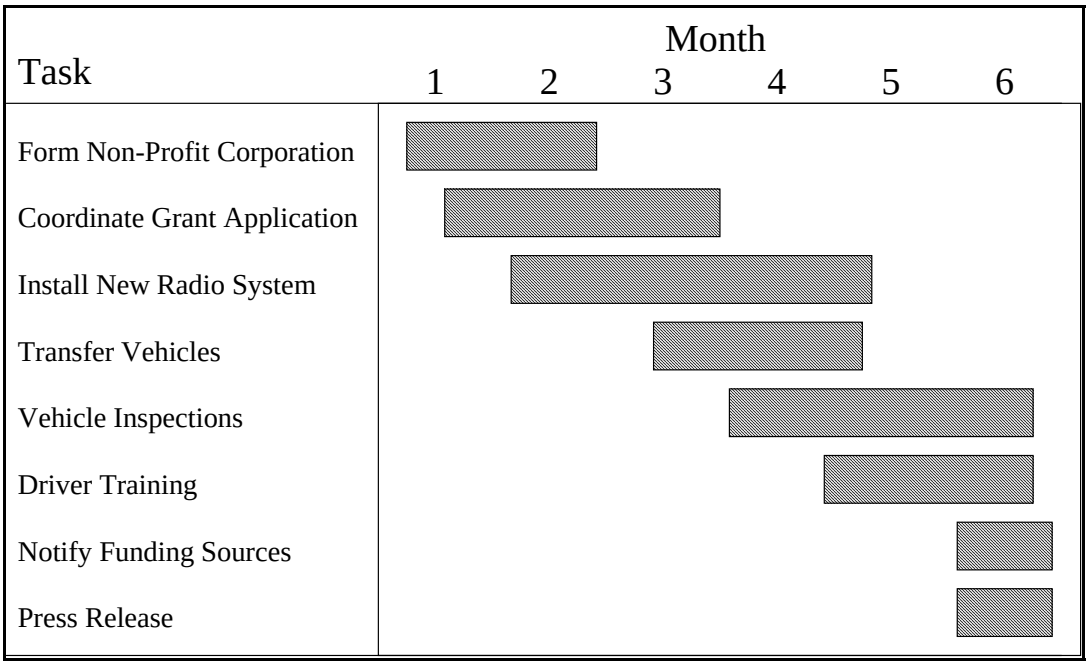

Figure 7: Sample Implementation Schedule

Notice how the tasks overlap. Your implementation schedule will likely be longer. It will also be helpful to break down the main tasks into subtasks on the schedule to give a more accurate picture of what specifically needs to be done.

Responsibilities

Assign responsibilities for each task in accordance with the implementation plan. Make sure participants are clear about the tasks and subtasks for which they are responsible. You may wish to develop an assignment roster listing all tasks and subtasks and the participants who are responsible for each.

Make sure participants are clear about the tasks and subtasks for which they are responsible.

PSC Licensing and Regulations

The Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) is responsible for licensing any carriers providing transportation services in Montana. The following possible coordination participants are exempt from PSC licensing requirements:

There are specific rules regarding which transportation providers are exempt from PSC regulations.

- Urban transportation districts created under MCA 7-14-2;
- Municipal bus services created under MCA 7-14-44;
- Car pool or van pool services with 15 or fewer passengers per vehicle, provided that the drivers are members of the car pool or van pool; and
- State agencies.

Follow these guidelines, provided by MDT.

- If the operator is a private nonprofit that transports only seniors and persons with disabilities, PSC authority is **not** required.
- If the operator is a private nonprofit that provides transportation to anyone else in the community other than seniors and persons with disabilities, whether under contract or not, PSC authority **is** required.
- If the operator is a private or public nonprofit that provides transportation to the general public, PSC authority **is** required.
- If the City or County Commission designates the operator as the transportation provider for the city and/or county, **and** the operator is a city or county employee, PSC authority is **not** required.
- If the operator is under contract to provide transportation for the city/county, even if the city/county designates the contractor as the transit provider for the area and the operator is not an employee of the city/county, PSC authority **is** required.

For those not exempt from Public Service Commission certification, PSC regulations can be a challenge to coordination in Montana. Those organizations that are not exempt from PSC certification must follow the regulations, outlined in Title 69, Chapter 12 of Montana Code, specified for motor carriers in Montana.

There are four classes of Motor Carriers defined in MCA 69-12-301.

- **Class A** motor carriers include all motor carriers operating between fixed termini or over a regular route and under regular rates or charges, based upon either station-to-station rates or upon a mileage rate or scale.
- **Class B** motor carriers include all motor carriers operating under regular rates or charges based upon either station-to-station rates or upon a mileage rate or scale and not between fixed termini or over a regular route.

- **Class C** motor carriers include all motor carriers where the cost is fixed in and the transportation service furnished under a contract, charter, agreement, or undertaking.

- **Class D** motor carriers include all motor carriers operating motor vehicles transporting garbage.

A coordinated transportation operator will need to apply to operate as either a class A or B carrier. An example of a Class A motor carrier would be a fixed-route bus system, while a Class B motor carrier would be a door-to-door, demand responsive system. The final determination of motor carrier class will be made by the PSC.

The final determination of motor carrier class will be made by the PSC.

Applications must be completed with the PSC. The application fee is $100. The application requires information regarding the applicant's business name, the services that are proposed, and why they feel there is a need for this service. Applicants are also required to include affidavits from proposed customers supporting the need for the service in the area. Upon filing the application, applicants must place legal notices in the newspapers serving their proposed service area, giving opportunity for public comment and protest.

If there are no protests, the application will typically be granted within 45 days. If there are protests, a hearing will be held in which each side presents evidence to support their claims. If a hearing is held, only evidence presented in the hearing will be used to make a determination regarding the approval of the application.

If there are protests, a hearing will be held in which each side presents evidence to support their claims.

Motor Carrier regulations in Montana require that any agreement "between or among two or more carriers relating to rates, fares, classifications, divisions, allowances, or charges (including charges between carriers and compensation paid or received for the use of facilities and equipment) or rules pertaining thereto or procedures for the joint consideration, initiation, or establishment thereof" must be approved by the Public Service Commission.

For more information on PSC licensing, or to request an application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, contact the PSC (see Chapter 11 for contact information).

ADA Requirements

The guiding principle behind the ADA's transportation requirements is that individuals with disabilities have equal access to transportation services as individuals without disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed into law in 1990, and has had a profound impact on public transportation services across the country. All transportation providers are required to be in compliance with ADA requirements. Both public and private transportation providers are required to follow the regulations of the ADA. The guiding principle behind the ADA's transportation requirements is that individuals with disabilities have equal access to transportation services as individuals without disabilities. The requirements of the ADA take into consideration the differing needs and circumstances of small and large providers and of demand responsive and fixed route systems. The guiding principle, however, remains the same. ADA requirements are not to be viewed as standards for implementation; rather, they are the minimum requirements. The Federal Transit Administration is responsible for the administration of ADA regulations for transportation providers.

The ADA requires that vehicles be equipped with accessibility functions as outlined in the rest of this section. The ADA also requires that transit providers serving the general public with fixed route service must provide complementary paratransit service for those who are not able to access the general public system. Paratransit service must operate during the same service hours as the general public service and must cover the same service area. The paratransit service can be strictly demand responsive, regardless of the function of the general public service. Customers must be able to make reservations during regular business hours, up to the day before they request service. The complementary service can charge up to double the cost of the fixed route. If additional services are offered, more can be charged, as long as the basic, complementary service is still available at the lower rate.

Any new vehicle purchased by a transportation provider must meet ADA requirements.

Any new vehicle purchased by a transportation provider must meet ADA requirements and any old vehicle being rebuilt to increase its usable life by five years or more must be retrofitted to meet ADA requirements to the extent that it is physically possible. Demand responsive systems are not required to purchase all ADA compliant vehicles as long as the system as a whole offers equivalent levels of service.

For a full outline of ADA requirements for transit systems, consult the Access Board's Technical Assistance Manual online (http://www.access-board.gov/transit/manuals/Manuals-list.htm) or contact the Access Board directly (see Chapter 11 for contact information).

Vehicles and Maintenance

When implementing any sort of vehicle joint use or joint maintenance programs that will affect the manner in which vehicles are kept and maintained, ensure that available vehicle and maintenance resources are adequate to handle the new system.

Ensure that available vehicle and maintenance resources are adequate to handle the new system.

Prior to the final launch of the coordination program, take stock of all of the vehicles and maintenance resources the program will have available. While the vehicle rosters collected during the initial data gathering phase gave an indication of the condition of each vehicle, have all vehicles inspected by a mechanic to ensure that they are in good operating condition and that they meet the safety standards of the coordination program. Complete the inspections with enough advance time that any vehicles with maintenance problems can be fixed before the system is launched.

Another important consideration is whether the maintenance program of the coordination system is able to handle the increased needs of the new coordinated fleet. If maintenance is contracted out, update maintenance contracts with the size, condition, and maintenance standards of the new fleet. Make sure that the maintenance shop with which the system is contracting has the resources to meet the system's maintenance needs in a timely fashion. If maintenance is performed in-house, ensure that the maintenance shop has the necessary resources. Are there enough mechanics to fulfill the routine and emergency maintenance requirements? Does the shop have enough space to house all the vehicles that need to be fixed? Are the tools and parts inventory adequate for the requirements of the new program?

If maintenance is contracted out, update maintenance contracts with the size, condition, and maintenance standards of the new fleet.

If a maintenance plan for the system has not yet been developed, do so now. Many grant programs that fund vehicle purchases will require that maintenance plans are included in the grant application.

Drivers

Drivers are one of the most important assets of any transportation system. Not only do they operate the vehicles, they also represent the main contact most of the customers will have with the transportation system.

Hiring

Before hiring additional drivers, determine the qualifications that will be required. If large portions of the system's vehicles hold 16 passengers or more, a commercial driver's license (CDL) will likely be a requirement. Requiring a CDL will help avoid the difficulties surrounding scheduling non-CDL drivers to smaller vehicles. Determine what other training drivers will need to have before being employed in the system and what training will be provided to drivers when they are hired. Drivers

with experience working with some or all of the customer groups that the system will be serving may also be favored.

Wages and Benefits

Ensure that there is not a great disparity in wages for drivers in the coordinated system.

There are several factors to consider when determining wages and benefits for drivers. When hiring drivers from the previous system, base wages upon the rates that the drivers were previously paid. However, ensure that there is not a great disparity in wages for drivers in the coordinated system. Consider both wages and benefits. For instance, drivers in one system may have higher wages but lower benefits, such as insurance or retirement plans. Great disparities in pay across the coordinated system can be a source of resentment to those drivers on the lower end of the scale, and this resentment will likely be transmitted to the customers of the system. Other transportation systems of similar size and purpose across Montana and the region can be good sources to determine an equitable wage scale for drivers.

Training

Training for drivers will help ensure a safe and pleasant transportation experience for passengers. Some training will be mandated by law, and other training will help the system to receive better insurance coverage or discounts. The main types of training include:

- **Driver Training**. Driver training may include basic driving skills, defensive driving skills, and training for specific types of vehicles.

- **CDL Training**. All drivers of vehicles designed to carry 16 or more passengers, including the driver, must have a CDL, which requires more than basic driving skills. To pass the CDL test, individuals must show specialized knowledge required for driving larger vehicles. CDL training will prepare drivers for the CDL test.

Training for employees should be considered an investment in the transportation system.

- **Sensitivity/Special Needs Training**. When coordinating with providers serving groups with different special needs, it may be necessary to train drivers from other providers on the special needs of all the groups that will be served by the coordinated system. In addition, overall sensitivity training may be desired.

- **First Aid/CPR Training**. Basic first aid or CPR training can be a part of the risk management plan. Training drivers in these skills can help save lives or reduce injuries in the case of an accident or medical emergency.

- **Drug and Alcohol Training**. Drug and alcohol training are mandated for programs receiving FTA funds or for drivers holding CDLs.

- **Refresher Courses**. From time to time, it may be necessary to hold refresher courses for any or all of the training programs discussed above.

Reservations, Scheduling, and Dispatching

Reservations, scheduling, and dispatching are three interrelated functions.

- **Reservations**. The reservation process involves passengers and agencies scheduling trips in advance, usually over the phone. The reservation process can take two forms: subscription and as-needed. Subscriptions should be arranged for rides that occur at a regular time between the same locations. As-needed rides are called in by customers or agencies only.

- **Scheduling**. Scheduling is the process of assigning passengers to vehicles and assigning vehicles to routes. Scheduling can be complex, depending on the types of service offered and the type of coordination program undertaken. The job of the scheduler is to create the schedule that best utilizes the resources of the transportation provider(s).

- **Dispatching**. Dispatching involves the communications between vehicles on the road and the main office or dispatching center. Dispatchers may help with routing and locations; they relay cancellation information to drivers and decide when to record passenger no-shows; and they are links between the driver and response personnel in the case of an emergency.

In small providers, the reservation, scheduling and dispatching functions are often handled by the same person, who may have other administrative functions as well.

Small providers often assign all of these functions to the same person, who may have other administrative functions as well.

Reservation, scheduling, and dispatching mechanisms must be compatible between all participating agencies when the coordination program involves vehicle joint-use arrangements. The reservation methods can be particularly complicated with vehicle joint use if all participating agencies take reservations from their own customers. Reservationists from all agencies must coordinate their scheduling each day. With subscription-only service, this is less of a problem, but with as-needed reservations, it can become a serious complication. The easiest solution is to designate one agency in the coordination program as the central contact for reservations and scheduling.

Another issue that must be resolved is how to get completed schedules to the drivers. This will depend on where drivers start the day. If all drivers start from the same location where reservations, scheduling, and dispatch occur, drivers can pick up their dispatch sheet (manifest) when they come to work in the mornings. If the vehicles are stored in a different site, such as a vehicle barn at another location, create a method of

communicating schedules between locations, such as fax machines, email, or secure web page.

Standardize communications mechanisms used by the dispatchers.

Standardize communication mechanisms used by the dispatchers. The participating agencies in the coordination program may use several different methods, such as two-way radio, cell phones, or pay phones on the road. With vehicle joint use, it is important that all agencies are able to communicate with all vehicles. Installing a two-way radio system to be shared by participating agencies is one solution. With this in place, it is possible to have either a central dispatching location for all agencies, or decentralized dispatching, in which each agency would have their own base station and their own "talk group," but all agencies would be connected to the entire radio system.

Risk Management

A comprehensive risk management plan is needed for any transportation provider.

Risk management includes all steps taken to ensure the safety of passengers and minimize the legal and financial liabilities of the transportation provider. A comprehensive risk management plan is needed for any transportation provider; insurance is one component. Other components include emergency plans and procedures, and a drug and alcohol testing policy. These issues will be discussed in the following sections.

Insurance

Insurance is one of the most complicated issues in implementing a coordinated transportation system. Consult with a risk management professional to assist in making any decisions regarding insurance for the coordinated system. Because of the wide number of possible insurance solutions for a wide variety of possible transportation programs, this section cannot provide all of the answers; rather, it is intended to provide the information needed to ask the right questions to determine which insurance options are right for the transportation system.

Insurance Options

There are essentially three options for insuring a coordinated transportation system.

- **Conventional**. Conventional insurance refers to the purchase of insurance through an insurance agency. Conventional insurance transfers the system's liability onto that agency in exchange for the payment of a premium. The premium will be dependent upon the risks the insurance agency feels that the transportation system holds.

The main drawbacks surrounding conventional insurance revolve around the cost. The costs of conventional insurance can be very high, particularly when the main passengers are seniors and/or persons with disabilities. With some conventional insurance providers, mixing passenger groups will raise the cost even higher. In addition to the high costs, insurance is a notoriously cyclical market. Insurance rates tend to rise as interests rate fall (the opposite is also true). In a hard insurance market (i.e., when interest rates have fallen as insurance rates rise), many transportation providers simply cannot afford to pay. In addition, if drivers have a low accident rate, it is probable that, over time, the total cost of the premiums will be greater than the total cost of liabilities.

The main drawbacks surrounding conventional insurance revolve around the cost.

Another problem specialized transportation providers have with conventional insurance is that it can be hard to find coverage that is tailored to a specific situation. Some insurers may be willing to cover only specific passenger groups; some insurers may be willing to cover only specific drivers. When using conventional insurance, be prepared to shop around. Some insurance agencies focus on providing insurance to specialized transportation providers and may be better suited to those needs.

The benefit with conventional insurance is that the premiums payed buy peace of mind and convenience. Purchasing insurance through an agency relieves the administrative burden of self-insurance or insurance pools; transferring liability to another agency ensures that liability will be covered.

- **Self-Insurance**. Self-insurance relies on the system having the financial solvency to assume its own liability costs. Self-insurance involves setting aside a certain amount of money into a fund to pay any claims that may arise. Because of the potential cost of claims, typically only large organizations can afford to self-insure. In Montana, to be able to self-insure automobiles, an organization must have at least 25 registered vehicles and be able to prove that it is capable of paying judgments.

Self-insurance relies on having the financial solvency to assume liability costs.

Self-insurance typically has the benefit of lower costs, as the system is only paying for its own liability, not financing the liability of all purchasing organizations, as is the case with conventional insurance and insurance pools. Self-insurance also has the benefit of avoiding the market instability inherent with conventional insurance. The cost of self-insurance is contingent upon the number of claims made.

The major downside of self-insurance is that it requires a large organization. Often, county and municipal governments self-insure; including them in the coordination program may be a way to take advantage of the benefits of self-insurance. Typically, self-insurers will also purchase Excessive Liability

insurance from a conventional carrier in case of the rare claims that their current resources could not pay.

Self-insurance also comes with the added administrative burden of dealing with claims within the organization. Some organizations that self-insure contract out the administration and claims handling of their self-insurance program.

Insurance pools typically function like small insurance companies.

- **Insurance Pools**. Insurance pools typically function like small insurance companies. Participants pay fees in order to receive coverage. Coverage limits are specified and deductibles are typically used. Insurance pool members are expected to participate over a long period of time. Cost benefits can be particularly good for a well-managed insurance pool.

  Insurance pools have similar benefits and drawbacks to self-insurance. With a large number of organizations participating in the insurance pool, there is potential to have a larger pool for claims than with self-insurance. Cost benefits and the benefit of avoiding the unstable insurance market remain with insurance pools.

  Like self-insurance, insurance pools have the drawbacks of the administrative burden of handling claims in-house and the need to purchase Excessive Liability insurance in case of extreme loss. In insurance pools, several organizations are needed to form the pool. This has the added drawback that, unlike with self-insurance, the system will be financing, in part, the liabilities of all participants in you're the pool. This can be a potentially serious drawback if any members of the pool have especially bad driving records.

Large and midsize transportation providers typically self-insure, whereas small providers typically purchase insurance from insurance companies.

Large and midsize transportation providers typically self-insure, whereas small providers typically purchase insurance from insurance companies. When determining which insurance option to use, first decide which factors are most important. Is cost the most important issue? Is minimizing administrative burden an important consideration? The following chart summarizes some of the key pros and cons of each of the three main insurance options.

Table 1: Insurance Options

Option	Pros	Cons
Conventional Insurance	• Level of coverage • Less administrative burden	• Cost • Unstable market • Paying for more than your liability • Finding suitable coverage
Self-Insurance	• Cost • Stability • Paying for only your own liability	• Large organization needed • Excess Insurance typically needed • Administrative burden
Insurance Pools	• Cost • Stability • Potentially larger fund than self-insurance	• Several organizations needed • Excess Insurance typically needed • Paying for other organizations' liability • Administrative burden • Long-term participation

Types of Insurance

When you think of insurance in the context of transportation systems, vehicle insurance most likely comes to mind. However, as with any business or organization, there are many hazards that the system may need to (or is required to) insure against. Some of the more common types of insurance that small transportation providers may require include:

When you think of insurance in the context of transportation systems, vehicle insurance most likely to come to mind. However, as with any business or organization, there are many hazards that the system may need to (or is required to) insure against.

- **Vehicle**. The law requires that all of the system's vehicles must be insured (minimum requirements are discussed in the next section.) Vehicle insurance can further be divided into several parts:
    - **Bodily Injury** insurance covers the medical expenses of passengers and of passengers in other vehicles.
    - **Liability** insurance covers property damage done to other vehicles in collisions in which the system's vehicles are at fault.
    - **Collision** insurance pays for damages done to the system's vehicles through accidents not caused by others. Although the law does not require collision insurance, if the system's vehicles are financed through a bank, the bank will likely require the coverage.

  - **Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist**. Though uninsured or underinsured motorist insurance is not required by law, insurance agencies offering vehicle coverage in Montana are required to offer it.

- **General Liability**. General liability insurance covers claims that may occur through the regular operation of the transportation system.

- **Building Liability**. Building liability protects the system from claims that arise out of liability attached to owning buildings.

- **Property Damage**. Property damage insurance covers loss or damage to any buildings or property owned by the system in the case of accidents or natural disasters.

- **Crime**. Crime insurance protects against the theft of the system's money or property.

- **Directors/Professional**. Directors and professional insurance may cover liability stemming from mistakes, negligence, and wrongful acts of the directors or staff of the transportation system.

- **Excess Liability**. Excess liability coverage is purchased to cover liability from incidents or accidents that go above and beyond the coverage of a regular policy. Excess liability insurance is typically purchased as a safeguard by self-insurers or members of insurance pools.

- **Unemployment and Workers Compensation**. If the coordinated system will have paid employees, unemployment and workers compensation insurance must be provided. These insurances are registered through the state and paid as payroll taxes.

Before purchasing any insurance policy, understand exactly what is covered by the specific policy being purchased.

These are typical types of insurance. Some policies may not cover everything discussed above. Before purchasing any insurance policy, understand exactly what is covered by the specific policy being purchased.

Legal Requirements

State laws and regulations govern the minimum requirements for insurance coverage for motor vehicles. The minimum requirements for insurance for motor vehicles are:

- $25,000 for bodily injury caused to one person,

- $50,000 for bodily injury caused to two or more people, and

- $10,000 for liability.

In addition to these requirements, the Public Service Commission has set regulations for insurance requirements for all motor carriers based on the seating capacity of the insured vehicle. The minimum requirements for bodily injury and property damage liability are as follows:

Table 2: Minimum Insurance Coverage

Seating Capacity	Minimum Coverage
7 or less	$100,000
8 to 15	$500,000
16 to 30	$750,000
31 or more	$5,000,000

Minimum vehicle insurance requirements are set by state law and by PSC regulations.

The exception to this rule is that any motor carrier certified to operate only within a particular city and up to a 10 mile radius around that city is required to carry a minimum of $500,000 insurance, regardless of the size of the vehicles used, except for seven passenger vans for which the requirement is the same as listed above.

Other Insurance Issues

Having a comprehensive risk management policy in place will help the organization when seeking insurance coverage. A sound risk management policy can help the system find lower overall insurance rates and more insurance options, as the organization will appear to be less of a risk to insure.

A sound risk management policy can help the system find lower overall insurance rates and more insurance options.

The coverage purchased should be automatic for all vehicles owned, leased, or hired (new vehicles should not have to be added to the policy as they are purchased).

Understand how the insurance company defines an occurrence, an incident, or an accident. For example, if there is an accident in which eight passengers are injured, is this one incident or eight?

Determine whether the vehicle insurance policy covers all drivers that will be operating the system's vehicles. It is very important that all possible drivers be covered. Look for policies that cover the vehicles, specifically, rather than specific drivers. If there are uniform training requirements in place for all drivers in the system, this should not be a problem.

When shopping for insurance, avoid policies with exclusions for charging fares, transporting non-agency clients, and making long distance trips.

Emergency Procedures

An important part of a risk management plan is having detailed procedures for accidents and emergencies.

An important part of a risk management plan is having detailed procedures for accidents and emergencies. Having these procedures in place and training employees for these procedures can make a difference in the event of an actual emergency. The following sections discuss emergency procedures that should be implemented.

Passenger Illness or Injury

This refers to passenger illness or injury not related to accidents. These policies are particularly important for transportation providers whose customers may already have some health problems. Procedures should cover:

- Notifying dispatch,
- Providing comfort and medical attention for sick or injured passengers, and
- Handling other passengers while awaiting assistance.

Basic first aid or CPR training may also come into play in passenger illness or injury procedures.

Driver Illness or Injury

Occasionally, drivers will also get sick or injured on the job. The following procedures should be in place for when this happens:

- Notifying dispatch,
- Providing necessary medical attention for the driver, and
- Obtaining a new driver for the vehicle.

Vehicle Mechanical Failure

A good preventative maintenance program will keep mechanical failures to a minimum. However, when transportation is your business, there is no way to altogether avoid breakdowns. Be prepared. Procedures should cover:

- Getting the vehicle out of traffic,
- Ensuring the safety of all passengers,
- Notifying dispatch--it should be dispatch's job to call a tow truck or other mechanical help and to secure another ride for passengers, and
- Securing the vehicle with flares, flashers, and reflectors.

A good preventative maintenance program minimizes mechanical breakdowns, and a thorough driver-training program will help keep accidents to a minimum. However, there is no way to altogether prevent mechanical breakdowns or accidents.

Accidents

Just as a good preventative maintenance program minimizes mechanical breakdowns, a thorough driver-training program will help keep accidents to a minimum. And like mechanical breakdowns, there is no way to prevent accidents altogether. Accident procedures should first address passenger safety, and then liability. They should cover:

- Getting the vehicle out of traffic, if possible;
- Getting passengers off the vehicle and ensuring passenger safety;
- Notifying dispatch. Dispatch will be responsible for notifying police, ambulances, tow trucks, and insurance providers, as necessary. The policy should make clear when each should be involved;
- Securing the vehicle with flares, flashers, and reflectors;
- Reporting the accident and completing paperwork; and
- Testing for drug and alcohol use, if required by law.

Drug and Alcohol Testing Requirements

Transportation providers need to be aware of two sets of federal regulations regarding drug testing of safety-sensitive employees.

Transportation providers need to be aware of two sets of federal regulations regarding drug testing of safety-sensitive employees. All agencies receiving funding through the Federal Transit Administration Section 5307, 5309, or 5311 programs must follow the FTA's drug and alcohol testing requirements (as specified in 49 CFR 655). All drivers in the system holding Commercial Driver's Licenses are subject to the drug and alcohol testing requirements set by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) (as specified in 49 CFR 382). The regulations are similar, but do contain some small differences. Agencies receiving FTA funding must comply with FTA regulations, but do not need to follow FMCSA regulations, regardless of whether or not they employ CDL holders. For agencies not receiving FTA funds, all CDL holders must be in compliance with FMCSA regulations. Individual CDL holders are responsible for the FMCSA standards, regardless of their employment status.

Only safety-sensitive employees must be included in the testing program. Safety-sensitive employees are those employees who drive, dispatch, or maintain revenue vehicles; those who are CDL holders, whether or not they drive revenue vehicles; and those who carry firearms. Volunteers are exempt from drug-testing requirements, provided that they receive no remuneration for their time (i.e., workfare, community service as an alternative to a criminal sentence, academic credit, or payment by another agency). Mileage reimbursements do not count as remuneration.

Consult the *Implementation Guidelines for Drug and Alcohol Regulations in Mass Transit* and *Best Practices Manual: FTA Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs* for complete details (Chapter 12).

Coordinating Drug Testing

Drug and alcohol testing can also be coordinated.

Drug and alcohol testing can also be coordinated. (For full details on coordinating drug and alcohol testing, see Chapter 11 of *Implementation Guidelines for Drug and Alcohol Regulations in Mass Transit*.) Coordination has two main benefits: lowering costs and reducing administrative burdens. Coordination of drug and alcohol testing can occur in two forms sanctioned by the FTA: consortia and third party administration. Consortia involve several agencies pooling the administration responsibilities of their drug testing policies. Third party administrators are outside vendors that perform all drug testing functions for their clients, including administration and record keeping. Coordination of drug and alcohol testing is particularly recommended for small transit agencies.

Evaluation Program

Focusing on the data analysis, Chapter 8 will discuss the various methods and measures to use when evaluating the success of the coordination program. However, before analyzing data, procedures for collecting valid data must be in place. Valid data requires thorough and accurate data collection.

Before analyzing data, procedures for collecting valid data must be in place. Valid data requires thorough and accurate data collection.

Data Collection Procedures

The first step in establishing the data collection procedure is determining the reporting requirements for the system. Based on these reporting needs, establish the types of raw data that are needed. (Consult Chapter 8 to learn more about the types of raw data that may be needed or the possibilities for reporting requirements.)

There are usually two sources for operational data gathering in a transportation system: the drivers and the dispatchers. In a small system, it is usually feasible for the driver to keep track of the necessary data on the vehicle log. Vehicle logs will typically contain information such as how many passengers were picked up, the agency sponsoring each passenger's ride, the time the passenger was picked up, the vehicle miles when the passenger was picked up, the time the passenger was dropped off, and the vehicle miles when the passenger was dropped off. Driver logs may need to contain some or all of this information depending upon the reporting requirements.

In addition to operational data, financial records will need to be consulted to determine the costs of operating the system.

When operating mainly subscription-based services, information such as the length and duration of trips will generally not vary, and can be calculated ahead of time. In such cases, drivers may only need to record deviations from the standard schedule as they surface.

When dispatchers are responsible for data gathering, their data gathering procedures will start with maintaining copies of daily driver schedules. Deviations in pick-up times, route mileage, or passenger counts can be radioed in by drivers for the dispatchers to note on their logs.

Standardize Data

It is *crucial* to standardize the data collected by drivers and dispatchers from each participating agency.

It is *crucial* to standardize the data collected by drivers and dispatchers from each participating agency. If agencies are collecting different types of data, the data gathered cannot be combined to form aggregate data for the whole coordination program, nor can the data be compared among the participating agencies.

Reporting Procedures

Finally, determine the reporting requirements for the coordinated transportation system. Identify the types of reports to be utilized and the frequency at which they will be generated. Use the following process to determine reporting requirements.

- Identify the reporting requirements for funding sources and any legal authorities or regulations that must be followed.

- Determine internal requirements for reporting. This may include monthly inventories for each agency and quarterly progress reports. These needs will be dependent upon the goals and policies of the coordination program.

When reporting needs have been determined, assign responsibilities for the creation of reports. Establish standard formats for reports, a list of recipients who will receive copies of particular reports, and deadlines for the completion of reports.

Communications

When the new corrdinated transportation system is ready to launch, publicize it.

When the new coordinated transportation system is ready to launch, publicize it. There are three main groups to whom communications should be directed:

- **Customers**. Keep customers updated about any changes that will affect their interactions with the system. Changes affecting customers may include different drivers on their vehicles, different numbers to call to make reservations, or different routes. While the goal when implementing the system should be to minimize any inconvenience to the customers, they will be more forgiving if they are notified before the changes occur and if they are informed about the benefits that will result from the coordinated system.

- **Funding Sources**. Keep funding sources informed of the progress of planning and implementing the coordinated system. Keeping in touch with funding sources throughout the process will help to maximize funding potential and avoid any misunderstandings when the program is implemented.

- **General Public**. Whether or not the system will serve the general public, it is a good idea, for the sake of good will, to inform the community of the purpose and progress of the coordination program, as well as the benefits of the program for customers and the community as a whole. Press releases to local newspapers and television stations, and opening ceremonies in which participating organizations, local elected officials and members of the media are invited are ways to publicize the new coordination program.

  If the system will be serving the general public, it is especially important that the public be notified. In addition to notifying the public about the opening date, publicize how to access the system, the fares, and the routes and service area. Not knowing how to access public transportation is one of the most common reasons that people cite for not using the services available. Educating the public on how to access the system will be an ongoing process.

If the system will be serving the general public, it is especially important that the public be notified about the opening date, how to access the system, the fares, and the routes and service area.

Chapter Summary

Develop a plan for implementation of service.

- Confirm participation of all agencies before embarking upon implementation.
- The goal is to have a smooth transition to the coordination program.
- Phased implementation can ease the transition process.
- Show all tasks and subtasks to be completed in the implementation schedule. Tasks can overlap.
- Clearly assign responsibilities for all activities.

Motor carriers must be licensed by the Public Service Commission in Montana. Exemptions are available for:

- Private non-profit organizations carrying seniors and persons with disabilities,
- Urban Transportation Districts,
- Municipal Bus Services,
- Car pools and van pools, and
- State agencies.

Applications must be made with the PSC.

- There is a $100 fee.
- Public notice is required.
- Hearings are required if there are any public protests.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will affect services and how vehicles are equipped.

- The guiding principle behind ADA is the provision of comparable services.
- Vehicles must meet specific accessibility requirements.

Review maintenance requirements and vehicle condition before implementation.

- All vehicles should be inspected prior to implementation.
- Maintenance arrangements must be sufficient to meet the needs of the coordination program.
- Develop a maintenance plan.

Consider the following suggestions when hiring and training drivers.

- Give preference to drivers from the previous system.
- Provide comparable wages for all drivers in the coordinated system.
- Training is an investment. The training program may include: driver training, CDL training, sensitivity training, first aid training, and drug and alcohol training.

For reservations, scheduling, and dispatching:

- Make arrangements compatible between all participating agencies.
- Central scheduling and a single two-way radio system are popular solutions.

Insurance, one of the major challenges in transportation coordination, can be addressed in three ways:

- Conventional insurance is purchased from an agent and transfers your liability to that agent. The benefit is reduced administrative burden; the downside is cost.
- Self-insurance hinges on having the financial solvency to assume liability costs. The benefit is paying only for the system's liability; the downside is the administrative burden.
- Insurance pools involve several organizations paying into a fund to cover their liability. The benefit is the low cost; the downside is increased administrative burden.

Things to consider when making decisions concerning insurance needs include:

- Beyond vehicle insurance, general liability, building liability, property damage, crime, directors/professional, excess liability, and unemployment and workers compensation insurance may be needed.
- State law sets the absolute minimum requirements for motor vehicle insurance. Agencies regulated by the PSC are held to higher requirements.
- When purchasing insurance, shop around for the most competitive rates and understand exactly what is being purchased.

Having emergency procedures in place is an important part of a risk management plan. Have procedures for:

- Passenger illness or injury,
- Driver illness or injury,
- Vehicle mechanical failure, and
- Accidents.

The FTA and FMCSA have drug and alcohol testing requirements.

- Agencies receiving FTA Section 5307, 5309, or 5311 funds are responsible for following the FTA's drug testing guidelines, as specified in 49 CFR 655.
- All drivers holding CDL's are subject to the testing requirements set by the FMCSA, as specified in 49 CFR 382.
- Agencies that receive these FTA funds and employ drivers with CDL's should defer to the FTA regulations.

In preparation for data collection:

- Determine what data needs to be collected and who will collect it,
- Ensure data collection is standardized between agencies, and
- Decide what reports will need to be prepared.

When implementation is complete and the system is ready to be launched, communicate with key groups:

- Prepare current customers for the changes in the system.
- Keep funding sources up to date of progress.

- Notify the general public for goodwill purposes. If serving the general public, educate them on how to access the system.

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Chapter

8

Evaluation

Chapter 8 contains instructions for evaluating the progress and success of the coordinated transportation system.

Once the coordinated transportation system has been planned, implemented, and is fully functioning, it is necessary to monitor and evaluate the progress and success of the program. This chapter focuses on how to turn the raw data that has been collected into useful measures of effectiveness and how to use those measures to set goals and priorities for the program's future.

Evaluating Data

Data can be evaluated over a period of time, measured by weeks, months, quarters, or fiscal years. The essential process of evaluating data involves:

- Determining goals and reporting needs,
- Determining the measures of effectiveness used to track these goals,
- Comparing these measures of effectiveness over a period of time and with other similar systems, and
- Adjusting goals.

Determining Goals and Reporting Needs

The raw data collected and procedures used for collecting that data should be determined by the measures of effectiveness that need to be calculated. The measures of effectiveness to be calculated will be determined by the system's reporting needs. Reporting needs can be established through the following steps.

- First and foremost, consult funding sources requirements. At the very minimum, collect enough data to meet the reporting requirements for all of the system's funding sources.

- Second, determine the data and measures of effectiveness that will need to be calculated for management and operational purposes on a day-to-day basis.

- Third, isolate the data and measures of effectiveness that are needed for long-range planning. What information will be needed to review the system's current goals and to set goals for the upcoming year? What about for the next five years? Long range planning, through five-year Transportation Development Plans (TDPs), is a requirement of the FTA Section 5311 funding program.

- Finally, decide if there are any additional data and measures of effectiveness that are needed for advocacy purposes. One of the best ways to encourage participation in coordinated transportation is to be able to back up claims about benefits with numbers from coordination programs already in operation.

Determining the Measures of Effectiveness Used

The following table lists some common goals for improvement in a coordinated transportation system and measures of effectiveness that can be used to gauge success:

Table 3: Goals and Measures of Effectiveness

Goals	Measures of Effectiveness	Data Sources
Increased Service Efficieny (Overall)	• Trips per Mile/Hour/Operating Day/ Vehicle Operating Day (+) • Miles/Hours per Vehicle Operating Day (+)	Vehicle Logs
Increased Vehicle Capacity per Trip	• Trips per Revenue Mile/Hour (+)	Vehicle Logs
Decreased Deadhead	• Trips per Revenue Mile/Hour (+)	Vehicle Logs
Decreased Travel Time	• Average Trip Length (-) • Average Trip Time (-)	Vehicle Logs
Decreased Costs	• Cost per Trip/Mile/Hour (-) • Revenue per Trip/Mile/Hour (+) • Deficit per Trip/Mile/Hour (-)	Vehicle Logs, Financial Records
Increased Provision of Trips/Rides	• Total Trips/Rides (+)	Vehicle Logs
Better Quality Service	• Complaints per 1,000 Trips (-) • Accidents per 10,000 Trips (-)	Vehicle Logs, Incident Records, Customer Service Records

Not all goals can be tracked using the measures of effectiveness listed in this chapter. For instance, goals to increase service area or service hours could not be measured by calculating average trip time or length.

Comparing Measures of Effectiveness

In order to determine if the coordination program has benefits beyond previously uncoordinated transportation in the area, compare data from the current coordination program to data from the period prior to coordination. If current participants in the coordination program had poor data collection procedures prior to joining the program, it may be difficult or impossible to compare some or all measures of effectiveness. Standardized data collection should begin during the planning phases, so there will be at least a minimum data set regarding operations of the previously uncoordinated system.

Even when comparing data from the current system to data from the system in operation prior to the coordination program, ensure that the data being compared are measuring the same thing. Otherwise, any comparisons are meaningless. For example, two cost-per-trip measures--one referring to total costs, the other to operating costs--could not be adequately or effectively compared because the points of

comparison are not the same. The measure with total cost would probably be higher as it includes administrative and capital costs as well as operating costs.

With the initial set of data, it may be difficult to determine if these numbers indicate that the program is successful, particularly if the data collected prior to the implementation of the coordination program was of poor quality. Likewise, with the extensive variability possible in such factors as customer groups served, service provided, and service area covered, defining a universal set of numbers indicating "good" or "bad" performance is nearly impossible.

A rural transportation system providing fewer rides and covering more miles could be more efficient than an urban system providing more rides and covering fewer miles. A transportation system serving mobility-challenged passengers in which the drivers assist the passengers from their door to the vehicles may have comparably lower vehicle miles per hour and higher average trip length than a system serving mostly ambulatory individuals with curbside pickup, and yet, may be operating just as efficiently.

If good data was collected from the transportation provided prior to the implementation of the coordination program, then evaluating the success of the transportation program will be possible beginning shortly after implementation. If poor quality or insufficient data is all that is available, as is often the case, initial evaluative efforts will have to rely on estimates and qualitative impressions until higher quality data has been collected. For this reason, standardized data collection should begin during the planning phases, so that there will be at least a minimum of data regarding operations of the uncoordinated system.

Evaluating data involves comparing numbers from one time period to numbers from another time period. For instance, when numbers measuring cost-per-trip decrease and numbers measuring trips-per-operating-day increase, the numbers indicate progress. Pay attention to numbers relating to the current goals of the transportation system. As an example, if a goal is to increase service by decreasing the time passengers spend on vehicles, average trip time will decrease over time as the system shows progress toward its goals. However, if a goal is to increase the service area of your transportation system, average trip time may increase over time as a result of the increased distances vehicles travel.

It is also possible to compare the measures of effectiveness of a transportation system with those of similar transportation systems in Montana or in other states. Because no two transportation systems are exactly the same, the comparisons made with other transportation systems will be relative comparisons. It is best to compare against several similar systems to obtain a more accurate picture of current standards of performance. The idea is to see if the system's measures of effectiveness are similar with those of similar providers.

It is also possible to compare the measures of effectiveness of the transportation system with those of similar transportation systems in Montana or in other states.

Measures of effectiveness in the same range as similar providers in the region indicate that the system is probably performing in line with accepted standards. Small variances in measures may be related to the nature of the services provided by the system, for instance a fixed route system may be less expensive to operate than a door-to-door system operating at similar capacities. If measures vary greatly, the difference is more likely to be accounted for by performance disparities. If one system's cost per ride is substantially higher than other systems' cost per ride, this may indicate that this system needs to work harder to improve efficiency of service. On the other hand, if one system's cost per ride is substantially lower that other systems' cost per ride, this may indicate that this system is performing with very high efficiency, that the systems being compared are operating with low efficiency, or both. The Montana Transit Association, Montana Transportation Partnership, MDT, or DPHHS may be sources of information on similar systems in the state.

Adjusting Goals

When planning for the coordinated transportation program began in Chapter 3, one of the key steps in the Initial Planning Phase was setting the goals for the program. The goals set were based on the weaknesses of the uncoordinated transportation system and the expansion and improvement of service to be obtained through coordination. Setting goals for a coordination program is an ongoing process. When implementation is complete and data has been collected for a few months, the extent to which the program is showing progress towards the original goals should be apparent.

Setting goals for the coordination program is an ongoing process.

Schedule time with the participating organizations on a regular basis (quarterly, semi-annually, yearly) to review the progress of current goals and to determine if new goals should be set. With good data collection and evaluation procedures, a good picture of what is working and what needs improvement will emerge. The process for setting goals after the program has been implemented is similar to the process during the Initial Planning Phase.

- Determine the deficiencies in the current transportation system.
- Determine areas for expansion.

- Prioritize the list of deficiencies and expansion proposals.
- Set goals and plans of action based on the prioritized list.

Reporting

Generating reports is the most effective way to keep track of the progress of the coordination program.

Generating reports is the most effective way to keep track of the progress of the coordination program. With spreadsheets, reports only need to be prepared once, and then can be generated automatically as raw data is entered. Reports should be generated over a standard time period, such as weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly, or some combination of these. Each report should list all of the measures of effectiveness being tracked. A sample (shortened) report might look like this:

Table 4: Sample Report

	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
Cost per Trip	$9.11	$8.57	$9.01	$8.48
Cost per Mile	$0.91	$0.86	$0.90	$0.85
Recovery Ratio	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.27
Trips per Operating Day	203	208	195	226
Average Trip Time	0.32 hours	0.28 hours	0.30 hours	0.27 hours

Using a Spreadsheet

Computer spreadsheets help to mitigate the difficulty of data collection.

For many human services agencies providing transportation as an ancillary service, tracking data is an extra burden. Computer spreadsheets help to mitigate the difficulty of data collection. While they won't eliminate the work of data entry, they will make generating any number of reports much simpler.

All computer office suites come equipped with a spreadsheet program that will perform these tasks. If the cost of office software seems prohibitive, there are many fully functional, low-priced (and even free) alternatives that will work just as well for these purposes. Many integrated dispatching and passenger accounting software packages will also be able to handle data collection and report generation needs. For more information on applicable computer software, see the internet links in Chapter 12.

Raw Data

Raw data typically falls into two categories: monetary and service provided.

All data collection starts with the input of raw data. Raw data is used to calculate the various measures of effectiveness. Ensure that the definitions of the raw data being collected by each participant in the coordination program are the same. *Data among*

all participants should be uniform. Raw data typically falls into two categories: monetary and service provided.

Monetary

Monetary data measures the revenue and costs of the transportation system. The success of the coordination program will be judged, on many fronts, by the improvement of the financial situation.

Total Revenue

Total revenue is the money coming into the system from all sources, including farebox revenues, contract revenues, state and federal grants, and charitable donation. The value of in-kind contributions should also be accurately determined and included in total revenue.

Passenger Revenue

Passenger revenue includes all income from those paying for transportation services. Passenger revenue includes farebox income, customer donations, and contract income.

Total Costs and Operating Costs

Cost data is typically expressed as either total system costs or operating costs.

Some transportation systems and funding programs prefer to look at operating costs. For the purpose of the MDT TransADE program, operating costs are defined as "those costs directly related to system operations. The following items must be considered operating expenses: driver's salaries and fringe benefits, dispatcher salaries and fringe benefits, fuel, oil, tires, tubes, purchased transportation and casualty and liability costs."

Some transportation systems and funding programs prefer to look at operating costs. For the purpose of the MDT TransADE program, operating costs are defined as "those costs directly related to system operations."

Total costs include operating costs, capital expenditures, and administrative costs for providing transportation. For many human services agencies that only provide transportation as an ancillary service, figuring total costs can be tricky. Administrators may only work on transportation part-time, so how can the percentage of their wages that counts toward the cost of transportation be calculated? If the organization does not keep detailed records of the amount of time spent on each task, estimate. For instance, if a manager makes $2000 per month and spends 20% of his or her time on transportation, $400 per month would be applied toward the total cost of transportation.

Service Provided

Service provided data reflect the quantity and quality of the transportation the organization provides. Service provided data include the number of trips provided, the

miles and hours vehicles were in operation, and quality data, such as the number of accidents and complaints reported.

Trips Provided

A "round trip" for one passenger would count as two trips.

The term "trip" refers to a one-way passenger trip. One passenger embarking at a source and disembarking at a destination counts as one trip. A "round trip" for one passenger would count as two trips. Likewise, if seven passengers get on a bus at the nursing home and get off of a bus at the group meal site, that counts as seven trips.

Demographics and Trip Purpose

When keeping track of customer trips, if possible or practical, keep track of customer demographics and trip purposes. Demographics may include customer groups such as seniors, persons with disabilities, children and low-income. Trip purposes may include such reasons as medical, employment, education, and nutrition.

Demographic and trip purpose data may be needed for funding sources targeted towards specific customer groups. It may also be useful to forecast demand for certain services in the future or the need for specific equipment, such as more wheelchair accessible spaces in the fleet.

Passenger or Revenue Miles

All miles with passengers are typically considered revenue miles in human services transportation settings because, although passengers may not be paying a fare for the ride, the transportation is being subsidized through some source or another.

Passenger or revenue miles are the miles vehicles are driven with passengers. All miles with passengers are typically considered revenue miles in human services transportation settings because, although passengers may not be paying a fare for the ride, the transportation is being subsidized through one source or another.

Total Miles

Total miles include the miles vehicles are driven with and without passengers. Miles driven without passengers, such as from the vehicle storage location to the first pick-up of the day, are known as deadhead miles. Deadhead miles can be calculated by subtracting revenue miles from total miles:

Deadhead Miles = Total Miles – Revenue Miles

Passenger or Revenue Hours

Like passenger or revenue miles, passenger or revenue hours are the total number of hours vehicles are driven with passengers.

Total Hours

Total hours include the hours vehicles are driven with passengers and without passengers.

Miles vs. Hours

Miles and hours are the major figures measuring the amount vehicles are used. Some systems prefer one figure to the other when quantifying vehicle use, while other systems use both.

Miles and hours are the major figures measuring the amount your vehicles are used.

Miles may be the more obvious figure used to quantify vehicle use. A vehicle's odometer is the standard means to judge a vehicles usage. It's easy to say that a bus with 20,000 miles is relatively new, whereas a bus with 200,000 miles may be approaching the end of its useful life. Therefore, miles can easily be used to estimate and forecast vehicle lifespan and maintenance schedules.

Hours are used to quantify driver use. The time a driver spends in a vehicle is measured in hours; often the driver will be paid by the hour. Hours measure the amount of time that the driver may be sitting waiting to pick up a passenger, helping passengers load or unload, or waiting at a stop light or in traffic. Hours can be easily used to calculate labor expenses for drivers.

Accidents/Incidents

The overall safety of the transportation system can be gauged using performance measures related to the rate of accidents or incidents (such as accidents per 10,000 miles). For definitions of accidents or incidents, it is useful to follow the definitions given by the system's insurance provider.

For definitions of accidents or incidents, it is useful to follow the definitions given by the sytem's insurance provider.

Complaints

One way to measure the quality of service provided is to track the number of complaints received. If the program's goals include the improvement of service quality, performance measures utilizing the number of complaints received (such as complaints per 1,000 trips) could be a useful number to track.

Qualitative Data

Many of these figures, such as accidents/incidents and complaints, also contain qualitative data. While reducing accident and complaint rates are worthwhile goals, pay attention to the reasons why people are complaining.

Do not ignore the qualitative benefits of coordination, such as improvements in quality of life for the customers of the system. Tips on measuring these benefits will be discussed later in this chapter.

Many of these figures, such as accidents/ incidents and complaints, also contain qualitative data.

Measures of Effectiveness

The following sections list the most common measures of effectiveness used for coordinated transportation systems and show how to calculate them. It is not always

necessary to calculate all of these measures. However, it is key that all participating agencies use the same measures, to ensure that the success of the system can be uniformly and accurately measured.

Measures of effectiveness can be divided into performance measures and cost measures. Performance measures compare one performance data figure against another. These measures typically gauge the efficiency of services provided. Cost measures compare one monetary data figure against one performance data figure. These measures allow you to gauge and compare the true cost of providing transportation services over time, even through varying ridership and funding.

Measures of effectiveness are expressed in terms of *some figure* per *some figure*, such as Cost per Trip.

Measures of effectiveness usually determine the relationship between two figures. They are expressed in terms of *some figure* per *some figure*, such as Cost per Trip. When calculating these measures, think of the word "per" as an expression of the division symbol. For instance Cost per Trip would equal Cost divided by Trip.

Cost per Trip = Total Cost / Total Trips

(Throughout the following sections multiplication will be indicated by a "*" and division by a "/".)

Performance Measures

Performance measures are used to gauge the extent and efficiency of service without consideration of financial implications.

Performance measures are used to gauge the extent and efficiency of service without consideration of financial implications.

Common Performance Measures

Trips per Mile	=	Total Trips / Total Miles
Trips per Hour	=	Total Trips / Total Hours
Trips per Operating Day	=	Total Trips / Total Operating Days
Trips per Vehicle Operating Day	=	Total Trips / (Number of Vehicles * Total Operating Days)
Hours per Vehicle Operating Day	=	Total Hours / (Number of Vehicles * Total Operating Days)
Miles per Vehicle Operating Day	=	Total Miles / (Number of Vehicles * Total Operating Days)

Per vehicle operating day measures refer to the average number of trips, hours, or miles each individual vehicle in the fleet travels on a single day.

Vehicle Miles per Hour = Total Miles / Total Hours

Vehicle Miles per Trip = Total Miles / Total Trips

Average Trip Length = Total Passenger Miles / Total Trips

Average Trip Time = Total Passenger Hours / Total Trips

Vehicle miles per hour and vehicle miles per trip measure the amount of traveling of the vehicles.

Vehicle miles per hour and vehicle miles per trip measure the amount of traveling of the vehicles. These figures come in handy when it is time to think about replacing vehicles. Average trip length and time measures how long customers are on vehicles and how far they travel.

Accidents per X Trips = (Accidents / Total Trips) * X

Complaints per X Trips = (Complaints / Total Trips) * X

These are safety and service measures. Because accidents and complaints are (hopefully) rare, these figures are usually expressed like accidents per 10,000 trips, in order to present a more meaningful figure. As indicated above, accidents per 10,000 trips would be calculated as:

Accidents per 10,000 Trips = (Accidents/ Total Trips) * 10,000

Cost Measures

Cost measures are generally expressed as cost, revenue, or deficit per *some figure*. Cost measures are used to judge the economic efficiency of the coordinated transportation program.

Cost measures are used to judge the economic efficiency of the coordinated transportation program.

Common Cost Measures

Cost per Trip = Total Cost / Total Trips

Cost per Passenger Mile = Total Cost / Total Passenger Miles

Cost per Mile = Total Cost / Total Miles

Cost per Hour = Total Cost / Total Hours

These measures can be calculated for operating costs as well as total cost by substituting operating cost for total cost in the right side of the equation. Make sure to indicate whether measuring total or operating costs.

Revenue and deficit measures are indications of the amount of cost being met by customers.

Revenue per Trip	=	Total Passenger Revenue / Total Trips
Revenue per Passenger Mile	=	Total Passenger Revenue / Total Passenger Miles
Revenue per Mile	=	Total Passenger Revenue / Total Miles
Revenue per Hour	=	Total Passenger Revenue / Total Hours
Recovery Ratio	=	Total Passenger Revenue / Total Cost

Deficit measures indicate the cost of operating the transportation system above and beyond farebox revenues.

Deficit	=	Total Cost – Total Passenger Revenue
Deficit per Trip	=	Deficit / Total Trips
Deficit per Passenger Mile	=	Deficit / Total Passenger Miles
Deficit per Mile	=	Deficit / Total Miles
Deficit per Hour	=	Deficit / Total Hours

Revenue and deficit measures are indications of the amount of cost being met by customers.

Evaluating "Intangibles"

One of the problems that coordinated transportation programs across the country have found in evaluating their success is that some of the benefits of the program seem to be of intangible value.

One of the problems that coordinated transportation programs across the country have found in evaluating their success is that some of the benefits of the program seem to be of intangible value. It's easy to calculate a decrease in cost per trip resulting from the elimination of duplication of service, but how can "intangibles" , such as the following examples, be measured?

- The benefits in terms of quality and extension of life to individuals who are able to access medical care?
- The benefit to individuals and to the community when people can work because they are now able to access transportation?
- The benefits to individuals who have more flexible access to shopping, cultural, and recreation activities?

- The benefit to the community in terms of money spent on shopping and recreation that is now available to individuals because of access to transportation?

The measures in the previous sections, which are standard measures for evaluating a transportation system, focus on the cost of the system and the services provided by the system. These are critical measurements that can show some of the important benefits of transportation coordination. However, some coordination programs have found that these measures do not show the full benefit to the community.

Some coordination programs have found that it is possible to estimate a monetary value for these "intangible values." A 1997 U.S. DOT funded study of the Sweetwater [Wyoming] Transit Authority Resources (STAR) attempted to calculate the savings of the system, including attempts to quantify some of the "intangible" benefits. Calculations for six areas of benefits were made.

Table 5: Benefit Calculations for "Intangible" Values

Benefit	Calculation
Access to Employment	Annual wages and reduction in public assistance costs for those who are dependent on transit to get to work.
Access to Medical Care and Social Services	Difference in the cost of taxi service for all trips that would need to be taken if transit was not available.
Providing Rides to School Age Children of Working Parents	Wages lost from time taken out of work to drive children to day care centers.
Access to Shopping and Recreation	Difference in the cost of taxi service for these trips, assuming one third would still be taken.
Access to Educational and Counseling Services	Potential wages and reduction in public assistance, assuming these services help individuals gain and retain employment.
Enabling the Continuation of Independent Living	Avoidance cost based on the percentage of the cost of living in a nursing home for those who are able to continue living independently because of transit.

While the intangible values may offer somewhat speculative estimates of the benefits of coordination, they illustrate the thought process needed to undertake such an evaluation.

While intangible values may offer somewhat speculative estimates of the benefits of coordination, they illustrate the thought process needed to undertake such an evaluation. They also illustrate the difficulty, both in theory and in practice, of converting intangible benefits into tangible results. Attempting to quantify the intangible benefits of coordination will likely involve fastidious record keeping and effort above and beyond standard data collection routine.

The first step in the process is to determine the broader areas of benefit that result from coordination. Keeping records of trip purpose and passenger demographics will help to determine the areas where coordination has an impact. Consider areas where customers would have reduced or no access without transportation services as well as quality of life improvements.

When broad areas of benefit have been determined, the next step is to ascertain how these broad areas can be quantified. Quantifying these benefits in terms of cost savings is a good way to encourage support for the program. The example from Sweetwater, Wyoming demonstrates how to turn broad areas of benefits into measurable calculations. These calculations should be realistic; while they may be speculative, if calculations are based on realistic assumptions, they will have credibility.

Chapter Summary

To select which data to collect and which measures of effectiveness to use, consider:

- Reporting requirements of all funding sources,
- Needs for day-to-day managerial operations,
- Needs for long-term planning, and
- Measures necessary to calculate for advocacy purposes.

The following considerations should be reviewed when evaluation data.

- Data is evaluated by comparing measures of effectiveness over periods of time.
- Compare measures of effectiveness from the current program with measures of effectiveness from the transportation system in place before the current program.
- Evaluating data is a matter of comparing numbers from one time period to another.
- Reports should be generated regularly.

Data collected by all participants in the program should be uniform. Several types of raw data should be gathered to more effectively complete program evaluations.

- Monetary data includes total revenue, passenger revenue, total costs, and operating costs.
- Service provided data includes trips provided, trip purpose, passenger miles and hours, total miles and hours, accidents, and complaints.
- Qualitative data may include the reasons behind the numbers and should not be ignored.

Measures of effectiveness:

- Compare two raw data figures, usually in the form of *something* per *something*, where "per" means "divided by."
- Performance measures compare two service provided figures such as Trips per Mile or Accidents per 10,000 Trips
- Cost measures compare a service provided figure with a monetary figure such as Cost per Trip or Revenue per Passenger Mile

To evaluate the intangible benefits of coordination:

- Define the broad areas of benefits from the coordination program, and
- Determine how these areas can be quantified.
- Measuring the intangible values of coordination involves some speculative estimates; however, if calculations are based on realistic assumptions, they will have credibility.

Chapter

9

Funding Sources

Chapter 9 contains profiles of the funding sources most commonly used for coordinated transportation.

While coordinating transportation services should provide increased efficiency and lowered costs, vans and buses still require funding to operate. Transportation systems are usually funded through traditional revenue sources, such as fares, donations, advertising, contract services, and governmental and charitable grants.

This chapter is intended to give an introduction to the most common sources of funding and revenue for transportation services. It is not intended to be a list of every possible source. Actively and creatively seek out other sources for which the partners in the coordination program may be eligible.

Actively and creatively seek out other sources for which the partners in the coordination program may be eligible.

Please note that information regarding funding from the Department of Transportation (DOT) may change after September 2003. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the transportation bill in effect at the time of this document's publication, expires in September 2003. The reauthorization process may result in both changes in funding levels available from DOT programs and changes in the rules governing these programs.

Revenue Sources

Many transportation providers, particularly those serving the general public, recover a small portion of their operating costs by charging customers for their services through fares or contract rates. Typical income sources, excluding governmental funding and grants, are discussed in the following sections.

Contract Services

Contract rates should be set to recover the whole cost of providing transportation.

For human service transportation providers, contract services will typically be one of the largest sources of income. Providing transportation services to other organizations that may not have capital equipment of their own is one of the key aspects of coordinating transportation. Because existing transportation systems can often provide their services more efficiently, contracting with them can be a cost-effective way to provide transportation services. Contract rates should be set to recover the whole cost of providing transportation.

Fares

General public transportation systems strive to recover a small percentage of their costs through passenger fares. Fares are typically set low to encourage public patronage and are usually subsidized through federal and local funding. In general, fares are set to recover a specific portion of operating costs for general public transportation, dependent upon the level of other funding available for subsidization.

Donations

Some systems that do not charge customers or specific customer groups for transportation may ask that customers pay a suggested donation if and when they can afford it. For instance, transportation providers operating with Title III funds are not allowed to charge seniors for services. Many systems operating with Title III funds ask for donations. (Title III funding is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.)

Advertising

A traditional source of revenue for larger transportation systems, such as city buses, is selling advertising space on the outside and inside surfaces of buses. Advertising is not typically a substantial source of income; however, when resources are tight, no possibilities should be overlooked. Systems providing fixed route bus services are often able to acquire benches and covered bus stop vestibules as in-kind services, with the provision that advertising be placed on them.

In-kind contributions are donations of services or materials that are not expected to be paid for by the system.

In-Kind Contributions

In-kind contributions are donations of services or materials that are not expected to be paid for by the system. While in-kind contributions typically include services and equipment, they should be accounted for as revenue in your system. In-kind contributions can be particularly beneficial in that they may be usable as local matches to federal funds. Specific requirements vary from program to program; for instance, in-kind contributions cannot be used as a local match for MDT TransADE program funds.

Grant Sources

Governmental and charitable grants make up a substantial income source for many transportation providers. Providers primarily serving economically dependent customers may rely heavily or entirely on grants to fund their services. The following are some the most commonly used funding sources. Many of these programs place a strong emphasis on coordination. Eligibility requirements vary from program to program. Check with each source to confirm the eligibility of the coordinated system.

Governmental and charitable grants make up a substantial income source for many transportation providers.

Agencies providing transportation as their sole service, such as a consolidated transportation system, will not be eligible for some of the programs discussed in the following sections earmarked for human service agencies. However, human service agencies purchasing transportation from such a system will likely use one or more of these sources of funding for this purpose.

Federal Transit Administration

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as the primary regulatory body for public transit in the country, offers a number of programs to assist transportation providers with capital, planning, training, technical assistance, and operating expenses. All vehicles purchased through FTA funds must be ADA compatible lift or ramp equipped. Exceptions will only be made if the organization applying for funds already has ADA compatible vehicles in their fleet. Many of the following programs are administered through the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Transit Section.

Small Urban Public Transportation (Section 5307)

FTA Section 5307 provides funds for capital or operating expenses for public transportation systems serving areas with populations between 50,000 and 200,000. Section 5307 funds are administered by the FTA. Recipients of Section 5307 funds must be municipal bodies, either county or city governments. In Montana, the recipients of Section 5307 funds are Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula.

Capital Assistance for Transportation for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310)

FTA Section 5310 provides funds for capital expenses for transportation providers that provide services primarily to seniors and/or persons with disabilities. Capital purchases made under Section 5310 are funded 80% through the program with a 20% local match requirement. The three categories of eligible recipients for capital assistance funds are:

1. Private, nonprofit organizations;

2. Public bodies that certify to the state that no nonprofit corporations or associations are readily available in an area to provide the service; and

3. Public bodies approved by the state to coordinate services for seniors and persons with disabilities.

The Section 5310 program in Montana has a strong emphasis on coordination.

Recipients are required to file quarterly reports to MDTwith cost and operating data for the vehicles. The Section 5310 program in Montana places an emphasis on coordination. All current and future coordination efforts must be listed in the application. Applicants must be members of the local Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), and the TAC must review all applications. If there are multiple Section 5310 applications in a service area, the local TAC must review and prioritize all applications in a letter to MDT. Applications for Section 5310 funds, available through MDT, are due on the first working day of February of the fiscal year before the funds are needed.

Rural Public Transportation (Section 5311)

FTA Section 5311 provides funds for operating and capital expenses for transportation systems providing rural, general public transportation. Section 5311 funding covers 50% of the operating deficit and 80% of capital expenses. The other 50% and 20% are covered by local matching funds. Half of the local match share for operating expenses may come from other, unrestricted federal funds.

Eligible recipients of this funding are local public bodies, private nonprofit organizations, Native American Reservations, and operators of public transportation services. Only one Section 5311 provider may exist in any single service area. Coordination with other transportation providers--public, private, or social service--in the area is required to the extent possible.

Recipients are required to file quarterly reports to MDT with cost and operating data for the vehicles. Recipients of Section 5311 funds are also required to submit quarterly drug testing reports. Safety-sensitive employees must be tested for drugs and alcohol on a regular basis. Applications are due on the first working day of February of each year and are available through MDT. There are currently eleven Section 5311 recipients in Montana.

RTAP (Rural Transit Assistance Program)

The Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) is a component of the Section 5311 grant program that provides funding for rural transit providers to attend training programs, professional development programs, and educational conferences. Rural transit providers receiving federal funds are eligible for the program, as are small urban public transit providers, so long as the program to be attended is primarily designed to benefit rural public transit.

RTAP can reimburse 100% of the cost of registration fees, meals, travel, and accommodations upon proof of successful completion of the program attended. MDT must approve applications for RTAP assistance before attendance at the conference. Applications are available through MDT.

Planning and Research (Section 5303/5313)

These funds are the principal sources of federal financial assistance to help urban and non-urban areas plan, develop, and improve comprehensive public mass transportation systems. Eligible activities under these grants include the planning, engineering, designing, and evaluating of urban and non-urban mass transportation projects; development of regional transportation plans; and completion of other technical studies.

The MDT Transportation Planning Division's Urban Planning Section administers the Section 5303 Grant Program. The Section 5313 portion of this grant is used by the Transit Section to conduct rural planning and technical studies, and to meet the non-urban statewide planning needs. Section 5313 funding is provided to transit agencies in rural and small urban areas for planning and technical support.

TransADE

The MDT Transportation Assistance for the Disabled and Elderly (TransADE) program (MCA 7-14-112) is a state program providing operating assistance for transportation services that serve persons with disabilities and seniors. TransADE funds are collected through a 25-cent fee on vehicle registrations. Although the program has just begun collecting funds, it is estimated that approximately $315,000 per year will be available for the program. This money is to be equally distributed among MDT's five transportation financial districts.

Of a total of 260 points in the TransADE evaluation process, 130 points granted solely on a provider's coordination efforts.

Eligible recipients include counties, incorporated cities and towns, transportation districts, and nonprofit organizations providing transportation services for persons 60 years of age or older and for persons with disabilities. Priority is given to specialized transit providers. TransADE funds can only be used for operating expenses. The maximum grant is for 50% of operating expenses, the rest being supplied by local match sources (which may include federal funds). (Note that MDT TransADE program funds may not be used as local match funds for FTA programs; TransADE may only be used to expand service and coordination.) To receive continuous funding, applications must be renewed yearly. Preference will be given to those applicants currently receiving TransADE funding, provided that they are successfully achieving the program's requirements. This program places a very strong emphasis on coordination. Of a total of 260 points in its evaluation process; 130 points are granted solely on a provider's coordination efforts. A transportation provider that is making a grant application under this program must score a minimum of 91 points (70%) in the coordination category to be considered for a grant. MDT TransADE

recipients are required to file quarterly reports with MDT and are monitored throughout the year to ensure the program's requirements are being met.

MDT holds application workshops for TransADE funding in October and November. Applications are distributed at the workshops and must be completed and returned to MDT by the first working day in February. The local Transportation Advisory Committee must approve all applications before they are submitted to MDT. For information on this program, contact the MDT Transit Section.

Federal Highway Administration

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Surface Transportation Program and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds can be used for public transportation capital projects. FHWA funds are not available directly to coordination programs. These funds are awarded to state transportation departments on a formula basis. In order to use these funds for coordinated transportation projects, state and local transportation planning agencies must be involved.

Title III-B – Administration on Aging

Title III funds the nationwide network of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), which provide programs and services to help seniors maintain their independence and quality of life. Title III-B provides funding for supportive services, including transportation. Title III-B funds are not specifically earmarked for transportation services, but the Older Americans Act requires AAAs to consider transportation as a priority service when developing their service plan. AAAs typically provide transportation directly or through contracts with public transit agencies.

When providing transportation services using Title III funds, transportation providers are not allowed to charge a fare to senior citizens. Seniors may be asked for a donation. Operators are also not allowed to ask customers' ages.

For more information, contact your local agency on aging.

Social Services Block Grants (Title XX)

The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) program provides funding to states and territories for programs helping individuals achieve economic self-sufficiency and to prevent neglect, abuse, and exploitation of adults and children. Funding is provided to states, based on their population, and is typically awarded to local social service departments. The program is administered by the states. Some of the funding may be used for transportation services. In fiscal year 2003, approximately $5.5 million will be awarded to the state of Montana under the SSBG program. The Department of Public Health and Human Services administers the program in Montana.

Community Service Block Grants

The Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) program provides funds to States and to Federal and State recognized Native American Tribes to support local non-profit community action programs. The local community action programs provide a range of social services to lessen the causes and conditions of poverty. Many of these programs provide transportation for their customers. The Department of Public Health and Human Services administers the CSBG program in Montana.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a Federal program providing medical assistance for low-income individuals and persons with disabilities. The program requires that states provide transportation for Medicaid recipients to access health care services. Medicaid will pay for transportation costs for the least expensive mode of transportation to the nearest health care provider.

Medicaid transportation services in Montana are administered by the Mountain-Pacific Quality Health Foundation (Foundation) through a contract with the Department of Public Health and Human Services. To be reimbursed for Medicaid transportation services in Montana, you must be enrolled as a Medicaid Provider. There are three types of Medicaid transportation providers in Montana.

To be reimbursed for Medicaid transportation services in Montana, you must be enrolled as a Medicaid Provider.

- **Ambulance Services**. All emergency Medicaid transportation is provided by ambulance services. Ambulance services may also provide non-emergency transportation, usually to non-ambulatory individuals or for scheduled medical procedures.

- **Specialized Transportation Providers**. Specialized transportation providers serve persons with disabilities. These providers operate specially equipped vehicles such as wheelchair vans or stretcher vans.

- **Commercial Transportation Providers**. All other transportation providers fall into this category, including city buses, van services, and taxis.

All non-emergency transportation services require prior authorization from the Foundation in order to receive reimbursement. Guidelines for Medicaid transportation providers are outlined in the *General Information for Providers* manual and supplemental manuals for specific types of services provided.

For more information, contact the Montana Medicaid Provider Hotline at 1-800-480-6823.

TANF

The Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program was created as part of the 1996 welfare reform program and replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) programs. States have wide latitude in their administration of the TANF program. Transportation services are a supportive service for the TANF program.

In Montana, the TANF program, known as Families Achieving Independence in Montana (FAIM), funds a limited number of transportation projects. Projects are selected through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process; the grantees set the parameters. Grantees are required to submit quarterly reports detailing the progress of their project and the status of their vehicles.

Due to budget constraints at the time of publication, the TANF program in Montana was not funding any new transportation projects. The Public Assistance Bureau of the Department of Public Health and Human Services administers the TANF program in Montana.

Head Start

Head Start agencies must provide transportation to the program to as many families as possible or give reasonable assistance for families to arrange transportation to the program.

Head Start is a federal program providing a variety of services to disadvantaged preschool children. The Department of Health and Human Services designates local public, private nonprofit, or private for profit agencies to serve as the Head Start agency in their community. The Head Start program provides 80% of the funds needed to operate the local program, with a 20% local match.

In order to make the program more accessible, Head Start agencies may use some of their funds for transportation. Because Head Start transports children, strict new requirements have been implemented regarding the safety equipment of the vehicles used. These requirements were passed in 2001 and are being phased in through 2006. These requirements include that:

- Head Start agencies must provide transportation to the program for as many families as possible or give reasonable assistance for families to arrange transportation to the program.
- All Head Start vehicles must be ADA compliant.
- By 2004, all Head Start vehicles must have at least one bus monitor.
- By 2004, all Head Start drivers must have a CDL and must pass criminal history, driving record, and background checks.

- By 2006, all Head Start vehicles must be either school buses or vehicles designed to carry 11 or more people, including the driver, and must meet all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety standards for school buses.

Under the new requirements those providing Head Start transportation must also make reasonable efforts to coordinate transportation resources.

Local and/or Tribal Governments

Local municipal governments and tribal governments may already provide funding or may be willing to fund a coordinated transportation system. Local governments already receive funding for transportation purposes from several different sources, including federal funds, state funds, and local taxes. By emphasizing the benefits that coordinated transportation systems can provide for the community, local governments may be persuaded to share in the cost. Tribal governments have available additional federal funds designated specifically for transportation on Native American Reservations. Tribal governments also have more autonomy than municipal governments. However, most reservations already have high demands on their transportation budgets.

By emphasizing the benefits that coordinated transportation systems can provide for the community, local governments may be persuaded to share in the cost burdens.

Local Tax

Montana code authorizes the levying of property taxes for various purposes that may be used to fund coordinated transportation.

MCA 7-14-232 authorizes local governments to levy a property tax to fund an urban transportation district in Montana. Urban transportation districts are created to provide local public transportation, as provided in MCA 7-14-201 (et seq.).

MCA 7-14-111 authorizes county and city governments and urban transportation districts to levy a property tax to fund transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities. Under this section, the taxing body is authorized to:

- Contract with public or private transportation providers to provide rides for senior citizens and persons with disabilities; or

- Use funding to augment a local public transportation system's ability to provide service to senior citizens and persons with disabilities; or

- Create and operate an independent public transportation system for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

MCA 7-14-111 encourages regional coordination through the formation of regional Transportation Advisory Committees.

Procedures for levying a property tax are outlined in MCA 15-10-420.

Charities and Foundations

Local and national charity organizations and foundations, such as United Way and Easter Seals, may provide funding for specific transportation initiatives.

Local and national charity organizations and foundations, such as United Way and Easter Seals, may provide funding for specific transportation initiatives. Charities can have strict requirements for the use of their funds, and may not emphasize coordination to the extent that the federal and state governments do. On the other hand, charitable funding may have fewer restrictions than government funding. Make sure you clearly understand the requirements of the specific charitable funding. See Chapter 12 for links to more information on charities and foundations supporting human service transportation.

Corporate Sponsorship

Local businesses may also be an innovative source of funding, through sponsorships or contributions. Businesses may take this as an opportunity to demonstrate their good citizenship, promote goodwill in the community, and support a worthwhile cause. Corporate sponsorships can be a win-win situation, generating revenue for the transportation system, goodwill for corporate partners, and visibility in the community for both. Corporate sponsorships also have the potential to bring in funding with more flexibility than governmental funding. Local businesses may offer some sort of sponsorship if you can show ridership figures that indicate that the transportation system is bringing them customers that would not otherwise use their services.

Non-Traditional Funding

Many transportation providers actively and successfully seek out creative and non-traditional funding sources for their programs.

The previous sections listed the most common sources of funding for transportation providers. However, there are numerous other sources of funding that could possibly be used for transportation services. Many transportation providers actively and successfully seek out creative and non-traditional funding sources for their programs. In essence, the only limitation on possible funding sources is the amount of time available to research and complete applications.

The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) has put together a resource guide listing over 50 programs from which transportation funding is or may be available. This guide is located on their website at:

www.ctaa.org/ct/resource/funding.asp

The guide can also be ordered from the National Transit Resource Center (see Chapter 11 for contact information.)

Part

D

Resources

The chapters in Part D contain additional resources for planning and implementing a coordinated transportation system.

Chapter 10: Supporting Documents

Chapter 10 has copies of all the supporting documents, such as letters and funding applications that have been mentioned in the previous chapters.

Chapter 11: Contact Information

Chapter 11 provides contact information for agencies supporting coordinated transportation.

Chapter 12: Internet Resources

Chapter 12 lists resources on the Internet that have more detailed information that may be helpful in implementing a coordinated transportation system

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Chapter

10

Supporting Documents

Chapter 10 contains supporting documents such as letters, resolutions, and sample funding applications that are referenced throughout Part B.

All of the documents in Chapter 10 are indexed on the following pages. You can look up the document that you need by the chapter in which it was referenced. Some documents are referenced in multiple chapters. Documents will be indexed by all chapters in which they are listed, even though only one copy will be contained in this chapter.

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

Chapter 3 Written Plan Components

I. List of possible stakeholders
II. Invitation to Participate in Coordination
    a. Letter Sent
    b. Responses
        i. Interested Responses
        ii. Non Interested Responses
        iii. No Responses
III. First Meeting
    a. Agenda
    b. Minutes

Note: The agenda and minutes from this and all subsequent meetings should be included in your documentation.

IV. Organizational Procedures
    a. Leadership
V. Data Collection
    a. Survey Tools and Interview Questionnaires
    b. Survey and Interview Results
    c. Route Maps
VI. Data Analysis
VII. List of Deficiencies and Expansions
VIII. Deficiencies
    a. Expansions
    b. Priority List
    c. Goals
IX. Level of Coordination – Next Step

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List of Possible Stakeholders

- Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services
- Agency on Aging
- Cancer Society
- Care Facilities
- Children and Family Services
- County Commissioners
- Council for the Blind
- Community Action Agency
- Developmental Disabilities Centers
- Disability Services
- Easter Seals
- Head Start
- Health and Human Services Department
- Hospitals
- Job Placement and Job Training
- Local Colleges or Universities
- Local Elected Officials
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- Nursing Homes
- Public Assistance Bureau
- Public Transportation
- Private Transportation Providers
- Red Cross
- Regional Planning Organization (RPO)
- Religious Organizations
- Salvation Army
- Senior Centers
- School Boards
- Special Education Programs
- Taxi Operators
- Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Tribal Council
- United Way
- Veteran's Administration
- Vocational Education Programs
- YMCA and YWCA

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Letter of Invitation to join Coordinating Committee

Date

Address

Dear _____,

I am writing to let you know that (name of organization(s)) is/are forming a committee to discuss the coordination of transportation services in this area. Coordination can lead to more efficient transportation services by reducing overhead and eliminating duplication of service. In addition, coordination is a requirement of many funding sources for public and human services transportation.

We will be holding the first meeting of the coordinating committee at (time and place of first meeting). Your organization is invited to send a representative or representatives to participate in this meeting. The representative should be someone who is involved in the provision of transportation for your organization or familiar with the transportation needs of your customers. The representative should also be someone who has the authority or permission to discuss your organization's participation in transportation coordination.

Please respond to this letter at (contact information) indicating whether your organization would be interested in participating in this coordinating committee and whether your organization will be able to send a representative to the initial meeting.

Thank you. We look forward to your participation. If you have any questions, please contact me at (contact information).

Sincerely,

_____

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First Meeting Agenda

First meeting of the Coordinating Council

I. Introduction to Coordinating Council
   a. Purpose of Council
   b. Purpose of Meeting

II. Introduction of Council Members

III. Discussion of Coordination Concepts
   a. History
   b. Benefits
   c. Challenges

IV. Discussion of Coordination in the Community
   a. Current Transportation Needs
   b. Possible Coordination Opportunities
   c. Possible Challenges

V. Outline of Planning Process

VI. Establishment of Organization Procedures

VII. Adjournment

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Montana Agency Transportation Survey

Agency Information

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Website url **(if any)** **http://**_____

Contact Person: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Phone Number: ____ - ____ - _____ Ext. ____

Fax Number: ____ - ____ - _____

1. Is your agency:

- ❑ **Public**
- ❑ **Private non-profit**
- ❑ **Private for-profit**
- ❑ **Other (please specify)** _____

2. What age group are your services designed for? **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **Under 9**
- ❑ **9 to 18**
- ❑ **19 to 59**
- ❑ **60 to 64**
- ❑ **65 and older**
- ❑ **Any age**

4. What type of primary services does your agency provide? **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **Alcohol, Tobacco or Drug Education & Treatment**
- ❑ **Child Care**
- ❑ **Community Based Developmental Disabilities Service**
- ❑ **Community Support Networks**
- ❑ **Diagnosis and Early Evaluation**
- ❑ **Education/Training**
- ❑ **Employment Opportunities/Job Placement**
- ❑ **Family Safety & Protection Housing**
- ❑ **Family Support & In-home Assistance**
- ❑ **Health Care**
- ❑ **Housing**
- ❑ **Life Skills Development & Assistance**
- ❑ **Nutrition**

- ❑ **Other Community Based Service**
- ❑ **Residential Care**
- ❑ **Transportation**
- ❑ **Other (please specify)** _____

4. During the average week, how many customers travel to your offices and/or services? _____

5. Please estimate the percentage of your agency's customers that obtain your services by each of the following means of transportation.

- **Fixed route bus service (buses that run on a schedule)** _____ %
- **Dial-a-ride service (small buses or vans that operate on request)** _____ **%**
- **Van services for specific customers (for veterans, church members, senior centers, etc.)** _____ **%**
- **Private taxi** _____ **%**
- **Medical transportation (ambulance)** _____ **%**
- **Agency vehicles** _____ **%**
- **Private vehicle driven by agency employee or volunteer** _____ **%**
- **Family, friends or neighbor** _____ **%**
- **Drive themselves** _____ **%**
- **Walk** _____ **%**
- **Other (please specify)** _____ _____ **%**

(TOTAL 100%)

6. Does your agency serve people with transportation limitations?
(Transportation limitations are physical, mental, or other conditions that limit one person's ability or cause difficulty in getting to places they need or want to go)

- ❑ **Yes**
- ❑ **No (Please skip to question 7)**

6a. Please identify the types of transportation limitations: (check all that apply)

- ❑ **Age-related disability**
- ❑ **Physical disability**
- ❑ **Cannot afford motor vehicle**
- ❑ **Remote location**
- ❑ **Lack of motor (for reasons other than income)**
- ❑ **Developmental disability**
- ❑ **Visual impairment**
- ❑ **Hearing impairment**
- ❑ **Multiple disabilities**
- ❑ **Other (please specify)** _____

6b. What percentage of your customers do you estimate have transportation limitations? (e.g. 5%, 40%, etc.) _____ ***%***

7. Does your agency provide any type of transportation to its customers (ride from agency vehicle, bus pass, cash, etc.)?

- ❑ **Yes, agency provides transportation**
- ❑ **No (If no, skip to question 26)**

8. Please provide a written description of your transportation service area and the time periods of operation. ***For example: City of Billings, Monday to Friday, 52 weeks per year.***

_____

_____

_____

9. How are customers scheduled to receive transportation service? **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **Fixed route**
- ❑ **Provider scheduled**
- ❑ **Standing order trips (subscription mode)**
- ❑ **Demand responsive: reserve _____ hours beforehand**
- ❑ **Other (Please specify) _____**

10. What percentages of your customers who use any of your transportation services require special equipment or assistance?

- **_____ % requiring wheelchair lifts**
- **_____ % requiring car seats**
- **_____ % requiring Personal Care Attendant**
- **_____ % requiring other (please specify) _____**

11. Are the transportation <u>trips</u> restricted in any way to customers?

❑ **Yes** ❑ **No, (please skip to question 12)**

11a. How are the trips restricted? **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **Agency services only**
- ❑ EMERGENCY ONLY
- ❑ **Job training only**
- ❑ **Medical visits only**
- ❑ **Nutrition only**
- ❑ **School only**
- ❑ **Veterans services only**
- ❑ **Other (please specify)**

_____

11b. Is the restriction on specific trips an agency policy or funding source restriction?

- ❑ **Agency Policy**
- ❑ **Funding Source Restriction**

11c. Please explain the restriction(s) in detail.

_____

_____

_____

12. Please indicate the types of trips typically provided by your agency. **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **Program at your agency**
- ❑ **Congregate Meals**
- ❑ **Medical Appointment**
- ❑ **Employment**
- ❑ **Other (please specify)**
  _____
- ❑ **Program at another agency**
- ❑ **Shopping / Personal Business**
- ❑ **Field Trip / Recreation**
- ❑ **Education**

13. How are the transportation services funded at your agency? **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **Charging customers. If so, how much (e.g., $1.00/ride)** _____
- ❑ **City, county or special transportation district**
- ❑ **Donations, United Way, fundraising, volunteer**
- ❑ **Federal funds (what category)** _____
- ❑ **State funds (what category)** _____

14. Is your transportation <u>funding</u> restricted to specific groups of customers?

- ❑ **Yes**
- ❑ **No, (please skip to question 15)**

14a. How are the funds restricted? **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **People with disabilities only**
- ❑ **Veterans only**
- ❑ **Seniors only**
- ❑ **Low income**
- ❑ **Children**
- ❑ **Students**
- ❑ **Other (please** specify)
  _____

14b. Is the funding restriction on specific groups an agency policy or funding source restriction?

- ❑ **Agency Policy**
- ❑ **Funding Source Restriction**

14c. Please explain the restriction(s) in detail.

_____

_____

15. Looking toward the next five-year period, do you see your agency's funding for transportation:

- ❑ **Increasing**
- ❑ **Decreasing**
- ❑ **Remaining stable**

Please explain why.

_____

_____

16. Does your agency operate vehicles to provide transportation to your customers?

- ❑ **Yes**
- ❑ **No, (please skip to question 24)**

17. Please indicate the number of vehicles used for customer transportation provided by your agency, and provide an estimate of weekly miles and hours driven for your customers.

	Number of Vehicles	***Weekly Miles***	***Weekly Hours***
Buses			
Van			
Car			
Truck/SUV			
Other			

18. Please fill in the attached current vehicle roster that lists each vehicle, vehicle type, total vehicle miles (odometer reading), age, seating capacity, and condition (i.e. good, fair, poor).

19. Please fill in the attached vehicle utilization chart that lists each vehicle and when it is typically in service. **If service varies substantially by weekday, create a separate vehicle utilization chart for each day. (Please note that this information is critical to determine what service is available. Feel free to make copies if you need more forms).**

20. How do you maintain your vehicle fleet? **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **Perform in-house**
- ❑ **Contract to outside vendor**
- ❑ **Other (please specify)**

_____

21. How are the transportation services provided by your company insured? **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **Private insurance**
- ❑ **Pooled insurance fund**
- ❑ **Self-insured**
- ❑ **State or Federal insurance plan**
- ❑ **Other (please specify)**

_____

22. a. Who normally drives your agency's vehicles to provide transportation services for customers? **(check all that apply)**

- ❑ **Volunteers**
- ❑ **Staff**
- ❑ **Individuals hired specifically as drivers**
- ❑ **Other (please specify)**

_____

b. Do you require the people who drive your vehicles to have a Commercial Drivers License (CDL)?

- ❑ **No**
- ❑ **Yes**

23. Looking toward the next five-year period, please estimate the number of vehicles you may need for expansion or replacement.

	# of vehicles for expansion	*# of vehicles for replacement*
Buses	_____	_____
Van	_____	_____
Car	_____	_____
Truck/SUV	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____

24. Do you currently participate in any transportation coordination program with another transportation agency or provider? (***Definition of transportation coordination*: cooperation in the delivery of transportation services, i.e., working together to improve transportation-related activities through joint action.**)

- ❑ **Yes**
- ❑ **No**

IF YES, PLEASE DESCRIBE THE ARRANGEMENT AND SPECIFY THE TYPE OF TRIP AND NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS AND ANY OTHER COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS JOINT TRAINING, JOINT GRANTS WRITING, ETC.:

_____

_____

_____

25. Does your agency have interest in joining a coordinated transportation system?

- ❑ **Yes**
- ❑ **No**
- ❑ **Don't know**

PLEASE EXPLAIN THE ANSWER.

_____

_____

_____

_____

26. Do your customers routinely have transportation needs that you cannot serve?

❑ **Yes** ❑ **No**

PLEASE EXPLAIN AND TRY TO INCLUDE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE VOLUME AND NATURE OF THE TRIPS (EACH WEEK, MONTH, ETC.):

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. We invite any other comments you have on transportation. Use this space to add any explanation, remarks, or comments.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

Current Vehicle Roster

Vehicle No. (e.g., VIN)	Vehicle Make	Model Year	Vehicle Type Θ	Date Acquired (mm-yyyy)	Seating Capacity	Vehicle Condition (good, fair, poor)	Current Odometer Reading (In Miles)	# Of Wheel Chair Positions	Wheel Chair Access ♣	Radio Equipped (Y/ N)	Vehicle Use Status *

Θ Bus, Van, Car, Truck/SUV, or Other; ♣: None, Lift, Ramp, or Other.

* Active, Spare, or N/A (for vehicles NOT used to transport passengers, such as administrative and service vehicles).

Vehicle Utilization Chart

Vehicle No. (e.g., VIN)	Day *	A.M.												P.M.											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

For instance, Mon-Sun, Mon-Fri, Sat-Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, or Sun for different weekday schedules.

If service varies substantially by weekday, create a separate vehicle number/weekday combination for each day. Put a "×" in each box for the time periods during which the vehicle is typically busy.

Supplementary Survey

Name of Agency _____
Contact _____
Telephone _____

1. List grant funds that you currently receive of which all or part are or can be used for transportation purposes:

Department of Transportation		**Health and Human Services**	
❑ FTA Section 5307	$_____	❑ Agency on Aging	$_____
❑ FTA Section 5309	$_____	❑ CSBG	$_____
❑ FTA Section 5310	$_____	❑ Head Start	$_____
❑ FTA Section 5311	$_____	❑ SSBG	$_____
❑ TransADE	$_____	❑ TANF	$_____
❑ Other _____	$_____	❑ Other _____	$_____
❑ Other _____	$_____	❑ Other _____	$_____
❑ Other _____	$_____	❑ Other _____	$_____
❑ Other _____	$_____	❑ Other _____	$_____
CHARITIES, FOUNDATIONS, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT			
❑ United Way	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		

2. List your estimated annual yearly expenses in each of the following categories for the most recent fiscal year:

Type of Expense	**Cost**
Wages – Dedicated Transportation Staff	$
Wages – Prorated for staff who work part-time on transportation	$
Fuel and Oil	$
Maintenance – Labor	$
Maintenance – Parts	$
Maintenance – Contracts	$
Insurance	$
Leasing or Payments for Vehicles	$
Administrative Costs for Transportation	$
Purchase of Transportation Services	$

3. Please list your transportation staff in the following categories:

Category	Full-Time Staff Dedicated to Transportation	Full-Time Staff Partially Assigned to Transportation	Part-Time Staff	Volunteers
DRIVERS				
Escorts/Attendants				
Dispatchers, Schedulers, Reservationists				
Administration				
Maintenance				
Other				

4. Please list all the training that your employees are required to receive:

Type of Training	Employees Covered	Hours

4a. Is there any other training you would like your employees to receive?

5. For dispatching and communications with and between vehicles, do you use (check all that apply):

- ❑ Two-Way Radio
- ❑ Cell Phones
- ❑ Other _____

6. How do you schedule your vehicles?

- ❑ Manually
- ❑ Computer Software (Schedules must be generated in advance)
- ❑ Computer Software (Real time scheduling)

6a. If you indicated that you use computer software, indicate which software package you use.

7. Describe the computer hardware that you use:

8. Please include a map of the locations of your clients and their destinations if you provide demand responsive service or a map of your routes if you provide fixed route service.

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Survey Results Analysis

Response Rate

Surveys Sent Out	
Number Responding	
Percentage Response	

Agencies Responding

Agencies Not Responding

Agency Characteristics

1. Type of Agency

Type	Number	Percent
Public		
Private Non-Profit		
Private For-Profit		
Others (List Below)		

2. Age Group Served

Age Group	Number	Percent
Under 9		
9 to 18		
19 to 59		
60 to 64		
65 and older		
Any Age		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

3. Primary Services Provided

Services	Number	Percent
Alcohol, Tobacco or Drug Education and Treatment		
Child Care		
Community Based Developmental Disabilities Service		
Community Support Network		
Diagnosis and Early Evaluation		
Education/Training		
Employment Opportunities/Job Placement		
Family Safety and Protection Housing		
Family Support and In-Home Assistance		
Health Care		
Housing		
Life Skills Development and Assistance		
Nutrition		
Other Community Based Service		
Residential Care		
Transportation		
Others (List Below)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

Transportation Need and Services

4. Customers Traveling to Offices/Services

Total	
Average	

5. Mode of Transportation to Obtain Services

Indicate Number of Respondents in Each Category

Mode	0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%
Fixed Route Bus				
Dial-a-Ride/Demand responsive				
Van Service for Specific Customers				
Private Taxi				
Medical Transportation (Ambulance)				
Agency Vehicles				
Private Vehicles driven by Agency Employee or Volunteer				
Family, Friends, or Neighbors				
Drive Themselves				
Walk				
Others (List Below)				

6. Agencies Serving People With Transportation Limitations

	Number	Percent
Yes		
No		

6a. Types of Limitations Served

Type	Number	Percent
Age-related Disability		
Developmental Disability		
Physical Disability		
Visual Impairment		
Cannot Afford Motor Vehicle		
Hearing Impairment		
Remote Location		
Multiple Disabilities		
Lack of Vehicle (for reasons other than income)		
Others (List Below)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

6b. Percentage With Limitations

Indicate Number of Respondents in Each Category

	0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%
Respondents				

7. Agencies Providing Any Transportation

	Number	Percent
Yes		
No		

8. Description of Service Area (List Responses)

9. Scheduling Methods

Method	Number	Percent
Fixed Route		
Provider Scheduled		
Standing Order Trips		
Demand Responsive		
Others (List Below)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

10. Percentage Requiring Special Assistance

Indicate Number of Respondents in Each Category

Requirements	0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%
Wheelchair Lifts				
Car Seats				
Personal Care Attendant				
Others (List Below)				

11. Are Trips Restricted

	Number	Percent
Yes		
No		

11a. Restricted How

Restriction	Number	Percent
Agency services only		
Emergency only		
Job training only		
Medical visits only		
Nutrition only		
School only		
Veterans services only		
Others (List Below)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

11b. Restricted by:

	Number	Percent
Agency Policy		
Funding Source Restriction		

12. Types of Trips Provided

Type	Number	Percent
Program at agency		
Program at another agency		
Congregate meals		
Shopping/Personal business		
Medical Appointments		
Field Trip/Recreation		
Employment		
Education		
Others (List Below)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

Transportation Funding

13. How are services funded?

Source	Number	Percent
Charging Customers		
City, County, Transportation District		
Donations, United Way, fundraising, volunteer		
Federal Funds (List Categories)		
State Funds (List Categories)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

14. Funding Restricted to Specific Customer Groups

	Number	Percent
Yes		
No		

14a. Restricted How

Restriction	Number	Percent
People with Disabilities Only		
Children		
Veterans Only		
Students		
Seniors Only		
Low Income		
Others (List Below)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

14b. Is Restriction:

	Number	Percent
Agency Policy		
Funding Source Restriction		

15. Funding Stability

	Number	Percent
Increasing		
Decreasing		
Remaining Stable		

Agency Vehicles

16. Agencies Operating Their Own Vehicles

	Number	Percent
Yes		
No		

17. Number of Vehicles and Usage

	Number of Vehicles	Weekly Miles	Weekly Hours
Bus			
Van			
Car			
Truck/SUV			
Other			

18. Complete a Master Vehicle Roster

19. Complete a Master Vehicle Utilization Chart

20. How is Maintenance Performed

Method	Number	Percent
In-house		
Outside Contract		
Others (List Below)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

21. Insurance

Provider	Number	Percent
Private Insurance		
Pooled Insurance Fund		
Self-Insured		
State or Federal Insurance Plan		
Others (List Below)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

22a. Who Normally Drives Vehicles

Drivers	Number	Percent
Volunteers		
Staff		
Individuals Hired Specifically as Drivers		
Others (List Below)		

(Percent may total greater than 100%.)

22b. Require CDL

	Number	Percent
Yes		
No		

23. Five-Year Replacement and Expansion Needs

	# for Expansion	# for Replacement
Bus		
Van		
Car		
Truck/SUV		
Others (List Below)		

Coordination

24. Currently Participating in Coordination

	Number	Percent
Yes		
No		

25. Interested in Joining Coordination

	Number	Percent
Yes		
No		

26. Customers with Unmet Needs

	Number	Percent
Yes		
No		

Tally of Prioritization

Activity	Organizations Interested in Participating	Tally

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Resolution Authorizing the Development of a Coordinated Transportation Program

Resolution No. ____

WHEREAS, this board desires to improve the efficiency and level of service of transportation in this community and believes that coordinating transportation services is a viable means to approach this goal; and

WHEREAS, the coordinating committee of _____ (town/county/region) has been formed to develop a coordinated transportation system in this area;

THEREFORE, this resolution is passed as evidence of this board's support for the efforts of the coordinating committee.

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the coordinating committee of _____ has the support and endorsement of this board;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this board will support the coordination effort through personnel, time, and/or resources as is deemed fitting, necessary, and appropriate by this board and by the coordinating committee.

ADOPTED THIS _____ DAY OF _____ , 20____

Signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

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Chapter 4 Written Plan Components

I. Possible Activities for Coordination
II. Participation Tally Form
III. Final Decisions on Which Areas to Implement Communication
IV. Evaluative Procedures
V. Responsibilities
VI. Budget (Optional)
VII. Cooperative Agreement, Written Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, etc. (Optional)

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Resolution Supporting a Coordination Program at the Communication Level

Resolution No. ____

WHEREAS, this board supports the efforts of the coordinating committee of _____ (town/country/region) to improve the efficiency and level of service of transportation in this community through coordination; and

WHEREAS, the coordinating committee has determined that this community would benefit from coordination at the communication level, which consists of informal cooperation among transportation providers in the area;

THEREFORE, this resolution is passed as evidence of this board's support for coordination at the communication level.

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that this board supports the coordination program developed by the coordinating committee and will abide by any cooperative agreements developed by the coordinating committee and executed by this board.

ADOPTED THIS _____ DAY OF _____ , 20____

Signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

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Sample Administrative Budget

Expense	Total
SALARIES AND WAGES • Coordinator • Manager • Administrative Assistant • Bookkeeper • Other	
BENEFITS • Health/Medical Plans • Worker's Compensation Insurance • Unemployment Insurance • Other	
OFFICE SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT • Supplies • Small Equipment • Copying and Printing • Other	
FACILITIES • Rent • Phone • Utilities • Other	
INSURANCE • Building/Property • General Liability • Officer/Director Liability • Other	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES • Legal • Accounting • Consulting • Marketing • Other	
MARKETING, ADVERTISING, AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS	
DEPRECIATION	
TRAVEL	
OTHER	
Grand Total	

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Sample Operating Budget

Expense	Total
Vehicle Operations	
SALARIES AND WAGES • Drivers • Dispatchers, Schedulers, Reservationists • Other	
BENEFITS • Health/Medical Plans • Worker's Compensation Insurance • Unemployment Insurance • Other	
FUEL	
VEHICLE INSURANCE	
LICENSING AND FEES	
OTHER VEHICLE OPERATING COSTS	
Maintenance	
SALARIES AND WAGES • Mechanics • Mechanics' Aids • Washers • Other	
BENEFITS • Health/Medical Plans • Worker's Compensation Insurance • Unemployment Insurance • Other	
PARTS AND SHOP SUPPLIES • Oil and Lubricants • Tires and Tubes • Cleaning Supplies	
MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS	
OTHER MAINTENANCE COSTS	
Other Operating Expenses	
PURCHASE OF SERVICE	
COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT FEES • Cell Phone Monthly Charges • Two Way Radio Licensing • Two Way Radio Tower Rental for Antenna	
OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	
Grand Total	

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Parts of a Cooperative Agreement

The following lists the suggested components of a cooperative agreement in the suggested order that they should appear. All of these items may not apply to your cooperative agreement and the order of the items is not fixed. This represents a typical cooperative agreement.

- Preamble
    - Parties. All parties to the agreement should be identified.
    - Purpose.
- Glossary. The operational definition of terms used in the agreement as they apply to the agreement should be listed.
- Scope of Agreement.
    - Term. The period of time the agreement covers must be defined.
    - Activities. All activities covered by this cooperative agreement should be listed.
    - Levels of Participation. The level of participation of each party in each activity should be stated.
    - Responsibilities. Each party's responsibilities in terms of financial contributions, time commitments, resources, and participation should be defined.
    - Penalties. If penalties are to be imposed for failing to meet responsibilities, they should be defined here.
- Payments. If money is to change hands in the course of the agreement, procedures for billing and payment should be defined.
- Termination. Conditions under which parties may terminate the agreement should be set. Timeframe for notification of intent to terminate and procedures for terminating agreement should be defined.
- Amendment. Requirements and procedures for amending the agreement should be set.

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Chapter 5 Written Plan Components

I. Activities to coordinate
II. Administrative structure
III. Responsibilities for activities
IV. Joint use agreements
V. Simple agreements
    a. Responsibilities
    b. Policies and procedures
VI. Grant applications
    a. Potential funding sources list
    b. Grants to be coordinated list
    c. Responsibilities
    d. Copies of coordinated applications
VII. Joint purchasing agreements
    a. Survey of purchasing needs
    b. Procurement procedures
    c. Administration
VIII. Joint maintenance
    a. Maintenance policies and specifications
    b. Outsourcing maintenance contracts
    c. In-house maintenance plans
    d. Billing procedures
IX. Safety and risk management
    a. Insurance contracts, policies, and agreements
    b. Policies and procedures
X. Communications
    a. Cell phone quotes and contracts
    b. Two-way radio plans and license
XI. Vehicle joint use
    a. Specifications and policies
    b. Vehicle sharing
        i. As-needed sharing policies
        ii. On-going sharing policies
    c. Trip sharing
    d. Data analysis
    e. Passenger accounting and record keeping procedures
    f. Billing policies
XII. Budget

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Parts of a Joint Use Agreement

The following lists the suggested components of a joint use agreement in the suggested order that they should appear. All of these items may not apply to your joint use agreement and the order of the items is not fixed. This represents a typical joint use agreement with vehicle joint use.

- Preamble
    - Parties. All parties to the agreement should be identified.
    - Purpose.
- Glossary. The operational definition of terms used in the agreement as they apply to the agreement should be listed.
- Term. The period of time the agreement covers must be defined. List start and end dates.
- Service Details.
    - Operating hours and service area.
    - Fixed route: Describe routes.
    - Demand responsive: Describe areas served, reservation policies, scheduling procedures.
- Equipment. The equipment required to complete the agreement should be detailed including number of vehicles, types of vehicles, and equipment required, such as accessibility equipment, fareboxes, and communications equipment.
- Operators. Describe the requirements for operators including experience, driving record, training, and licensing requirements, such as CDLs.
- Policies, Procedures, and Responsibilities.
    - List the policies and procedures developed for the joint use agreement including:
        - Passenger accounting.
        - Vehicle maintenance.

        - Scheduling.

    - State which parties are responsible for which actions.

- Contract Rates and Fares. All costs should be detailed specifically.

- Payments. Procedures for billing and payment should be defined. Invoice schedule and payment schedules should be included.

- Records, Reporting, and Auditing.

    - State what records should be kept, by whom, and for how long.

    - State what reports will be completed and when they will be compiled.

    - State requirements for auditing of contract including schedules, financial responsibility, and resolution of findings.

- Insurance Requirements. State levels of coverage required by the system.

- Legal Requirements. List applicable legal requirements and how they will be upheld. Includes:

    - Labor Laws and Non-Discrimination Laws

    - Drug and Alcohol Testing

    - Disadvantaged Business Enterprises

    - Commercial Driver's License

    - Americans with Disabilities Act

- Dispute Resolution. Procedures for resolving disagreements or disputes that may arise during the course of the contract should be fully stated.

- Termination. Conditions under which parties may terminate the agreement should be set. Timeframe for notification of intent to terminate and procedures for terminating agreement should be defined.

- Amendment. Requirements and procedures for amending the agreement should be set.

- Contact Information. Contacts for representatives from all sides of the agreement should be listed.

Sample Funding Source Survey

Name of Agency _____
Contact _____
Telephone _____

Type of Agency:

- ❑ Private Non-Profit
- ❑ Private For-Profit
- ❑ Public
- ❑ Governmental Body
- ❑ Transit Agency
- ❑ Other _____

List grant funds that you currently receive of which all or part are or can be used for transportation purposes:

Department of Transportation		**Health and Human Services**	
❑ FTA Section 5307	$_____	❑ Agency on Aging	$_____
❑ FTA Section 5309	$_____	❑ CSBG	$_____
❑ FTA Section 5310	$_____	❑ Head Start	$_____
❑ FTA Section 5311	$_____	❑ SSBG	$_____
❑ TransADE	$_____	❑ TANF	$_____
❑ Other _____	$_____	❑ Other _____	$_____
❑ Other _____	$_____	❑ Other _____	$_____
❑ Other _____	$_____	❑ Other _____	$_____
❑ Other _____	$_____	❑ Other _____	$_____
CHARITIES, FOUNDATIONS, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT			
❑ United Way	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		
❑ Other _____	$_____		

Customer Groups served by your agency: (Check all that apply)

- ❑ Elderly (program clients)
- ❑ Disabled (program clients)
- ❑ Pre-School, Head Start, Daycare
- ❑ Low Income
- ❑ General Public (no restrictions)
- ❑ Elderly (general public)
- ❑ Disabled (general public)
- ❑ Pupil Transportation
- ❑ Other: _____

Is your agency interested in applying for other funding sources for which you might be eligibile:

❑ Yes ❑ No

Comments:

Is your agency interested in coordinating grant applications?

❑ Yes ❑ No

Comments:

Describe any specific eligibility requirements your program has for its customers:

Sample Purchasing Needs Survey

Name of Agency _____
Contact _____
Telephone _____

Check those items that you purchase regularly for your transportation program. Estimate the yearly expense for your transportation program for each item that is checked.

Office Supplies and Equipment	Yearly Expense
❑ Office Supplies (Pens, Pencils, Legal Pads)	$ _____
❑ Office Equipment (Small Furniture, Small Electronics)	$ _____
❑ Copy Supplies (Toner, Paper)	$ _____
❑ Computer Printer Supplies (Ink Cartridges, Paper)	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____

Maintenance Supplies	Yearly Expense
❑ Motor Oil	$ _____
❑ Transmission Fluid	$ _____
❑ Other Lubricants	$ _____
❑ Brake Fluid	$ _____
❑ Anti-freeze	$ _____
❑ Freon	$ _____
❑ Gasoline	$ _____
❑ Diesel Fuel	$ _____
❑ Windshield Wiper Fluid	$ _____
❑ Cleaning Supplies	$ _____
❑ Batteries	$ _____
❑ Tires and tubes	$ _____
❑ Safety Equipment (fire extinguishers, first aid kits)	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	

Capital Goods	Yearly Expense
❑ Cars or Station Wagons	$ _____
❑ Mini-vans	$ _____
❑ Large Passenger Vans	$ _____
❑ Small Buses	$ _____
❑ Large Buses	$ _____
❑ School Buses	$ _____
❑ Computers and Computer Hardware	$ _____
❑ Additional Technology Applications	$ _____
❑ Communications Equipment	$ _____
❑ Accessibility Equipment	$ _____
❑ Fixed Route Needs (Benches, Vestibules, Bus Stop Signs)	$ _____
❑ Land or Buildings	$ _____
❑ Major Office Furniture	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____

Transportation and Vehicle Related Services	Yearly Expense
❑ Purchase of Transportation	$ _____
❑ Preventative Maintenance	$ _____
❑ Major Maintenance	$ _____
❑ Vehicle Cleaning	$ _____
❑ Insurance	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____

Professional Services	Yearly Expense
❑ Legal	$ _____
❑ Accounting	$ _____
❑ Marketing	$ _____
❑ Consulting	$ _____
❑ Information Technology	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____

Other	Yearly Expense
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____
❑ Other _____	$ _____

Chapter 6 Written Plan Components

I. Establishing Administrative Entity
   a. Existing Entity
      i. Resolutions, etc., needed to have existing entity manage the consolidated system.
   b. New Entity
      i. All documentation required when creating a new entity
II. Capital Needs Plan
III. Capital Purchase Quotes and Contracts
IV. Budgets
   c. Start-up Budget
   d. First-year Budget
   e. Long-term Budgets
V. Contract Rates
VI. Fare Structure
VII. System Operating Procedures

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Resolution Authorizing the Creation of a Consolidated Transportation System

Resolution No. ____

WHEREAS, this board supports the efforts of the coordinating committee of _____ (town/country/region) to improve the efficiency and level of service of transportation in this community through coordination; and

WHEREAS, the coordinating committee has determined that this community would benefit most from the consolidation of transportation services into a single entity;

THEREFORE, this resolution is passed as evidence of this board's support for consolidation of transportation services.

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that this board supports the consolidation of transportation services in this community and will contribute the current transportation resources of this organization to the consolidated transportation system through arrangements with the coordinating committee in a manner that is deemed appropriate by this board and by the coordinating committee.

ADOPTED THIS _____ DAY OF _____ , 20____

Signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

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Sample Vehicle Replacement Schedule

VEHICLE	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Replacement Needs					
1 - Small Bus	$60,000				
2 - Small Bus		$60,000			
3 - Small Bus			$60,000		
4 - Small Bus					$60,000
5 - Van		$40,000			
6 - Van				$40,000	
Replacement Costs					
Grant Share	$48,000	$80,000	$48,000	$32,000	$48,000
Local Match	$12,000	$20,000	$12,000	$8,000	$12,000
Total	$60,000	$100,000	$60,000	$40,000	$60,000
Expansions Needs					
Small Bus	$60,000				
Small Bus				$60,000	
Van			$40,000		
Expansion Costs					
Grant Share	$48,000	$0	$32,000	$48,000	$0
Local Match	$12,000	$0	$8,000	$12,000	$0
Total	$60,000	$0	$40,000	$60,000	$0
Total Replacement and Expansion Costs					
Grant Share	$96,000	$80,000	$80,000	$80,000	$48,000
Local Match	$24,000	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$12,000
Total	$120,000	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	$60,000

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Demand Formula

Recommended Methodology for Estimating Annual Non-Program Related Rural Passenger Transportation Demand

$$D = R_e E\left(\frac{1}{1+k_e e^{-U_e}}\right) + R_m M\left(\frac{1}{1+k_m e^{-U_m}}\right) + R_p P\left(\frac{1}{1+k_p e^{-U_p}}\right)$$

Where:

D = annual demand for non - program related passenger transportation (One - Way Trips Per Year)

$R_e = 1{,}200$

$R_m = 1{,}200$

$R_p = 1{,}200$

E = number or persons age sixty or over

M = number of mobility limited persons age sixteen to sixty - four

P = number of persons, age sixty - four or less, in families with income below the poverty level. The definition of the poverty level is that used for the 1990 U.S. Census.

$k_e = e^{6.38}$

$k_m = e^{6.41}$

$k_p = e^{6.63}$

$$U_e = 0.000510 \times \frac{\text{Annual Vehicle Miles Available to Elderly Market}}{\text{Area of the County}}$$

$$U_m = 0.000400 \times \frac{\text{Annual Vehicle Miles Available to Mobility Limited Market}}{\text{Area of County}}$$

$$U_p = 0.000490 \times \frac{\text{Annual Vehicle Miles Available to Low Income Market}}{\text{Area of County}}$$

Source: SG Associates, *Demand Forecasting for Rural Passenger Transportation*, prepared for Transportation Cooperative Research Program, February 1995.

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Chapter

11

Contact Information

Chapter 11 contains contact information for agencies and funding sources that may be relevant to a coordinated transportation system.

Access Board		
Phone	(800) 872-2253	**Mail**
TTY	(800) 993-2822	Office of Technical and Information Services 1331 F Street, NW, Suite 1000 Washington, DC 20004-1111
Fax	(202) 272-0081	
Email	ta@access-board.gov	
Comment	Provides information on American's With Disabilities Act compliance.	

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Wireless Telecommunications Bureau	
Phone	(202) 418-0600
Comment	Administers two-way radio licensing.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Montana Field Office		
Phone	(406) 444-5304	**Mail**
Fax	(406) 444-5314	2800 Skyway Dr. Helena, MT 59602
Comment	Administers Commercial Drivers License program.	

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) **Exempt Organization Customer Service**		
Phone	(877) 829-5500	**Mail**
		Internal Revenue Service TE/GE Division, Customer Service P.O. Box 2508 Cincinnati, OH 45201
Comment	Contact for tax information for non-profit organizations.	

Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities (MCDD)		
Contact	Executive Director	
Phone	(406) 443-4332	**Mail**
Fax	(406) 443-4192	PO Box 526 Helena, Montana 59624
Website	www.mtcdd.org	
Comment	Sponsors of this project, MCDD provides funding, education, and advocacy for programs for individuals with developmental disabilities.	

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) **Disability Services Division**		
Contact	Administrator	
Phone	(406) 444-2590	**Mail**
Toll Free	(877) 296-1197	111 North Sanders Helena, MT 59620
TDD	(406) 444-2590	
Fax	(406) 444-3632	
Website	www.dphhs.state.mt.us/dsd/	
Comment	Administers statewide programs for individuals with disabilities.	

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) **Heatlh Policy and Services**		
Contact	Administrator	
Phone	(406) 444-4540	**Mail**
Fax	(406) 444-1861	1400 Broadway Helena, MT 59620
Website	www.dphhs.state.mt.us/hpsd/	
Comment	Administers public health programs in the state, including Medicare.	

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Human and Community Services		
Contact	Administrator	
Phone	(406) 444-5901	**Mail**
Fax	(406) 444-2547	1400 Broadway Helena, MT 59620
Comment	Administers Head Start and TANF programs.	

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Senior and Long Term Care		
Contact	Administrator	
Phone	(406) 444-4077	**Mail**
Fax	(406) 444-7743	111 North Sanders Helena, MT 59604
Website	www.dphhs.state.mt.us/sltc/	
Comment	Administers programs and advocates for seniors and citizens with disabilities requiring long-term care.	

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Transit Section		
Contact	Transit Section Supervisor	
Phone	(406) 444-6200	**Mail**
Website	www.mdt.state.mt.us/departments/ transportation_planning/ transit_programs/	P.O. Box 201001 2701 Prospect Ave. Helena, MT 59620-1001
Comment	Administers funding programs for rural and small urban transportation in Montana	

Montana Public Service Commission		
Phone	(406) 444-6199	**Mail**
		P.O. Box 202601 Helena, MT 59620-2601
Website	www.psc.state.mt.us	
Comment	Licenses transportation providers.	

Montana Secretary of State's Office		
Phone	406-444-2034	**Mail**
Fax	406-444-3976	Room 260, Capitol P.O. Box 202801 Helena, MT 59620-2801
Email	sos@state.mt.us	
Comment	Resources and licensing for businesses and non-profit organizations.	

National Transit Resource Center	
Phone	(800) 527-8279
Comment	Component of the CTAA providing assistance on transit planning.

Chapter

12

Internet Links

Chapter 12 contains links to relevant Internet sites that contain more information useful for planning, implementing, and operating a coordinated transportation system.

This chapter contains links to additional information on the Internet that can be helpful in planning a coordination program. It begins with a selection of general links to programs and information sources that may be of use. Following the General Links section all of the links that were referenced throughout the handbook are indexed by chapter.

General Links

Access Board	
URL	http://www.access-board.gov
Comment	The Access Board is a clearninghouse for information on maintaining compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

American Public Transportation Association (APTA)	
URL	http://www.apta.com
Comment	APTA is an association of public transportation providers. APTA generally represents larger systems.

Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM)	
URL	http://www.fta.dot.gov/CCAM
Comment	CCAM is a federal agency promoting coordination through information and technical assistance.

Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)	
URL	http://www.ctaa.org
Comment	CTAA is an association committed to ensuring mobility for Americans through research, education, and advocacy. CTAA genereally represents smaller systems.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)	
URL	http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov
Comment	The FMCSA is responsible for the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	
URL	http://www.fta.dot.gov
Comment	The FTA is the main administrative body governing public transportation. The FTA funds many public transportation programs through capital and operating grants.

Project Action	
URL	http://www.projectaction.org
Comment	Project Action works towards accessible community transportation for individuals with disabilities, through information, training, technical assistance, and grants.

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)	
URL	http://www.dphhs.state.mt.us
Comment	DPHHS is responsible for the administration of human service programs in Montana, including TANF and Medicaid.

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)	
URL	http://www.mdt.state.mt.us
Comment	MDT administers several funding programs for public and human service transportation in Montana.

State of Montana	
URL	http://www.discoveringmontana.com
Comment	The State of Montana website provides access to all state agencies, contact information, and laws and regulations.

Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Reports	
URL	http://www4.trb.org/trb/onlinepubs.nsf/web/TCRP_Reports
Comment	TCRP reports present useful information on a broad range of topics related to transit.

Chapter 1

Montana Transportation Coordination Website	
URL	http://www.coe.montana.edu/wti/TrCoordn/index.html
Comment	The Montana Transportation Coordination Website is the companion to this handbook, providing additional resources for coordination in the state, including a database of human service and transportation providers.

Chapter 5

FTA Best Practice Procurement Manual	
URL	http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/admin/BPPM/
Comment	This manual details procurement practices for FTA grant recipients.

Federal Communications Commission – Two Way Radio	
URL	http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/itfs&mds/about/twoway.html
Comment	This FCC site provides information on Two Way Radio systems, including information on licensing new systems.

Chapter 6

Secretary of State's Office – Information on Forming a New Business in Montana	
URL	http://sos.state.mt.us/css/BSB/New_Business.asp
Comment	This site gives step-by-step information on forming a new business in Montana. All necessary forms are included on this site.

IRS – Information on the Regulations Governing Non-Profit Organizations	
URL	http://www.irs.gov/charities/index.html
Comment	This site details the federal tax laws governing non-profit organizations.

Federal Communications Commission – Two Way Radio	
URL	http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/itfs&mds/about/twoway.html
Comment	This FCC site provides information on Two Way Radio systems, including information on licensing new systems.

Scheduling, Dispatching, and Accounting Software	
URL	http://www.apta.com/sites/business/computer.htm
Comment	This site lists some of the software packages available for scheduling for transportation providers.

Guidebook for Selecting Appropriate Technology Systems for Small Urban and Rural Public Transportation Operators	
URL	http://www4.trb.org/trb/onlinepubs.nsf/web/TCRP_Reports
Comment	This report gives information choosing technology solutions for small transportation systems.

Montana CDL Information	
URL	http://www.doj.state.mt.us/mvd/license.htm
Comment	This site provides information on obtaining commercial drivers' licenses in Montana.

Chapter 7

ADA Technical Assistance Manuals	
URL	http://www.access-board.gov/transit/manuals/Manuals-list.htm
Comment	These manuals provide commentary on the ADA regulations as they apply to transportation providers.

Implementation Guidelines for Drug and Alcohol Regulations in Mass Transit	
URL	http://transit-safety.volpe.dot.gov/publications/substance/ImplementationGuidelines/ImplementationGuidelines.pdf
Comment	This document provides instructions for implementing drug testing procedures in compliance with FTA regulations.

Best Practices Manual: FTA Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs	
URL	http://transit-safety.volpe.dot.gov/publications/safety/BestPractices/BestPractices.pdf
Comment	This document provides examples for implementing drug testing procedures in compliance with FTA regulations.

FMCSA Drug and Alcohol Testing Rule (49 CFR 382)	
URL	http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rulesregs/fmcsr/regs/382menu.htm
Comment	This site provides information regarding the FMCSA drug and alcohol testing rules, which apply to holders of CDLs..

FMCSA Home Page	
URL	http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov
Comment	The FMCSA is responsible for the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program.

Chapter 8

Scheduling, Dispatching, and Accounting Software	
URL	http://www.apta.com/sites/business/computer.htm
Comment	This site lists some of the software packages available for scheduling for transportation providers.

Guidebook for Selecting Appropriate Technology Systems for Small Urban and Rural Public Transportation Operators	
URL	http://www4.trb.org/trb/onlinepubs.nsf/web/TCRP_Reports
Comment	This report gives information choosing technology solutions for small transportation systems.

Chapter 9

MDT Transit Section	
URL	http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/departments/transportation_planning/transit_programs/
Comment	The MDT Transit Section administers many of the federal and state funding programs for public and human service transportation.

Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)	
URL	http://www.ctaa.org
Comment	CTAA is an association committed to ensuring mobility for Americans through research, education, and advocacy.

CTAA: Resource Guide, 2000: Federal Funding Sources	
URL	http://www.ctaa.org//ct/resource/funding.asp
Comment	This document profiles many federal funding programs that can be used for transportation purposes.

CTAA: Community Transportation Magazine: Jan.-Feb. 1999: Non-Traditional Funds for Community Transportation	
URL	http://www.ctaa.org/ct/janfeb99/funding.asp
Comment	This document profiles some non-traditional funding sources that can be used for transportation purposes.

The Foundation Center	
URL	http://www.foundationcenter.org
Comment	The Foundation Center is a contact source for private foundations funding a variety of different programs.

Appendices

Appendix A – Abbreviations and Glossary

The definitions of key terms and meanings of all abbreviations used in this manual are listed in Appendix A.

Appendix B – References

References are listed in Appendix B.

Appendix C – Survey Data (Separate Volume)

The methodology and results of the pre-implentation data collection survey are listed in Appendix C. Because of the scope of data collected, Appendix C is a separate volume, which is available upon request. The results of the survey are also viewable at the Montana Coordinated Transportation website.

For a hard copy, contact the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities:

Mail: *P.O. Box 526*
Helena, Montana 59624
Phone: *(866) 443-4332 (Toll-Free); or*
(406) 443-4332

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Appendix

A

Abbreviations and Glossary

Appendix A lists the definitions of key terms related to coordination and meanings of all abbreviations used in this document.

AAA – Area Agency on Aging

Accessibility – The extent to which all persons are able to approach and utilize a transportation system.

ACCT – Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation [Washington State]

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

Ambulatory – Able to walk

AOA – Administration on Aging

APTA – American Public Transportation Association

Assistant – An individual who assists people with disabilities in accessing transportation services.

AVL – Automatic Vehicle Location

Block Grant – A grant dedicated to some general issue or purpose without specific guidelines detailing its use.

Brokerage – A method of providing transportation services in which one agency is responsible for scheduling the vehicles of several agencies.

CCAM – Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility

CFR – Code of Federal Regulations

Client Dumping – The process of human service agencies routing their clients to general public transportation in order receive subsidized fares and save over contract rates.

Client Shedding – see Client Dumping.

COA – Council on Aging

Collaboration – The level of coordination between communication and consolidation; collaboration involves the formalization of the process of two or more organizations working together.

Commercial Driver's License (CDL) – A class of drivers license required for individuals driving vehicles with a capacity of 16 or more passengers, administered by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

Communication – The simplest level of coordination; communication involves informally working together towards common goals.

Consolidation – The highest level of coordination; consolidation takes place when two or more organizations join or merge their resources for the benefit of all participants.

Coordination – Transportation coordination refers to two or more agencies working together in order achieve more efficient service, better quality service, increased capacity, and to do more with less.

CSBG – Community Service Block Grant

CTAA – Community Transportation Association of America

DAPM – Drug and Alcohol Program Manager

DBE – Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

Deadhead – Mileage or hours vehicles are operated without revenue passengers.

Demand Responsive Service – A method of providing transportation services in which customers request rides on an as-needed basis, usually with a defined window of minimum notice.

DOT – Department of Transportation

DPHHS – Department of Public Health and Human Services

FAIM – Families Achieving Independence in Montana (Montana's TANF program)

FCC – Federal Communication Commission

FHWA – Federal Highway Administration

Fixed Route Service – A method of providing transportation services in which vehicles operate along pre-determined routes.

FMCSA – Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

FTA – Federal Transit Administration

GPS – Global Position System

HTML – Hyper Text Markup Language (format for web pages)

In Kind Service – A good or service provided to a transportation service without a monetary fee.

Insurance Pool – A form of insurance when a group of agencies agree to fund the liability of all participating agencies.

Joint Use Arrangement – An agreement between two or more agencies to share vehicles or other resources. Joint use arrangements spell out the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved.

Liability – Legal responsibility

Local Match – The portion of a grant-funded project that must paid for by the grant recipient, typically expressed as a percentage.

MCA – Montana Code Annotated

MCDD – Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities

MDT – Montana Department of Transportation

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – A written agreement detailing the rights and responsibilities of all parties to the agreement. An MOU is a less formal document than a contract.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – An agency in large cities responsible for planning transportation resources. In Montana, MPOs are located in Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula.

MRPNS – Montana Rural Passenger Needs Study

Non-Ambulatory – Not able to walk

PAB – Public Assistance Bureau

Paratransit – Specialized transportation for individuals who are not able to access general public transportation services due to disabilities.

Partial-Brokerage – A type of brokerage system in which the agency responsible for scheduling vehicles of other agencies also operates their own vehicles.

PDF – Portable Document Format (a means of transferring documents over the internet)

PSC – Public Service Commission

Request for Proposal (RFP) – A competitive bidding process in which possible contractors submit bids and qualifications and the issuer of the RFP makes a selection based on cost and merit.

Revenue Miles or Hours – Periods during which vehicles are operated with revenue passengers aboard.

RPA – Regional Planning Association

RTAP – Rural Transportation Assistance Program

Self-Insurance – When an agency funds its own liability through payments from revenue or a liability fund; agencies that self-insure must be able to prove that they are financially solvent to fund their own liability to legal limitations.

SSBG – Social Service Block Grant

STAR – Sweetwater [Wyoming] Transit Authority Resources

Subscription Service – A method of providing transportation services in which participants have regularly scheduled rides, such as every Tuesday at noon.

TANF – Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

TDP – Transportation Development Plan

TEA-21 – Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century

TIP – Transportation Improvement Plan

TransADE – Transportation Assistance for the Disabled and Elderly

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – A group of transportation stakeholders in a locality in Montana who meet to discuss and plan the transportation resources for their area.

Transportation Disadvantaged – Those people who are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation because of mental or physical disabilities, age, or

income status. Transportation disadvantages individuals rely on public transportation, family, friends, and taxis for needed transportation.

Trip – One passenger embarking at a source location and disembarking at a destination location. A "round-trip" is considered two trips.

URL – Uniform Resource Locator (Internet Address)

VR – Vocational Rehabilitation

WTI – Western Transportation Institute, Montana State University – Bozeman

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Appendix

B

References

Appendix B lists sources of data that were consulted in preparation of this manual.

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