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Theme #3: Transportation Access and Mobility

Multi-Modal Concept

1. Develop case examples of methods rural communities have used to improve mobility and access to services, including improving connections to urban activity centers and the national transportation network.
2. Identify best practices for the dissemination of information about rural multimodal transportation options (such as destinations that are accessible by foot, biking, transit, etc) and locally-available alternatives to driving such as home delivery of groceries.
3. Development and implementation of multi-modal trip planning and booking, merging fixed-route to demand-response services (RNS25).
4. Evaluate the effects of implementing Mobility Management, which is defined as "organizing a network of diverse transportation services and providers to satisfy customer needs" and Mobility as a Service (MaaS) more generally. Identify methods for collecting data to forecast demand for managed-mobility services and methods for allocating costs and revenues amongst potential partner (government, non-profit, and for-profit) organizations.
5. Develop visionary descriptions of the steps rural communities can take to move toward a well-coordinated multimodal transportation system. Identify case examples of communities that have fully or partially implemented a multimodal concept and the characteristics of successful and not-so-successful modal interconnection projects.
6. Develop recommended practices for assuring that rural multimodal transportation options are accurately depicted in mobile apps such as Google Maps and databases such as OpenStreetMap.
7. Identify effective transportation agency practices to support healthy food accessibility (ADD20).
8. Identify barriers to the coordination of healthcare-related and non-healthcare-related transportation, including unintended effects of state laws and federal regulations. Develop case examples of successful and not-so-successful collaborations between healthcare organizations and transportation agencies (AP060).
9. Identify methods to increase other transportation options besides public transportation within a rural county without subsidized funding.
10. Identify methodologies for connecting with Greyhound and other intrastate carriers.
11. Develop guidance on overcoming resistance to non-highway transportation investments in rural areas.
12. Evaluate the feasibility of using rural transit vehicles to deliver small parcels, similar to the Postbus concept in Europe. Identify potential legislative/regulatory actions to support this concept.

Ridesourcing and Volunteers

1. Modern approaches to ride hailing services for rural communities. (RNS5).
2. Analyze the effect of rural density on the cost of providing ridesourcing services, the market for such services, and the availability of drivers and vehicles.
3. Analyze the effect of rural telecommunications coverage gaps on the feasibility of rural ridesourcing.
4. Analyze the impact of real-time dispatch on demand for ridesourcing.
5. Evaluate how to address equity concerns if ridesourcing is used as public transit.
6. Evaluate the potential for development of public-private partnerships for ridesourcing in rural and small urban areas, for example having existing rural public transit agencies providing some or all of the drivers and vehicles utilized by ridesourcing companies.
7. Best practices and lessons learned from deployment and/or barriers to deployment of shared mobility services and other emerging ridesourcing technologies in rural areas.
8. Document the benefits and limitations of the use of volunteer programs for rural healthcare-related transportation.
9. Document methods for coordinating volunteer programs with transit and paratransit services.
10. Investigate opportunities to provide a partnership between driver's education students driving for practice and the needs of non-driving elderly who are aging in place.
11. Assess if smaller vehicles (1 to 1) and volunteer transportation should become part of public transportation in rural areas and best practices for accomplishing this.
12. Identify strategies to developing and sustaining volunteer driver programs as an effective mode of low-cost accessible transportation (ABE60).
13. Maximizing benefits and addressing challenges to volunteer driver transportation programs (APO60).
14. Investigate causes of the decline in rural carpooling since its peak in the mid-1970s.

Shared-Use

1. Evaluate how shared-use mobility services are being implemented in rural communities and their effectiveness.
2. Document existing shared-use mobility services that are meeting the needs of people with disabilities and identify additional methods to utilize shared-use mobility services for lowering costs and improving access compared to paratransit services.

Specific User Types

1. Document best practices for mobility within rural communities for non-drivers and as an alternative option for some who can drive.
2. Identify basic levels of service for mobility.
3. Identify the needs of the frail populations that use transit (5310) programs for services beyond basic service.
4. Document options, strategies, and best practices for disability access.
5. Identify the mobility preferences of rural seniors.

6. Identify effective senior driver education programs in rural communities.
7. Analyze the mobility preferences of Millennials in rural communities.
8. Analyze the impact of available mobility options in attracting or helping retain Millennials in rural communities.
9. Evaluate short-term support programs for access to work.
10. Mobility Inclusion for Un(der)served Population with the Emerging Technologies (TCRP B-47)
11. Collect rural generational mode choice preferences from various states/regions to develop a more granular view of relationships between community type, land use, etc.
12. Analyze relationships between transportation costs and rural mode choice to identify possible variations based on age, income, and employment stability.
13. Identify emerging trends affecting differences in rural transportation demand and trip-making patterns for various age groups: are they changing based on generational expectations as well as the customarily expected differences related to on life cycle stage?
14. Evaluate the changing demographics of people living in rural areas and identify current and emerging trends and how those trends affect safety for those users.