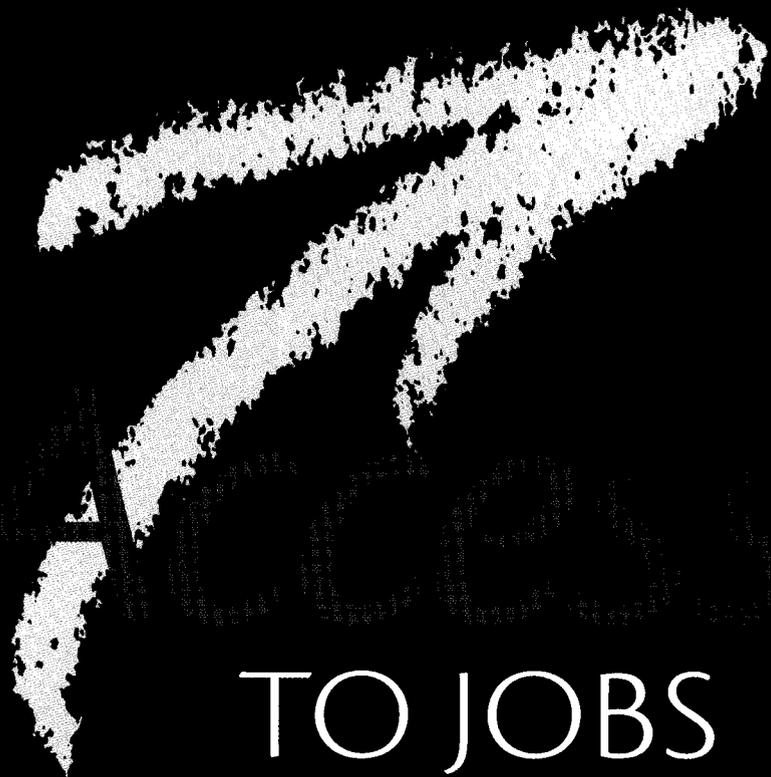




U.S. Department
of Transportation



TO JOBS

A Guide to Innovative
Practices in Welfare-to-Work
Transportation



Access TO JOBS

A Guide to Innovative Practices in Welfare-to-Work Transportation

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This report summarizes welfare reform transportation challenges and looks at the welfare-to-work activities of several states, metropolitan planning organizations and public mass transit agencies. In addition, it details the most pertinent research relating to welfare transportation, federal funding sources for welfare transportation and it highlights the current technical assistance efforts on the subject.

I. Introduction to the Issue

Transportation's Key Role in Welfare Reform

The crucial role of public transportation in welfare reform is often obscured by more obvious issues like job placement and child care. Yet without effective transportation, the welfare-to-work transition is virtually impossible.

Public transportation, as the innovative practices in this report illustrate, has a pivotal role to play in many American's journey from welfare to work. Today, fewer than one in 10 recipients of public assistance owns an automobile — so driving to that new job is rarely an option. And nearly 40 percent of the 10 million daily public transit riders in the U.S. are considered low-income. For these people, public transit is more than merely a ride — it is a lifeline.

However, public transportation services, as they are currently constituted in many areas, Cannot meet all the new transportation demands that welfare-to-work transportation can be expected to generate. Although many job opportunities will continue to be available in central cities and downtown areas that are well served by transit, the growth of new jobs in suburban locations that are difficult, and often impossible, to reach by conventional transit services remains a genuine issue.

This report summarizes welfare reform transportation challenges and looks at the welfare-to-work transportation activities of several states, metropolitan planning organizations and transit agencies. In addition, it details the most pertinent research relating to welfare transportation, federal funding sources for welfare transportation and it highlights the current technical assistance efforts on the subject.

Welfare Reform is the Catalyst

President Clinton signed the welfare reform bill in August of 1996 with the intention of completely overhauling the previous program. The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program was replaced with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF is a state-administered block grant apportioned to each state on a formula basis from the federal government. As its name indicates, the funding is temporary in that recipients will have no more than 60 months total (some states have chosen shorter periods) to find

employment. After 60 months of support, TANF benefits end. Each state has submitted a plan to the Department of Health and Human Services detailing how it intends to spend its TANF allocation. A year into this great social experiment, many states are reporting significant reductions in their welfare rolls.

These welfare reform successes present a unique challenge for public transportation. Some states are seeking to broker the purchase of welfare-to-work transportation for TANF clients, others are combining their efforts with the Medicaid program, while still others are experimenting with reverse-commute routes. Regardless, the clock is ticking for public assistance recipients.

The Planning Challenge: Jobs Moved Faster Than Transportation

Too often, job seekers are forced to continue on welfare because they have no way to get home from work

Although the downtown areas of many U.S. cities continue to be prime employment locations, in virtually all metropolitan areas there has been explosive job growth in the suburbs. Many of these newly created suburban jobs will prove to

be very attractive to people who are making the transition from welfare to work.

In many cases, there has actually been a significant reduction in the overall number of jobs in downtown areas, making it all the more important that effective transportation links be established between suburban job centers and urban residential neighborhoods where the majority of people on welfare currently live.

The Time Challenge: Work Hours and Service Hours Don't Match

Another impediment to public transportation's successful role in welfare reform is service hours. Years of diminishing federal transit funding and cuts to operating assistance have led many public transit providers to both cut routes and scale back hours of operation. For many fixed-route transportation providers (in urban and rural areas), service after 7:00 p.m. is too costly to operate. But the jobs that many welfare recipients find themselves qualified to fill often involve shift work and evening hours. Too often, job seekers are forced to continue on welfare because they have no way to get home from work.

The Rural Challenge: Not Enough Public Transit

There is a myth among many that welfare-to-work transportation is only an issue for cities. Unemployment is equally critical in rural areas and small towns. In fact, the rate of unemployment is actually higher in non-metropolitan areas than in cities. Nationally, one in four families receiving public assistance live in rural areas and a disproportionate share of non-metropolitan residents reside in poverty-level households. In rural Somerset County on Maryland's Eastern Shore, for example, there are two welfare recipients for every available job - an equation for failure under the new welfare law.

Combine these figures with the startling fact that 40 percent of all rural counties in the U.S. have no available public transportation, and one recognizes the growing crises in our nation's small towns and countrysides.

II. Determining Transit Needs

With even an 80-minute commute, residents from these areas could reach less than 44 percent of the appropriate job openings.

Research is a valuable tool in identifying whether spatial mismatches (the term describing the phenomenon of welfare recipients living far from job opportunities and having no transit to bridge the gap) or other barriers exist in local areas that keep many welfare recipients from employment. In the following innovative practices the research efforts of several regions are profiled. These case studies are presented because they have taken exemplary steps to define the problem. While much of this analysis used computer-based geographic information systems (GIS) mapping software, many areas have completed effective analysis without relying upon computer systems.

Study Finds Jobs Not Accessible to Welfare Recipients

Cleveland, Ohio is an older industrial city that has suffered serious losses in population, housing and jobs. Along with these changes — and also because of them — many of the city's welfare recipients have become geographically isolated.

Last year, Case Western Reserve University's Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change (CUPSC), in collaboration with the Cuyahoga (Ohio) County Departments of Entitlement and Employment Services, studied welfare participants. Intended to assist local government officials in anticipating the effects and challenges of the new federal welfare policies, the study posed the following questions: What is the employment potential of long-term public assistance recipients? Can the regional economy absorb so many low-skill workers? What is the likely impact on local neighborhood economies of time-limiting assistance?

By examining the public transit routes from selected locations in neighborhoods with high concentrations of public-assistance recipients, the study found that with even an 80-minute commute, residents from these areas could reach less than 44 percent of the appropriate job openings. It should be noted that these studies were conducted during rush-hour transit schedules, when the connections are the closest together. Most entry-level, low-skill jobs do not operate along conventional rush-hour schedules, therefore

the actual commutes are potentially much longer.

In a later study also performed by Case Western, a local labor market information system was developed to assess the impact of welfare reform. Previous researchers had assessed local labor demand and labor supply, but had failed to analyze job-skill requirements and spatial mismatch.

To get a clear picture of the dynamics of welfare entry and exit, the pre-reform study was conducted on two levels. The first looked at a 1995 cross-sectional caseload analysis to determine the potential consequences of selected policy changes for that particular population. Additionally, the study tracked welfare system entry and exit statistics to obtain a pre-reform basis for future studies. With all this data amassed in a central and accessible way, and with the help of geographic information system software, this research provided a valuable baseline to evaluate, predict and soften the negative impacts of time limits on AFDC recipients.

Both studies discovered that jobs that match the skill levels of most welfare recipients, regardless of occupation or field, are likely to be low-paid and temporary. Equally important, they found that jobs that are appropriate to the recipient's skill levels are not accessible within reasonable commute times. In the Cleveland area, inner-city residents with cars can reach one-third of

the available jobs in about 20 minutes. If these residents double their commute times, they can access three-quarters of the job openings in the area.

In a 40-minute public transit commute, residents of disadvantaged neighborhoods could reach only 8 to 15 percent of the jobs.

Without cars however, (U.S. DOT statistics have found that 6.5 percent of welfare recipients own a car) employment accessibility declines precipitously. In a 40-minute public transit commute, residents of disadvantaged neighborhoods could reach only eight to 15 percent of the jobs in the metropolitan area. After doubling their commute time they can reach, at most, only 44 percent of the jobs.

Such statistics are grim and present an overwhelming need for a new approach to address the transportation needs of public assistance recipients.

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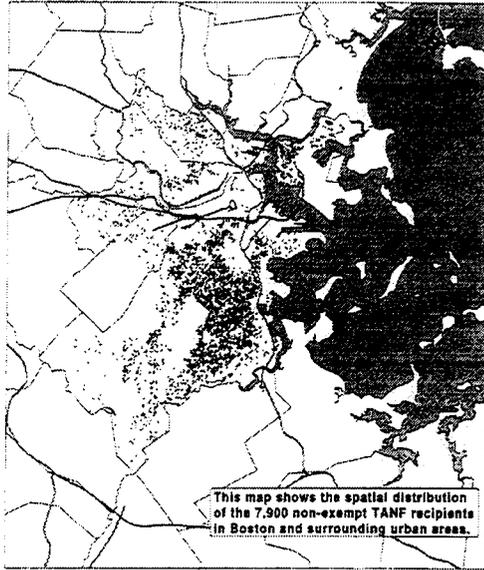
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Percent of Entry-Level Jobs Accessible Within Various Commute Times from Selected Cleveland-Akron Metropolitan Neighborhoods

Neighborhood	Average Commute 20 min. 37 min.		75th Percentile Commute 25 min. 45 min.		95th Percentile Commute 40 min. 80 min.	
	auto	public transit	auto	public transit	auto	public transit
Cleveland - West Side	33.9%	11.5%	44.3%	16.6%	70.3%	43.4%
Cleveland - Near East Side	35.4%	12.7%	48.9%	16.5%	73.6%	43.3%
Cleveland - East Side	27.8%	8.3%	48.5%	11.1%	70.7%	39.5%
Cleveland - Mt. Pleasant	38.3%	9.2%	50.9%	17.0%	73.3%	40.9%
Cleveland - Empowerment Zone	35.0%	15.0%	51.0%	21.0%	75.0%	44.0%

Source: Leete, L & Bania, N. (1996). *The Impact of Welfare Reform on Labor Markets*. Cleveland: Center on Urban Poverty & Social Change. Case Western Reserve University

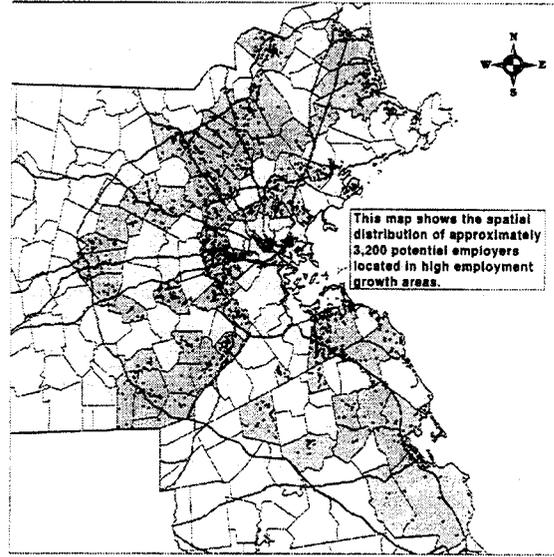
**Location of Non-Exempt TANF Recipients
(Boston, Cambridge, Somerville, & Brookline)**



Map Layers
 - Massachusetts Boundary
 - Town Boundaries
 - Highway
 - Recipients

Prepared by: US DOT/Volpe Center

Potential Employers in High-Growth Towns



Map Layers
 - Massachusetts Boundary
 - Town Boundaries
 - Employers
 - Highway

Prepared by: US DOT/Volpe Center

As part of the study, the locations of potential employers and of welfare recipients were mapped and then compared.

Studies Spotlight Spatial Mismatch

Given that only 6.5 percent of families receiving public assistance own an automobile, can these people without cars reach jobs and support services? Does public transportation provide an adequate link to job sites? Given the many places that women, the primary adult recipients of welfare funds, must go in a day (e.g., shopping, social services, doctors, job sites, and day care), can available transportation services help women coming off public assistance? Do transportation barriers to employment and the costs of overcoming these barriers act as a disincentive to leave the welfare rolls?

Question like these were addressed by Joseph Coughlin, director of the New England University Transportation Center at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston, in his research offering recommendations for transportation, community development and welfare reform planning.

Using geographic information systems (GIS) mapping software to examine Georgia's Cobb County, Coughlin and Michael Rich, associate professor of political science at Emory University in Atlanta, found further evidence of the spatial mismatch between job opportunities located in the suburbs and the large number of unemployed people living in metropolitan Atlanta.

Coughlin and Rich plotted the locations of available entry-

level jobs advertised in the employment section of one Sunday newspaper, residences of welfare recipients, sites for support services such as day care and training centers and the availability of transportation in Atlanta's metropolitan area. They found that only 43 percent of entry-level job opportunities in Cobb County are accessible by the Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transit Authority (MARTA). Further, the majority of these jobs entail a one- to two-hour commute time.

A similar study conducted in the Boston metropolitan area. It shows that in this city where welfare recipients have good access to transit from their homes, they still have a difficult time reaching the high job-growth areas in the suburbs.

Coughlin's report, *Planning for Equity: Transportation and Access to Jobs*, stresses that current transportation services are not adequate for accessing available jobs, training and related support services.

For communities to plan and implement successful access-to-work strategies, Coughlin advocates a three-tiered approach.

First, communities should analyze transportation needs and access-to-work issues from the customer level: What types of people make up the population of people coming off public assistance and entering the job market? What is the extent of their multiple or conflicting trip demands? Will they be traveling to a

dispersed job site? Do they have nontraditional work hours? Do they have limited money? Do they have access to a car?

Coughlin recommends coordinating human service with public transportation providers, as well as collaborating with employers and employer associations to provide on-site services.

The second level of analysis is from the system level: To what extent are the transit infrastructure and services available to serve city-to-suburb trips? Is this service provided outside the 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. work pattern? Here, Coughlin supports using GIS as a tool to analyze a particular region and to plan for greater access to jobs. He proposes instituting flexible, reliable and increased transit options for city residents so that they can reach suburban jobs.

The third level of analysis is from the facility level: Do suburban transit stops facilitate pedestrian access as well as park-and-ride options? Are office parks and shopping plazas accessible by public transit? Is there security during off-hours?

Coughlin recommends shuttle services, heightened security and pedestrian enhancements as approaches to meeting a metropolitan area's transportation and access-to-jobs needs from this level.

By documenting Boston's spatial mismatch, Coughlin demonstrates transportation's role as a crucial element of successful welfare reform.

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GIS Mapping Technology Helps Match Workers with Transit, and Jobs

St. Mary's County, in rural Southern Maryland, is marked by sprawling farmlands and the occasional small town. Most of the large private employers in the area are contractors supporting activities at the Patuxent River Naval Air Warfare Center. The majority of the county's 80,000 inhabitants reside in the vicinity

of this base, while the rest of the county is sparsely populated.

With welfare reform underway and thousands facing reductions or cessation in public assistance, St. Mary's County, in concert with the KFH Group, a consulting firm in Bethesda, Md., decided to utilize geographic information system (GIS) mapping software to help make steady work a reality for welfare recipients.

Case workers can see where most public assistance recipients live, along with the location of suitable employment opportunities, daycare centers and available public transportation

To better serve the community, the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services (DSS) wanted GIS mapping software to provide a clear vision of where employment opportunities were located in relation to where the people who needed transportation to work lived. Public transit has long been recognized as a necessity in connecting people to jobs and services, yet the advanced GIS technology has only recently been available to assist in effectively assessing and making this link.

With the assistance of GIS mapping, DSS case workers can see where most public assistance recipients live, along with the location of suitable employment opportunities, daycare centers and available public transportation. GIS mapping software makes it possible to engineer the most efficient and plausible routes to transport people to all of these services.

The St. Mary's County DSS was able to develop a geographic portrait of current welfare recipients and the available jobs and services with GIS mapping in several simple and easily replicated steps.

- Step 1** - Enter the current addresses of welfare recipients in a computer database with coding to denote single teenage mothers, families, etc.
- Step 2** - Create a computer map of client locations that is GIS-based, using off-the-shelf software.
- Step 3** - Generate another computer map of major employment and family service locations.
- Step 4** - Compare the mapped data with existing transit services, and then perform an analysis to demonstrate where new service should be targeted. Direct routes to affordable day care and other social services can also be analyzed.

By making use of available technology, St. Mary's County has facilitated a more seamless transition from welfare to work in Maryland for the client.

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Using GIS To Assess Mobility

It is by now well understood that people receiving welfare face tremendous mobility challenges. Very few welfare families own a car and 90 percent are headed by single mothers; about half of these mothers have children under the age of five. Given their need to retain their family responsibilities, these women's transportation needs will be much greater once they are working. Moreover, welfare families are disproportionately concentrated in big cities, while many of the jobs for which mothers are qualified are located in the suburbs. Because transit does not typically serve these suburban areas, the transportation available to welfare recipients is characterized by a "job accessibility gap".

In general, three classes of deficiencies prevent public transit from providing welfare recipients with adequate access to available jobs; (1) many outer suburbs are either beyond the reach of transit or served only by commuter rail, which often fails to provide direct access to employment sites and is moreover prohibitively expensive; (2) in many suburban areas served by transit there is a substantial gap between existing routes and growing employment areas; and (3) even when transit does provide direct access to a suburban job, the trip takes too long or requires several transfers, or transit schedules and hours do not match work schedules.

Geographic information systems, or GIS, provide transportation agencies with a powerful tool for understanding the specific dimensions of these mobility problems. A spatial analysis using GIS can determine the relative proximity of recipients and employers to transit service; travel times and distances between points or over the entire network; and any obvious gaps in transit service. Planners can then use this information to modify or improve transit routes or to develop new services. If updated regularly, the GIS data can also be used by welfare caseworkers and employment counselors to help recipients find and reach suitable jobs.

The most basic spatial analysis of access to jobs requires three sets of data; (1) GIS maps of transit routes; (2) addresses of welfare recipients who are required to find work; and (3) addresses or potential employers. Ideally, the analysis also should include the locations of day care centers, schools, job training programs, and other critical services.

Transit Data

Many transit agencies use GIS for planning and maintain geographic data on their transit system. For those areas whose transit agencies do not, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics has available a CD-ROM with maps of all major transit Systems in the U.S. However, because this data is somewhat out of date, it may be necessary to work closely with the transit agency to make sure that the maps are accurate. In any case, it will probably be necessary to add information on any private transportation services, commuter services, or paratransit services, should such information be desired for the analysis.

Welfare Recipient Data

The addresses of welfare recipients can be obtained from the state agency responsible for administering welfare programs. To protect privacy, the welfare agency may wish to remove recipients' names beforehand. Should the agency choose not to release the information, it is possible to substitute census data available for city block groups. This data can be obtained from the Census Bureau directly or from most large public or university libraries. (However, because the populations of suburban and rural areas are far more dispersed than those of cities, census data is not adequate for an analysis of these recipients' transportation needs.) Another option is for the welfare agency itself to convert the addresses to block-group-level data, or for the transit agency or MPO to delete all addresses from the system after geocoding them (converting the addresses to latitude and longitude coordinates).

Employer Data

This third step, determining which businesses may potentially hire welfare recipients and mapping them, is more complicated than locating either the transit system or welfare recipients. In general, the use to which the analysis will be put determines the most appropriate source of employer data. For a broad system-level or policy analysis, employment projections indicating which industries in which areas are likely to hire recipients

are an appropriate place to start. However, if the objective is to implement additional or complementary transportation services or to assist recipients in finding and retaining a job, information on actual job openings is preferable.

Employment Projections

Each state's labor or employment department develops employment projections for the U.S. Department of Labor. Two types of projections are available and can be used in a spatial analysis: projections of industry employment and projections of occupational employment. These projections indicate which industries or occupations are likely to create the greatest number of new jobs. Ideally, transportation agencies performing the spatial analysis should use employment projections developed for counties or service delivery areas, rather than for an entire state.

If industry employment data are used, the first step is to determine which of the fast-growing industries will create the most new entry-level jobs. This is achieved using the Department of Labor's industry/occupation matrix, which rank-orders the occupations employed by each industry (by Standard Industrial Classification Code). The industries found to employ the greatest percentages of entry-level workers are those that will be included on the maps. The next step is to obtain the addresses of actual companies in these industries, either from the state labor department or from a private directory or database.

Using occupational employment projections first requires a determination of which of the growing occupations are entry-level. Then, the Department of Labor's occupation/industry matrix is used to determine the industries that hire these workers. Company addresses are obtained from the same sources indicated above: state labor departments or private services.

Actual Job Openings

There are many potential sources of information on job openings at a given point in time. Classified ads are one such source. Another is the one-stop job centers being set up across the country. The latter is a particularly promising source of data, particularly given the potential to integrate the one-stop centers with welfare employment and transportation brokerage services.

Other Data

As mentioned above, the GIS analysis should ideally include the locations of child care centers, job training programs and other services. Child care data can be obtained from the state office responsible for licensing day care centers and after-school programs. The state labor department or welfare agency should maintain a list of all job training sites authorized for recipients.

Summary

GIS can be an invaluable tool for MPOs and transit agencies seeking to assess the mobility options of welfare recipients and others without access to an automobile. In particular, a spatial analysis may suggest ways to modify the existing transit system to meet recipients' needs or indicate which types of improvements may yield the greatest benefits. However, such an analysis is only a starting point. Improving mobility, and thus helping recipients to find and retain jobs, requires active collaboration and partnership among transportation agencies, state welfare departments, human services agencies, one-stop job centers, private industry groups, and local employers- in short, all of those responsible for implementing and meeting the challenge of welfare reform.

III. State Welfare-To- Work Transportation Efforts

A key component of the welfare reform law is devolution of power to the states. States have been thrust into new roles: designing and managing welfare programs. Each state, naturally, has developed its own unique program. The following profiles detail several states' efforts.

States have been thrust into new roles: designing and managing welfare programs.

Michigan

The state of Michigan's welfare reform program, To Strengthen Michigan Families, has been underway since 1992. Because Michigan was four years ahead of federal welfare reform, many of its programs are serving as models for other states.

One of the components of the state program, Project Zero, is a demonstration effort intended to reduce to zero the number of public assistance households in the pilot areas without earned income. The pilot areas include Alpena, Menominee, Midland and Ottawa Counties, and the Tireman and Romulus Districts in Wayne County.

Building Coalitions

Michigan approached the challenge of Project Zero by building a coalition of state agencies to help welfare recipients gain and retain employment. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), through their Bureau of Urban and Public Transportation (UPTRAN), worked closely with the Family Independence Agency (FIA), formerly the Department of Social Services, and the Michigan Jobs Commission (MJC) on this initiative. At the outset, a statewide information exchange effort introduced each county and district FIA director to their local transit agencies, the MichiVan program (statewide vanpooling) and local ridesharing offices.

At the local level, UPTRAN staff arranged meetings with county representatives from FIA, local transit providers, welfare officials, local community action agencies and other interested parties to overcome the barriers that prevent welfare recipients from accessing employment sites. These coordinated efforts build locally appropriate solutions.

Eliminating Barriers

For MDOT the challenge was to eliminate transportation as a barrier for Project Zero participants. This challenge has been met using the following mechanisms:

1. Providing rides for extended transportation service hours.
2. Providing transportation service to day care centers.
3. Allowing children on MichiVan vehicles.
4. Allowing the lease of MichiVan vehicles for purposes other than conventional vanpools.
5. Providing transportation to job interviews.
6. Providing vehicles to an FIA office in a county where there is no general public transportation.
7. Providing more than \$1 million in state money to extend transit service hours and areas of operation.

While these service extensions focus on the trip needs of the welfare reform clients, all of the services are open to the general public.

Michigan has approached the challenge posed by welfare-to-work requirements in a coordinated manner, at both the state and local levels. The most critical feature of the program has been to bring all the stakeholders (both state and local) to the table to discuss the client and develop services that address their needs. Another critical feature has been to fund these services. While Project Zero was a one year, intensive demonstration project focussed on selected areas, the mechanisms used to implement the program will be used in the future when Project Zero is expanded to include additional sites.

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Kentucky

On April 28, 1997 Kentucky Governor Paul Patton signed a \$5 million federal transit allocation for public transportation agencies throughout Kentucky — the largest public transit allocation that the state has ever seen. A portion of this funding will flow through Kentucky's new welfare initiative, Empower Kentucky, to guarantee transportation for all TANF recipients throughout the state.

As current welfare reform mandated that all recipients of state services must have better access to transportation, Kentucky officials realized they needed to completely revamp their program. Previously, many clients had been exempted from mandated programs such as job training and job placement because they were in rural areas that simply had no access to public transportation. A whopping 28 counties were completely exempted from training and work activities!

The EMPOWER Kentucky plan has set up a statewide transportation network composed of 16 regions. The regions were determined by analyzing an existing transit provider's fleet size and capacity. Additionally, an estimate of historical utilization of transportation was made by looking at the sparse pre-reform

welfare transportation data, but primarily by extrapolating from Medicaid data.

Each of the 16 regions will contract with a single provider to furnish the required transportation. These contracts will be bid competitively, and each provider will be responsible for providing all of the transportation themselves or for contracting for the necessary services on behalf of the customer. State monitoring will be conducted to ensure that consumers are being provided with appropriate service. All transportation providers must meet vehicle safety standards and driver qualification levels. EM-

POWER Kentucky estimates that the network will be implemented statewide within a one-year period, and that demonstration regions will be operating by early to mid-1998.

The most critical feature of the program has been to bring all the stakeholders to the table (both state and local) to discuss the client and develop services that address their needs.

The selected transportation provider will be paid a flat (or capitated) rate of \$3 per day for each welfare recipient that resides within the designated service area - regardless of whether or not the recipient uses the service. In return, the providers guarantee service for all public assistance recipients who need it. This fee, it is hoped, will be sufficient to cover the transportation costs of a limited number of consumers although many who live in rural areas will need a great deal more. Since the payments are made directly to the transit provider, the expenses of transporting clients in rural areas should be compensated by payments for recipients that do not use their transportation stipends. It's a gamble.

FTA Section 5309 funds which require a 20 percent match on the part of the participating transit agencies, will be used for capital expenditures. The actual distribution of the funding was based on a variety of factors from the mileage and age of existing vehicles to the provider's service area. For instance, preference was given to Appalachian areas and agencies with ridership that include high concentrations of welfare participants.

Overall, EMPOWER Kentucky's mission includes the general improvement of the present transportation to a system that is safe, efficient, ecologically conscious and financially responsible. The six-year plan calls for vast improvements to highways and infrastructure, and to a lesser extent, transit. Its ultimate benefits for welfare-to-work transportation lie in the guarantee of transportation for all recipients that request it. If sustainable by the participating agencies, the plan is a vast improvement over the previous system. It is highly resistant to fraud and does aim at empowering the impoverished. As the plan goes into effect, it merits close scrutiny as one that may be highly effective and practical in other states as well.

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South Carolina

The State of South Carolina is implementing welfare reform through the South Carolina Department of Social Services' Office of Family Independence (FI). To effectively provide adequate,

safe, reliable and cost-effective transportation resources for welfare recipients, state officials hired a project administrator from the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to develop appropriate transportation planning and implementation strategies.

Implementation Strategies

The project administrator for transportation has identified a number of steps in planning and implementation of welfare-to-work transportation.

1. Assess and analyze the welfare transportation needs at the state, regional and county levels. It is estimated that 80 percent of the FI caseload have ongoing transportation needs. The office has surveyed the transportation needs of all 46 local counties.
2. Identify short- and long-term solutions to transportation needs. Some solutions, policy changes and service designs have already been planned and/or implemented, for example:
 - The state Department of Social Services (DSS) has provided technical assistance through site visits and via the telephone to assist county DSS offices. To meet welfare transportation needs at the county level, that state DSS is helping counties link with existing transportation providers and establish on-going transit arrangements suitable to their local needs.
 - The state is considering policy revisions in purchased transportation service rates and individual service providers to provide greater flexibility for welfare transportation.
 - The state has provided temporary van rentals through approved private vendors to county offices for transporting public assistance recipients to jobs and training. These van rentals have been made available, thus far, in five counties.
 - The State is investigating using certified Medicaid individual transportation providers to handle low-volume welfare transportation needs. Under this arrangement, the cost of the trips would be billed to the FI program.
 - The State continues to coordinate and cooperate with the South Carolina DOT and the Interagency Committee on Coordinated Transit to ensure that transportation is provided in a coordinated manner.

The state is considering policy revisions in purchased transportation service rates and individual service providers to provide greater flexibility for welfare transportation.

- The DSS and the DOT are establishing a transportation pilot project involving seven county social services offices and six existing transportation providers. The project will take place in Allendale, Aiken, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Edgefield and Hampton Counties. The State is rotating its leased vehicles among county offices to meet transportation needs.

3. Develop a program and plan to address welfare transportation.

- The State was awarded a \$5,000 National Governor's Association (NGA) grant to be used for a transportation planning initiative for welfare reform. The DSS plans to supplement this grant and develop an RFP for a state-wide planning initiative to more clearly define directions for serving welfare recipients.
- Service options may include: Bidding out welfare-to-work transportation to existing transportation providers; providing transportation services internally through additional vehicle leases or purchases; employer or client-sponsored vanpools and/or vehicle ownership; and coordination with Medicaid transportation.

South Carolina is still in the planning stages for many of its employment transportation initiatives and has taken a coordinated approach by incorporating both transit providers and social service providers into the planning process.

The state FI program has maintained a flexible approach by considering policy changes to increase the availability of Transportation at the local level. The state welfare program has also taken the time and effort to survey its local offices to determine what transportation needs are most critical and how they might best be met.

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North Carolina

The State of North Carolina has planned and implemented a number of activities to help welfare recipients transition into the work world. The state's program, Work First, has been in effect since July 1995. North Carolina has coordinated its resources at the state level, bringing together the North Carolina Department of Transportation-Public Transportation Division (NCDOT-PTD), the North Carolina Division of Social Services (NCDSS) and the state Board of Education's Department of Public Instruction. These agencies have worked together on a number of initiatives.

Joint DSS-DOT County Visits

Representatives from the NCDSS and the NCDOT traveled together to several counties to participate in discussions relating to transportation. State and regional representatives from DOT and DSS also attended these meetings, along with county DSS directors and staff and local transportation coordinators. These meetings focused on the local barriers and solutions to transportation services.

Following these conferences, letters were written to local DSS directors identifying the issues and suggesting solutions. Copies of these letters were sent to all participants and follow-up is expected. These initial meetings were successful because they brought each party to the table to facilitate the communication necessary to design and implement coordinated transportation programs.

Transit Commuter Benefits

Both the Department of Social Services and Transportation are promoting the Internal Revenue Service's Transit Commuter Benefit to encourage employers to subsidize their employees' public transportation and/or vanpooling expenses. This program is good for all parties: the employer gets a tax break; the employee gets subsidized employment transportation; and the local transit system gets additional riders.

The North Carolina Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction passed a resolution in support of welfare recipients, which allows them to ride on school buses to access jobs provided by local school systems.

Rural Vanpooling

The Department of Transportation is promoting rural vanpooling to help meet rural employment transportation needs. NCDOT will provide a van to a county transit system with the expectation that the local employers will contribute to the transportation operating costs along with the employees.

Job Fairs

Both the DSS and the DOT have encouraged local transit systems to co-sponsor job fairs, along with local DSS offices, local community colleges (which typically provide job readiness training for Work First clients) and employers. At least three such job fairs have been held in the past year. The goals of the job fairs were:

To encourage employers to develop a transportation plan for their employees which will foster public transit use and may include incentives such as commuter subsidy benefits and flex time; to increase transit ridership by informing employees and employers about the availability and benefits of public transportation; to allow transit providers to receive input from users and potential users of their services; and to allow attendees to focus on job opportunities that are accessible via public transit. Job fairs have proven to be very successful and will likely be repeated in the future.

Ride Along Program

The DSS is encouraging counties that own vans purchased under the Work First program to allow non-Work First participants to ride in the vans as long as the riders pay their fair share. Allowing non-Work First participants on the vans allows other economically disadvantaged people to have access to transportation, increases vehicle productivity and generates additional revenue.

NCDOT Policies

The NCDOT, through the Transportation Development Plan process (soon to be the Community Transportation Services Plan), has long encouraged its grantees to coordinate local human service agency transportation programs with each other and with local public transit systems. A recent focus of the DOT has been to ensure that Work First programs are considered in the planning and implementation of local human service and general public transportation delivery.

Public School Bus Resolution

An innovative way in which North Carolina has helped improve access to jobs and training for Work First clients is coordination with the school bus network. In May 1997, the North Carolina Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction passed a resolution in support of welfare recipients, which allows them to ride on school buses to access jobs provided by local school systems - when there are no other alternative methods of transportation available. The adult riders are trained to serve as bus monitors when riding on the school buses.

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New Jersey

Through Work First New Jersey (WFNJ), the State of New Jersey is actively addressing the transportation challenges of persons transitioning from public assistance to the job market. Gov. Christie Whitman has dedicated nearly \$4 million to augment existing transportation networks and to provide welfare recipients with support services so that they can find and keep a job.

The transportation initiative was developed and will be administered by the Departments of Human Services and Transportation. The money will be divided into four categories: the

Get a Job, Get a Ride program, a planning fund to develop solutions to transportation needs, and the financing of welfare-to-work demonstration projects in Gloucester and Monmouth counties.

Get A Job, Get A Ride

The Get a Job, Get a Ride program, modeled after suburban Detroit's SMART transit system, will provide one month of free transportation on NJ Transit, the state's mass transit system, to any welfare recipient engaged in work or work-training activities.

County Level Planning

Each county is responsible for developing a transportation coordination plan that includes transportation for WFNJ participants, the senior population, people with disabilities, low income job seekers and others needing transportation to work.

New Jersey is expanding services to welfare participants through emphasizing partnerships with the public and private sectors — including business.

Each county's eligibility for federal and state transit funds is contingent upon submission of a coordination plan.

The NJDOT Transportation Innovation Fund is available on a competitive basis to counties and will be awarded for innovative transportation solutions to address gaps in welfare-to-work transportation service. For instance, welfare funds could be used to operate van pools to transport WFNJ recipients to UPS (which has limited bus access and no train line).

Demonstration Projects

The two demonstration projects in Gloucester and Monmouth counties will provide unique employment transportation solutions. The Monmouth County demonstration project will integrate the job and job-training trips of former welfare recipients with transit services already established for the elderly and people with disabilities. Gloucester County will provide a feeder service - shuttling former welfare recipients from home to public transit stations or from public transit stops to work sites. The feeder service will strengthen Gloucester County's welfare-to-work program further. Currently, the county provides 61 welfare participants with free bus passes to get to work. This replaces the \$6-a-day transit voucher previously given to participants and provides an incentive for participants to use mass transit.

New Jersey is considered a national model for welfare-to-work initiatives because the state has a broad-based transit network with services in each county. It is improving on that network by expanding services to welfare participants through emphasizing partnerships with the public and private sectors (including business), and through innovative programs such as a transportation brokerage program in Hudson and Essex counties that combine medicaid and welfare trips, a work-pass program and van pools developed through transportation management associations.

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Ohio

Although the State of Ohio does not officially mandate that local agencies coordinate their transportation services, their state-level encouragement of coordination is innovative. The recently passed state welfare reform plan, Ohio Works First, has as its

objective to move clients to self-sufficiency by placing a strong emphasis on getting and maintaining gainful employment. As the legislation takes effect over 100,00 TANF clients in Ohio will need to join the labor force within the next three years (Ohio has placed a 36-month time limit on TANF recipients within 60 months). Transportation has been identified as the number one barrier to this goal.

In response to this monumental challenge, Ohio wrote several transportation-related provisions into their law. One innovative aspect of the Works First effort is the planned funding integration. Of the funds appropriated to the Department of Human Services (DHS) in Ohio, some are expected not to be used due to the dramatic caseload reductions. The Department of Human Service will take all of the excess funding up to, but not exceeding \$5 million, for the purpose of enhancing transportation services to Works First participants. This is an incentive to transit providers to enable TANF participants the greatest possible access to employment, as that will mean more money for transit from Ohio DHS.

Another innovative aspect dictates that each member of the Board of County Commissioners must develop a written transportation work plan that establishes policies regarding the transportation needs of the county's low-income population. It is required that the commissioners consult with their County Department of Human Services; the local Community Action

Agency (if their county is served by one); and representatives from private nonprofit and government entities working with issues related to economic development, employment, and persons with disabilities.

A second proviso in the law requires the director of the state's department of transportation to apply for federal funds that are or may become available under ISTEA for transportation services for Works First participants. These funds will be used for efforts led by the Statewide Transportation Coordination Task Force, a group consisting of representatives from state agencies who either purchase, provide or have a need for TANF client transportation. The Task Force has been in existence since 1996, but was written into law in 1997 in Ohio's welfare reform legislation.

Coordination will take place with the Department of Human Services as well. The director of Human Services will convene a group composed of the directors of Transportation, Mental Retardation, Developmental Disabilities, Employment Services, and representatives of the regional transit authorities, the County Commissioners Association and the Rehabilitation Services Commission. This group is charged with reviewing state transportation coordination resources and policies as well as considering new coordination initiatives to support local community efforts to design transportation solutions for the unemployed and underemployed.

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Tennessee

As part of Tennessee's welfare reform law, transportation (along with child care, training and education) is guaranteed to Families First participants. Accordingly, Tennessee has allocated \$10.5 million for welfare-to-work transportation. As of September 1997, the Families First program has provided transportation for over 39,000 participants. They have also exempted over 170 families from the work requirement because they have no transportation alternatives. Most of those excused live in remote, rural areas unserved by any transportation services.

Tennessee's success in linking Families First participants with transportation is due to the individualized attention each participant receives to overcome transportation barriers. It can also be attributed to the state's emphasis on using a variety of transportation options.

Regional Transportation Brokers

The Department of Human Services (DHS) refers each Families First participant to a broker who creates a transportation plan for the recipient. The transportation brokers with which DHS contracts are the 14 Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) for the state. This covers all of the state's 95 counties, including 4 urban regions and 3 semi-urban regions. The SDAs have the responsibility of assessing the needs of each participant and contracting with transportation providers to arrange services for those who do not have access to a vehicle to get to job training, educational sites and employment.

The transportation brokers facilitate a variety of transportation alternatives: Participants can utilize a monthly bus pass, use taxi service or participate in vanpools. Stops at daycare centers are prearranged as part of vanpool services and the cost for children's ride on the service is provided by DHS.

Those who can arrange for their own transportation are eligible for a \$5 per day reimbursement. The reimbursement is applicable for those who can drive their own vehicle or carpool. DHS will also provide, through brokers, a gas voucher purchased

from local oil companies. Over 1,200 people have taken advantage of the \$5 per day gasoline voucher rather than the \$5 per day reimbursement.

Families First Councils

In addition to the brokers, Tennessee's welfare reform plan establishes a Families First Council in each locality. Council members come from a diverse group and include DHS social workers, community leaders, businesses, transportation providers and clergy. Through local Families First Councils, Tennessee is implementing a variety of transportation initiatives to meet the unique needs of individual areas.

Below are examples of other transportation solutions:

Wheels For Work: The First Wheels program, based on a Georgia program called Peach on Wheels, allows Department of Human Services clients to purchase a vehicle through a revolving loan process. Eligible Families First participants are those with a valid driver's license, funds to put towards their first insurance payment and a determination to become self-sufficient. Participants sign contracts agreeing to pay back the cost of the vehicles at a low monthly rate, without paying interest. The money paid back returns to the fund and helps other participants afford cars. The First Wheels program is designed to build credit history and teach responsibility.

The First Wheels program in Warren County demonstrates community partnership. The local Episcopal church provided the initial funding for First Wheels with a \$10,000 grant. The resource conservation and development council (RC&D), which normally works with water and land resources, serves as the administrative entity of the program. It handles funds and holds the automobile liens. Because of RC&D's nonprofit status, they can also accept vehicle donations and offer tax breaks to contributors. County case managers work with welfare recipients to obtain driver's licenses and assist them with schedules to keep cars in good working condition. This program is currently being replicated in two other counties.

In Blunt Co., a local car dealer donated used cars to a local foundation. Once a car is given to a recipient, the foundation retains the title of the vehicle for 3 years, provided the recipient keeps a job for that duration. With this program, recipients do not need to pay back the cost of the car. Moreover, the foundation pays the first two months of liability insurance on the car.

The Department of Human Service will take all of the excess funding up to, but not exceeding \$5 million, for the purpose of enhancing transportation services to Works First participants.

School Buses: The East Tennessee Private Industry Council has convinced the local school board in Roane County to use school buses to transport parents who are engaged in training and educational opportunities. Since the adult trips are for educational purposes, their rides are covered by the school system's insurance. As safety measures, adults are not permitted to ride with small children and the Roane County school system reserves the right to decline ridership to someone with a history of violence.

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IV. Metropolitan Planning Organizations

In many urban areas, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are facilitating welfare-to-work transportation efforts. MPOs are regional transportation planning bodies which administer federal surface transportation funds. In addition, because MPOs coordinate a wide variety of planning activities, some of these agencies are achieving success in creating coordinated employment transportation systems that meet the transit needs of local welfare recipients.

Some MPO's are facilitating the development of coordinated employment transportation systems that meet the transit needs of local welfare recipients

Capitol Region Council of Governments

Responding to the call to overcome the transportation barriers of those moving from welfare to work, Connecticut's Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCQG), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the city of Hartford and 28 surrounding municipalities, has formed a Welfare-to-Work Transportation Access Work Group (Work Group).

Members of the Work Group include representatives from business and industry groups; state Departments of Social Services, Labor and Transportation; the regional workforce development board; the City of Hartford; CT TRANSIT (Hartford's fixed-route service); the Greater Hartford Transit District and rideshare company and the MPO.

The goal of the Work Group has been to build consensus among agencies on defining the gaps in transportation services which prevent workers from reaching job sites, and to come up with practical solutions to bridge these gaps. Like most of the country; the Greater Hartford area has experienced an exodus of entry-level jobs from center city to suburbia and has seen the transit services in the region not keep pace with these changes.

Analysis of the region has shown that most available entry-level jobs are for second and third shifts and/or weekends; jobs that job candidates from the city without an automobile cannot access.

Transportation Solutions

To address these gaps, the CRCOG has proposed that the region might use savings in federal welfare reform money (about \$300,000) as the first step in a \$2.1 million, two-year Greater Hartford effort to connect city residents with suburban jobs. The Work Group agrees that solutions should be varied to address the wide variety of transportation needs of those enter-

ing the job market in suburban and other dispersed work areas.

Here are two examples of short-term transportation improvements already in progress:

- Two new Connecticut Transit bus routes will provide a peak-hour commuter service from Hartford to its suburbs, where most new jobs in retail and service are located. Besides the commuter buses, vans will be used to transport city residents to smaller, more remote suburban job sites. Connecticut Transit will also extend service hours, alter routes and provide other viable transportation alternatives for local residents reentering the workplace.
- The Greater Hartford Transit District's paratransit system has recently implemented special services to transport Hartford residents to a training site in Bristol, Ct. — about 20 miles away.

The goal of the Work Group is to provide more than 800 people with transportation to jobs in the first year of the pilot, and more than 1,600 in the second year. The Work Group will first target areas which will provide the most jobs to the largest group of people who are transit dependent.

Planners at the Council of Government expect that the types of service needed, route configurations and areas to be served are likely to change over time. As a result, they view flexibility and adaptability in service planning as essential to respond to shifting needs.

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West Florida Vanpooling

On Florida's panhandle, local hotels, retail outlets and restaurants were having trouble filling available jobs. Job seekers were isolated from these opportunities by long commutes from inland residential areas and a dearth of public transportation. Responding to this situation, the Destin Area Chamber of Commerce, with support from the West Florida Regional Planning

Council (the Pensacola-area MPO), developed a vanpool service designed to bring workers into the Destin area.

The vanpool program transports employees from Gulf Breeze, Crestview and other areas along the Alabama border to Destin and South Walton beaches. As the program grows, destinations to other beaches and areas inland will be added.

With support from some 60 community businesses, local leaders, and transportation planners, the vanpool program began with a three-month trial period in March 1997. And thus far, the results have been positive. More than 35 employers have joined as members of the Emerald Coast Transportation vanpool program. All four 15-passenger vans are at full capacity daily. And

there is a growing demand from employees of non-member employers to use the vanpool service.

Van Pool Services, Inc. (VPSI), a national commuter vanpool agency, is contracted to handle the day-to-day details of the vanpool program, including fleet management, operations, marketing, maintenance, billing and monthly payment collection. Emerald Coast Transportation, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, operates the three van routes for employees and employers in Okaloosa and Walton Counties. Vans are leased and operated for \$5,000 a month. Fees paid by the rider are matched by the employer.

The fee is based on the number of passengers, the type of vehicle and the daily round-trip mileage.

Emerald Coast Transportation is working hard to overcome many of the typical welfare-to-work challenges — service is provided for riders around the clock and a Guaranteed Ride Home program has been established. Park-and-ride lots at food stores, a police station, a high school and a coffee shop are the pick-up and drop-off points used for the three routes.

To advertise employment opportunities and recruit employees, the Destin Chamber of Commerce holds job fairs where potential employees are surveyed to determine the potential number of vanpool users.

Vanpooling is the option for this community because of its flexibility and convenience. By providing easy, reliable and safe access to the workplace, the service helps employers to recruit and keep employees, and employer tax credits are incentives for both employers and employees to rideshare. Participating employees benefit because they have a reliable vehicle and a convenient way to travel to work. Through vanpooling, commuters

Two new Connecticut Transit bus routes will provide a peak-hour commuter service from Hartford to its suburbs, where most new jobs in retail and service are located

can save as much as \$2,500 a year by not using their own vehicle (if they have one). The vanpool program is also a way to help reduce traffic and parking problems.

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St. Louis Metropolitan Area

In what has turned out to be a superior model of public-private coordination, the St. Louis area has engineered a workable welfare transportation system with which to create a truly livable and mobile community. A two-pronged strategy is at work in the metropolitan area under the auspices of the Bridges to Work program, co-sponsored by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development and Department of Transportation, and the Center for Mobility to Work project. Bridges to Work concentrates on establishing and augmenting viable transportation connections between urban areas and suburban employment sites (often called reverse commutes). Conversely, the Center for Mobility to Work focuses on the unemployed or underemployed populations within urban areas and employment sites near existing transit facilities. The foundation for both of these programs and the umbrella organization for the St. Louis Access to Jobs effort is the East-West Gateway Coordinating Council — the city's MPO has established a board of 16 agencies and private organizations to address labor force transportation issues in the region. Board membership includes, but is not limited to, the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis and the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. The Board collaborates with the MPO throughout 41 steps of the employment access initiatives. While the Missouri Highway and Transportation Department is not a member of the governing board, it works in conjunction with East-West Gateway Coordinating Council.

The global approach of the access-to-jobs initiative includes a dual emphasis on customer focus and community involvement.

Focusing on the customer means assessing the job-seeker's needs, potential capabilities and possibilities. Involving the community includes an often painstaking process of eliciting local participation in concept development, planning and implementation throughout local leadership changes and a general ambivalence that tends to pervade impoverished areas. The MPO efforts in this direction have been substantial and are only beginning to emerge in the implementation stages and are therefore too new to demonstrate measurable results.

Not to be overlooked is the general principle guiding the EWG CC: The agency encourages existing services to better serve the public at large rather than targeting of certain markets, such as welfare recipients, with special services.

Planning and Implementation

The East-West Gateway Coordinating Council has been successful in attracting funding from sources both public and private — from the Missouri Department of Social Services and the Missouri Department of Economic Development to philanthropic organizations such as the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Bridges To Work grant from HUD accounted for 73 percent of total project cost of \$2.1 million.

Ultimately, the total cost of all of the jobs programs being conducted by the MPO is \$4.3 million, 60 percent of which is being covered by state human services agencies, the rest of which is covered by the substantial private foundation and organization grants.

The MPO conducted economic market studies that focused on industries and areas which provide good prospects for employment growth. This included collecting and analyzing data on regional economic and population growth by location, occupation and industry sector. It also collected a great deal of information concerning the needs and resources of the region, such as the number of households receiving Temporary Assistance for

Needy Families (TANF), available transit services, available health and human services, vehicle ownership and unemployment rates.

The transportation aspects of the Bridges To Work project include extensions of major bus routes and longer operating hours to accommodate work shifts ending at 10:00 p.m., as well as planned circulator van service to-and-from express bus stops.

The Center for Mobility to Work has as its goal to provide job seekers with placements in the job-plentiful MetroLink (St. Louis light-rail system) corridor, which covers more than 10,000 business and 240,000 employees

This service will provide feeder service, connecting several pick-up and drop-off points with express bus routes, operations will be reversed at night. Initially, program participants will be provided subsidies for the express bus service. Additionally the MPO has ensured that participants will have a guaranteed taxicab ride home for emergencies outside of the scheduled operation of the shuttle.

Corollary to this, the Center for Mobility to Work has as its goal to provide job seekers with placements in the job-plentiful MetroLink (St. Louis light-rail system) corridor, which covers more than 10,000 businesses and 240,000 employees. The Center for Mobility to Work will provide training, career planning, job placement services and transit subsidies. These subsidies will begin at 100 percent and decrease to zero over a period of two-to-three months. This approach takes advantage of jobs within a reasonable commute and also of existing transit systems. It also conveys the general experience of the East-West Gateway Coordinating Council which has shown that lengthy inner-city-to-suburb commutes are often unrealistic for working mothers.

A third partner program to these is called Business Service Opportunities and it provides training, transportation and work-support services for residents of three supported housing programs. Vans owned by private-sector businesses and housing programs provide transportation with the intent to place at least 30 participants in jobs. This project is being conducted in cooperation with the MPO and several public and private organizations.

The St. Louis metropolitan area has developed a long-term and comprehensive approach to heal ailing communities, incorporating local community input, local businesses and employers. The East-West Gateway Coordinating Council expects that as these projects show successful results, other businesses and local governmental agencies will provide more funding to help it continue. The planning process emphasized the integration of transportation with the broader needs of the welfare recipient.

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V.

Local Innovative Practices

The innovative practices presented in this section represent a variety of welfare-to-work transportation designs tested in various areas and environments, including major metropolitan areas and rural areas.

The innovative practices presented in this section represent a variety of welfare-to-work transportation designs tested in various areas and environments, including major metropolitan areas and rural areas. Diversity is also reflected in the populations served, which range from ordinary workers, to welfare recipients, to Native Americans living on reservations.

While some of these initiatives have been in operation for a long time and have gone through numerous refinements, others are relatively new. Some offer transportation services, others focus on marketing and outreach and still others present methods to incorporate welfare transportation into transportation system's planning. With each of the following examples, the type of welfare-to-work innovation is identified along with the area.

In reviewing the innovative practices presented in this document, it is clear that there is no single welfare-to-work transportation solution. The methods that work are responsive to the needs of local clients and employers, take into consideration the unique geography and resources of the regions they serve and identify, coordinate with or build upon existing public and human-service transportation.

Baltimore, Md. — Reverse Commute

Baltimore is one of five cities involved in an employment transportation initiative cosponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Transit Administration known as Bridges to Work. The program, operated by the Historic East Baltimore Community Action Council (HEBCAC), identifies job-ready individuals, helps them prepare for and obtain employment and provides them with rides to work. The program aims to serve residents of East Baltimore, an area with a large proportion of welfare recipients, but few employment opportunities. The jobs-rich area near the Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport — 15 miles from East Baltimore — is the targeted employment destination.

When HEBCAC assists someone in obtaining employment in the BWI Airport district, it then provides door-to-door van rides from East Baltimore to job sites. Since the project started in December 1996, two vans have been picking up workers in East Baltimore each morning, dropping them off at work, and transporting them back home in the evening. Many

of the riders are former welfare recipients, and the opportunity to obtain a good job has had a major impact on their lives.

Without the van service, residents of East Baltimore would be unable to take advantage of the job opportunities near the airport. While the City of Baltimore operates bus service between East Baltimore and the airport, the first bus arrives too late for most morning shift jobs.

For each rider, the service is free for the first 30 days. Subsequently, the full fare is \$4 per round trip with the remaining operating costs absorbed by HEBCAC as part of the Bridges to Work program. For program participants seeking employment in the airport district, HEBCAC also provides free van rides for job interviews.

To help job seekers, HEBCAC collaborates with the City of Baltimore Office of Employment Development and a number of job training and placement agencies. This coordination allows HEBCAC to identify riders and helps the other agencies find rides to work for their clients. The agency also has an arrangement with the BWI Business Partnership for outreach to employers in the airport district.

The long-term plan is to demonstrate that the service is financially viable, with a farebox recovery ratio of at least 50 percent. Baltimore's efforts showcase coordinated job placement and transportation services and outreach to employers and prospective riders.

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Buffalo, N.Y. — Planning, Reverse Commute

Transportation providers in Western New York are restructuring their mobility system to respond to job and population shifts. The new service concept is called Hublink, and focuses on better coordination of all types of transportation services to increase personal mobility and maximize the use of transportation dollars.

Led by the Niagara Frontier Transit Authority (NFTA), the Hublink initiative is a model for planning transportation sys-

tems to explicitly take into account employment transportation. Hublink includes extensive research on transportation needs and alternatives, coordination opportunities and creative financing. The objective is to create a broad-based community consensus regarding the best approach to improving public transportation. To date, several service concepts have been developed to better provide employment transportation:

Late-Night Service

Many inner-city residents are employed in service industries, which have night or evening shifts outside traditional working hours. To improve services for passengers traveling to-and-from work at night, NFTA operates a request-a-stop program after 9:00 p.m. which allows riders to alight anywhere along the route if the bus can safely stop.

Reverse Commuting

Much of the central portions of Buffalo and Western Niagara Falls are characterized by transit-dependent populations who need better access to suburban employment in the retail, service and health-care fields. While significant job opportunities in these fields are available in suburbs adjacent to Buffalo, transit services have historically underserved the reverse commute market. NFTA is exploring a variety of methods to improve access to these jobs, from modifying existing routes to introducing innovative services tailored to these markets. Service modifications may include imple-

menting timed transfers at suburban hubs and key urban transfer points, expanding access to reverse trips of existing and new suburban-to-city express routes and introducing limited-stop services on key routes in reverse directions. New services may include a region-wide vanpool program, subscription buses to the largest employment centers and employer shuttles at suburban work sites.

Buffalo's transportation planning process resulted from the recognition of unmet needs and commitment from a broad-based coalition to a variety of transit service concepts in which employment transportation is a significant component.

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While significant job opportunities in these fields are available in suburbs adjacent to Buffalo, transit services have historically underserved the reverse commute market

Chicago, Ill. — Multiple Strategies

During the past few decades, the City of Chicago experienced the loss of thousands of full-time manufacturing jobs - the kind needed to support a family with good pay, benefits and job security. Many of the full-time jobs remaining in the city are filled by workers commuting from suburbs.

A 1995 research project conducted by the Chicago Urban League, Northern Illinois University and the Urban Institute examined the imbalance between jobs and job seekers in the Chicago metropolitan area. It found that for every entry-level job opening in Chicago, there are ten entry-level job seekers. However, in relatively job-rich suburban DuPage County, there is an almost equal balance between entry-level job seekers and entry-level job openings, at least for white-collar jobs. Many suburban manufacturers, however, have difficulty filling entry-level, blue-collar positions — largely because the prime labor force lives in the city and is too poor to own a reliable vehicle. The public transit system has not provided a service to bridge this gap.

Chicago has been a showcase for efforts to overcome these sorts of challenges. Two different kinds of service providers — a nonprofit organization called Suburban Job-Link Corporation and a suburban transit agency known as PACE — have each developed effective strategies.

Suburban Job-Link Corporation

Suburban Job-Link Corporation, a nonprofit community economic-development organization, was founded in 1971 to serve unemployed residents of Chicago's West Side neighborhoods which suffer from persistent unemployment and welfare dependence. Suburban Job-Link seeks to connect residents of inner-city neighborhoods with good employment opportunities in Chicago's suburbs, like job-rich DuPage County. The term "good employment opportunities" means that Suburban Job-Link targets jobs which are accessible within a reasonable commuting time; provide enough take-home income and fringe benefits to allow workers to escape poverty; and provide a realistic opportunity for upward mobility.

Suburban Job-Link offers both employment and transportation services, a combination which forms its worker mobility strategy. It concentrates its resources in the following program areas: running a suburban Job Oasis support facility which pro-

vides a series of employment, work-readiness and transportation services under one roof; ensuring the mobility of workers between inner-city neighborhoods and suburban areas through a daily express bus service and a neighborhood-based rideshare network for reverse commutes; identifying full-time jobs with benefits and decent wages for trainees; improving interpersonal skills through coaching, training and mentoring; incubating a neighborhood empowerment program focused on bringing full-time suburban job openings to inner-city neighborhoods; and creating opportunities by placing unemployed people in temporary positions that provide work experience, earned income and access to employers.

Specifically, Suburban Job-Link offers the following transportation services:

Express Bus Transportation Services — Suburban Job-Link uses eight buses to provide inner-city residents with commuter transportation services between Chicago's West Side and jobs in the northwest suburbs. Half of the fleet is coach buses; the remainder are converted school buses.

In 1996, Suburban Job-Link initiated a corridor transportation strategy. There are two designated corridors currently in place: Roosevelt Road and Cermak Road. Workers who live within three blocks of either road can walk to any Chicago Transit Authority bus stop along the route and catch a Suburban Job-Link bus

to their workplace. The organization uses custom computer software and scanning equipment to automate bus passenger tracking. Riders are asked to pay as much as \$2 per ride, which covers part of the cost of bus transportation while the remainder is covered by Suburban Job-Link.

Shuttle Transportation Services — Suburban Job-Link uses passenger vans and buses to provide free rides between innercity neighborhoods and the Job Oasis in Bensenville, Ill Free shuttles are also provided for job interviews. Once the job seeker becomes employed, express bus service or ridesharing is used for long-term commuting. PACE Suburban Bus Service, part of the regional public transit system, has become a vital partner in linking Chicagoans with suburban employment (see below for more on PACE).

Ridesharing Management Services — Suburban Job-Link is developing a program with PACE to provide vans for reverse commuting. They hope that the vanpool program will provide a

A 1995 research project found that for every entry-level job opening in Chicago, there are ten entry-level job seekers. However, in suburban DuPage County, there is an almost equal balance between entry-level job seekers and entry-level job openings

natural transition to independent forms of transportation.

Suburban Job-Link has emerged as one of the organizations that has developed an effective response to the problem of jobs moving to the suburbs. The organization continues to seek out innovative methods of bridging the gap between blue-collar jobs and inner-city workers.

PACE Suburban Bus Service

Transit agencies based in the suburbs have traditionally provided radial service focused on central business districts. With the shift in population to more distant suburbs and a growing number of suburb-to-suburb trips, the traditional model failed to meet the needs of PACE's traditional market. In response, the agency developed a wide array of services to meet the needs of niche markets, calling this approach the mass customization of mass transit. The key elements of PACE's strategy include:

- **Service coordination.** Forty-two percent of PACE riders transfer to Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) and METRA (the transit agencies that serve metropolitan Chicago). Coordinated schedules, timed transfers and coordinated fares help to create a seamless system.
- **Employer Outreach.** PACE representatives work with employers to assess their needs and design custom services. Providing transit service in conjunction with business relocations to new suburban offices has been particularly successful. PACE works with employers and developers in the design of new buildings to ensure that pavement thickness is appropriate for buses and that driveways are large enough to accommodate transit vehicles.
- **Service Options.** PACE operates eight types of vehicles and offers many forms of service, including subscription buses, vanpools and traditional fixed-route service, and strives to create new options that match particular market niches.
- **Partnerships.** In addition to working with employers, PACE coordinates services with job-training programs, social-service agencies, sheltered workshops and other community organizations. For example, PACE provides service in coordination with Suburban Job-Link (see above).

In Chicago, employment transportation encompasses a wide range of transportation and non-transportation services and provides mobility for ordinary workers as well as welfare recipients. Partnerships between transportation providers, employers, job training programs and other social service agencies have been the key ingredient for success.

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Detroit, Mich. — Multiple Strategies

Southeast Michigan is home to the City of Detroit and myriad suburban municipalities. The City of Detroit, with just more than one million residents, has suffered in the last two decades from the decline of manufacturing and the pressure of foreign competition. In the wake of these changes, the city has endured double-digit unemployment and higher-than-average rates of dependency on public assistance. Ironically the motor city is now a community in which 33 percent of all households lack an automobile.

In contrast to downtown Detroit, the suburbs have grown and prospered. Light industry, warehousing, services and other sectors have flourished in the outlying areas. In some cases, suburban employers have even experienced labor shortages — caused in part by the difficulty of accessing transportation to reach these employment opportunities.

Transportation services in the City of Detroit are provided by an urban transit agency. Whose services end at the city limits. In the suburbs, Southeast Michigan Area Rapid Transit (SMART) is the transit provider.

SMART's recent innovations emerged as a result of a threat to its existence. With no local funding, shrinking federal dollars and no increases in state support, SMART was running out of money. In conjunction with its successful effort to pass a local tax providing a source of dedicated funding, SMART redefined its market and developed several effective employment transportation practices.

- **Outreach.** SMART networks with employers through Buses to Business breakfast forums. To launch these, SMART worked with the Michigan Department of Employment Security; chambers of commerce, county economic development departments, the Michigan Jobs Commission and others who helped get the word out to the business community that SMART was willing to work with employers to change schedules and routing, and even to design special services to meet business needs.

At each forum, held at 7:30 a.m., employers completed a survey enquiring about number of employees, hours of business and similar information. SMART compiles this information into a database to guide the creation of new transit services. To find the companies and invite them to the forums, SMART purchased a commercially-available mailing list of companies in the area. Another outreach practice saw the hiring of three ombudspersons

whose job is to sell SMART. When calls come in from businesses, the ombudspersons are responsible for answering questions, setting up meetings with the employers and following through inside SMART to make sure that employer needs are met.

- **Marketing.** Among the most innovative of SMART's employment transportation activities are its marketing programs. The Get a Job, Get a Ride program gives new hires at least one month's free bus fare. The program is advertised through radio commercials. Another marketing mechanism is the WJOB jobline. WJOB, the largest Detroit radio station with an African-American market, uses one of its concert lines to advertise jobs. The Michigan Department of Employment Security worked with SMART to introduce this service. Information from any employer with a permanent job available is fed to the radio station. The information includes the nature of the job, its pay rate and how to get there using SMART. At a minimum, this generates 1,000 calls each week.

- **Planning.** Restructuring bus service to better match the needs of employers required visualizing the spatial distribution of work sites and residences, the network of streets and roads and SMART's routes. Using geographic information system (GIS) software helped SMART to identify new businesses and to reach an additional 10,000 employers and an estimated 200,000 more jobs.

- **Operating good service.** Another way that SMART serves the employment transportation niche is by guaranteeing the quality of its service. A widely-publicized unconditional moneyback guarantee costs SMART less than \$100 per month, but earns high marks from employers and riders. The guarantee is also a good incentive for employees, since it encourages them to keep the buses clean and on time. When a complaint comes in, they know a supervisor will follow up with them.

- **Coordination.** In addition to SMART, numerous social service agencies in suburban Detroit provide transportation services. Previously, even with 75 separate mobility providers, many disadvantaged members of the community faced transportation barriers. The long distances to be traversed, the eligibility limitations on social-service transportation and a constrained pool of resources all inhibited the effectiveness of transit.

In compliance with MPO requirements to coordinate, all the transportation providers had a history of cooperation. This foundation led to the development of a computerized reser-

vation system allowing social-service agencies to schedule riders onto SMART vehicles, and vice versa. To streamline coordination, SMART employs a remote terminal of the QuoVadis real-time scheduling and dispatch system at one community organization, with plans of providing remote terminals at 50 agencies. The pilot organization indicated that the QuoVadis system enabled it to improve customer service to its clients by being their transportation scheduler. This approach harmonizes with the general trend in social-service delivery to provide all services at a single one-stop location.

SMART also has coordinated with social-service agencies to solve employment transportation problems. For example, SMART teamed up with Operation ABLE, a human service agency that provides personalized job search, job placement, occupational training and career-transition services for job seekers 45 years of age or older. SMART had trouble meeting the transportation needs of Operation ABLE's clients in the

City of Detroit, since those who lacked their own transportation faced several transfers and a discouragingly long travel time to take a position in the jobs-rich suburbs. Through a CTA JOBLINKS demonstration grant, Operation ABLE leased a SMART vehicle to bring people from the City of Detroit to one of the agency's two training sites. Operation ABLE viewed the dedicated vehicle as a boon to customer service because it provided pick-up service at home, which represented a cut above other public transportation and

was widely appreciated by Operation ABLE's clients, especially during the winter months. Based on a survey of riders, the service was warmly received — all of the patrons were satisfied or very satisfied with the service, and used it four or five days a week.

The innovative practices evidenced in Detroit include an creative marketing program, restructuring service to better serve the needs of employers, operating good transit service, and close coordination of SMART with numerous social service agencies.

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The Get a Job, Get a Ride program gives new hires at least one month free bus fare and is advertised through radio commercials

Glendale/Azalea, Ore. — Rural Coordination

In recent years, as the timber industry hit hard times, southwestern Oregon has faced some of the worst unemployment in the nation, accompanied by high welfare enrollment and persistent poverty. The residents of two communities in this area, Glendale and Azalea, face a 50-mile trek to non-timber jobs, medical services or shopping, and many faced a 10- to 20-mile journey to the local Glendale-Azalea Skills Center.

Under the leadership of the Glendale-Azalea Skills Center, the community adopted a combination of innovative strategies, including the use of school buses and development of volunteer carpools, to overcome its transportation gap.

A total of 28 volunteer drivers, including homemakers, retirees and school bus drivers, provided rides for other members of the community. This network allowed people to access various education and employment opportunities located at the Skills Center and/or in nearby cities such as Roseburg and Grants Pass, as well as to attend medical appointments.

Effectively marketing the service and recruiting volunteer drivers were the keys to success. A communications specialist created posters, press releases and fliers for on-going recruitment of volunteer drivers and riders. The service was highlighted by the local newspaper and TV news stories, which also called for volunteer drivers.

Skills Center staff attended numerous community fairs to promote volunteerism, supply information to the community on the project and solicit volunteer drivers and carpool participants. They matched drivers with people who needed rides.

Another innovative practice to emerge from Glendale/Azalea was the use of school buses to transport the general population. While many communities have considered using school transportation for a more general ridership, Glendale/Azalea is one of the few that succeeded in convincing the local school district to allow community members to ride along with students. Counter to popular perception, research indicated that the integration of pupil and community transportation was not prohibited by law. It was, in fact, a priority of Oregon's Superintendent of Education. Local residents ride school buses for transportation to GED/Adult Education programs at the Skills Center, hopping on and off as the vehicles travel their usual routes.

Bringing together agencies at all levels to address transportation needs was key to the success experienced in Glendale and Azalea. The planning group included a Glendale School District

representative, the Glendale School District Business Manager, the Oregon Department of Human Resources Volunteer Program Manager, the Adult and Family Services District Manager, a community member and a representative of the Douglas County Department of Health and Social Services. This broadbased coalition helped ensure support for the unique transportation solutions.

The success of efforts in Glendale/Azalea resulted from a strong commitment from the Glendale-Azalea Skill Center in incorporating pupil and community transportation, effective marketing of the service and maintaining a network of volunteer drivers.

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Louisville, Ky. — Reverse Commute and Planning

The City of Louisville, Ky. is the state's largest urban center with a population of 665,000. Bluegrass Industrial Park, the third largest development of its kind in the nation, is located in the eastern suburbs of the city. It offers job opportunities in a wide variety of industries, at all levels of employment. The eastern area, in which Bluegrass Industrial Park is situated, enjoys a relatively high annual household income and low unemployment. In contrast, the west end of downtown Louisville is an area with few job opportunities and a large pool of potential workers. The western area has had double-digit unemployment, but transit-dependent would-be workers from the inner city have lacked direct bus service to the jobs-rich industrial fringe.

Employers in the Bluegrass Industrial Park claimed that a major barrier to filling job vacancies was a lack of transportation for people living within the city. Faced with a shortage workers, businesses took unusual steps, as exemplified by the \$8.00 per hour starting wage offered by a local fast-food establishment.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization in the area, the Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA) together with the local public transit property; the Transit Authority of River City (TARC), worked together to estab-

Local residents ride school buses for transportation to GED/Adult Education programs at the Skills Center

lish a new express route between inner city Louisville and the Bluegrass Industrial Park, as well as a local circulator shuttle within the industrial park. Prior to this new reverse commuter service, residents of the west end traveling to the Bluegrass Industrial Park had to make three transfers and walk a long distance from the bus stop to the workplace, resulting in a two-hour trip.

In planning the new reverse commute route, KIPDA and TARC worked with a wide variety of employers, community agencies and local government entities. These organizations confirmed that there was a market for the proposed service, and promised assistance in referring riders from the target group. A comprehensive operational analysis undertaken by TARC further underscored the fact that there was a sizable unmet need for this service.

The new service includes two out-bound runs from the far west end of Louisville to the Bluegrass Industrial Park, and an additional eight runs starting from the central business district. Eleven in-bound runs complement the out-bound service. The travel time from the two endpoints of the express route is 45 minutes, with the bulk of the route traveled on Interstate 64. The peak cash fare is \$1.00.

In addition to the express service, two local circulator shuttles operate within the Bluegrass Industrial Park. The huge size of the park, combined with a lack of sidewalks or streetlights, could impede a commuter's ability to get to their workplaces without the shuttles. Each of the shuttles operate on half-hour headways in the morning and afternoon. With a free transfer from the express route, there is no charge to ride the shuttles.

Specific activities were undertaken to develop ridership. KIPDA and TARC held meetings with community agencies, the Private Industry Council and employers in Bluegrass Industrial Park to generate referrals. In addition, they made presentations to several chambers of commerce. TARC worked especially closely with social service workers and employment counselors in the inner city to identify potential riders. TARC produced attractive brochures illustrating the express route and the local circulator shuttles, as well as the schedules for each, and distributed them widely to employers, social service agencies and existing passengers. When Job Fairs were held at the Bluegrass Industrial Park, TARC provided free rides to the event and distributed information about the routes. Finally, TARC coordinated press coverage on the new route in the local newspaper.

Ridership surveys revealed that users of the express route tended to be transit-dependent commuters who lacked a vehicle.

They worked in the food service, hospitality and retail industries. An overwhelming percentage of those surveyed reported that they rode the bus to work every day. Slightly more than half lived in the four zip codes of west Louisville that comprised the target area for the service. The success of the reverse commute express service has allowed it to become institutionalized.

In addition to cash fares, TARC secured cash assistance from the municipality and support from employees in the form of a commitment to purchase employee bus passes. Jefferson County also pledged funding from the local occupational tax fund. Combined with federal operating assistance and local transit funds, these sources of funding are expected to sustain the service for the foreseeable future.

The Nia Neighborhood Travel and Jobs Center, scheduled to open on May 12, 1998, will become a focal point for public transportation service and information in the west end of Louisville. The Nia Center is adjacent to the intersection of two of TARC's most heavily traveled bus routes. Together these two routes account for approximately 20 percent of TARC's average daily ridership. In addition, three neighborhood circulator routes, express service to Bluegrass Industrial Park, and TARC Night Owl

buses serve the Nia Center.

A TARC Nia Center coordinator will be available on site as a liaison to the other tenant partners, and liaison to the community including employers and government agencies serving the area surrounding the center. The TARC Nia coordinator will work cooperatively with employers to design and deliver specialized, cost-effective transportation services for employers living or working in the empowerment zone area.

Partners in the Nia Center and campus include Workforce Development Partnership Center dedicated to providing employer driven training for residents in the Louisville Empowerment Zone, the LCBD Enterprise Group, providing a small business incubator and business management support services, and the Louisville Business Resource Center providing information and advice for small business owners.

TARC has also launched a service it calls Nia Night Owl Job Link to meet the needs of late-night shift workers: People living or working in Louisville's Empowerment Zone can take a 20-passenger shuttle bus between home and work from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. daily. To be eligible for the service, all one needs to do is pre-register.

The successful practices evidenced in Louisville include sound planning to recognize unmet employment transportation needs,

TARC has also launched a service it calls Nia Night Owl Job Link to meet the needs of late-night shift workers. It operates from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. daily

coordination of transportation and social service resources, and development of public-private funding partnerships.

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Minneapolis, Minn. — Reverse Commute

The Reverse Commute Program in Minneapolis had a grassroots beginning. In 1990, companies in the suburbs of the metropolitan Twin Cities area were exploring innovative ways to transport inner-city job seekers to workplaces in the suburbs. For example, one company used taxicabs, while another bought a used car for several workers to share. While effective for individual companies, these piecemeal attempts did not meet the larger need to connect inner-city workers with suburban employment; meeting this need was the genesis for a reverse commute program known as Destination Jobs.

In 1992, the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce created a Reverse Commute Committee to facilitate employment opportunities for the inner city unemployed through transportation linkages to the suburbs. The Reverse Commute Committee consisted of representatives of business, transit agencies, government and training and employment agencies.

The reverse commute effort was intended to bridge the gap between Southwest Metro Communities, an area with one of the fastest rates of jobs creation in the region, and the inner-city population, which has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the Twin Cities. Prior to launching any service, a job fair was held to identify and recruit sufficient riders with employment in the suburbs - a key to establishing viable service. As a result of the job fair, 85 inner-city job seekers obtained employment. The job fair was a considered a tremendous success because it radically changed the dynamic of reverse commuting and employment options for inner-city residents of Minneapolis.

Following the Job Fair, Destination Jobs, a two-leg reverse-commute route was established. First an express bus picks up

riders in the city and drops them off at a suburban transit hub, where a hub-and-spoke system takes over. Two small buses then take riders to worksites. This service is available Monday through Friday, currently serving approximately 75 riders per day. Riders are required to make reservations for a round-trip at least 24 hours in advance. The one-way fare is \$2.

The Hennepin County (Minn.) Department of Training and Employment Assistance provides an Emergency Ride Home program to every rider who needs to get back home in an emergency. This Emergency Ride Home program serves as an inexpensive incentive for riders to participate in the reverse commute program, although very few have used this benefit.

To take advantage of the mobility provided by Destination Jobs, businesses have been willing to alter their shifts and community service agencies have been willing to provide training in targeted areas to meet business needs. Destination Jobs also has helped riders make the transition to transportation self-sufficiency. Program staff estimate that, on average, a rider uses the reverse commute service for six-to-nine months before seeking out his or her own transportation.

Overall, the key to the success of Destination Jobs has been the collaborative approach. The project has brought together the suburban business community, the Southwest Metro Transit Authority, the nonprofit inner-city neighborhood employment agencies, various community organizations and local governments. A key activity that helps sustain the reverse commute program is an annual Job Fair which provides a positive environment for prospective employers to meet with inner-city job seekers. The job fair promotes the concept of reverse commuting and provides a new influx of riders. Destination Jobs is also marketed through job training agencies and the schedules published by the Southwest Metro Transit Authority.

The demand for reverse commuting has been growing rapidly. Currently, the Reverse Commute Committee is exploring the possibility of establishing more fixed routes from early morning until 11:00 p.m., so that employees working the second shift can also be served.

The innovative practices evidenced in Minneapolis include commitment from collaborating transportation and social service agencies, a well-coordinated annual job fair to help inner-city residents obtain employment and to promote the reverse commute concept and a service design that responds to local needs and geography.

The best practices evidenced in Minneapolis include commitment from collaborating transportation and social service agencies and a well-coordinated annual job fair

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Zuni, N.M. — Rural

The Pueblo of Zuni is located in rural Northwestern New Mexico in McKinley County, 150 miles west of Albuquerque. It is the largest, most remote and most traditional of the 19 Indian Pueblos in the state. The people of Zuni have maintained their unique culture by perpetuating both their language and religion. However, their efforts to preserve their unique culture have not been without economic costs. Half of the population have annual household incomes below the federal poverty level, while the unemployment rate hovers at 67 percent. Nearly one-fifth of all households in the community have no vehicle.

Recognizing the high demand for employment and education transportation, the Zuni Entrepreneurial Enterprises Inc. Public Transportation Program (Z.E.E.), obtained a JOBLINKS grant from the Community Transportation Association of America to develop, implement and maintain a transportation program linking unemployed individuals to job training and meaningful employment. Z.E.E. is committed to providing transportation service to people who are currently unemployed/ underemployed, individuals requiring specialized transportation assistance, individuals who are not able to attend vocational training due to lack of transportation and persons with disabilities.

To accomplish the goal of developing a responsive and specialized transportation system, Z.E.E. has established the following objectives:

- To provide daily transportation services for a minimum of 25 individuals seeking employment or attempting to retain employment; a minimum of 25 students to institutions of higher education; and, a minimum of ten persons with disabilities to and from local job sites.

Z.E.E. recognized the need for both employment and education transportation in the entire target area, and has designed services to address these unmet needs

- To develop memorandums of agreement and service agreements with agencies in the community responsible for vocational training and education. These agencies include Zuni Vocational Rehabilitation, Pueblo of Zuni Higher Education Program, University of New Mexico Zuni Branch and the Zuni Public School District.
- To develop a model for employment and education transportation services that can be replicated for other rural Native American communities in the country.
- To develop a volunteer network to continue project operation beyond the grant funding period.

Specifically, Z.E.E. plans to operate employment/education transportation services within the Zuni reservation and to Gallup, New Mexico (a center for shopping, employment, entertainment, banking and other support services) five days a week, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Dispatch will be coordinated with all collaborating agencies.

The project will keep track of the impact of the transportation program through a database of individuals served. Following the completion of the demonstration period, Z.E.E. plans to publish a report which can be used by other Native American communities desiring to initiate similar services. This report will discuss cost of services, challenges encountered, strategies and recommendations on how to initiate and maintain services.

In summary, Z.E.E. recognized the need for both employment and education transportation in the entire target area, and has designed services to address these unmet transportation needs.

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VI.

Technical Assistance

Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)

The Community Transportation Association of Americas (CTAA) National Transit Resource Center provides in-depth technical assistance on all aspects of welfare-to-work transportation efforts.

Transit Hotline

The toll-free Community Transportation Hotline (800.527.8279) provides direct access to resource specialists and the vast information collection of the Resource Center. Whatever the topic - funding, legislation, vanpools, wheels-to-work programs, state welfare transportation plans, etc. — the Resource Center will be able to help you.

Also, through the Hotline, callers access CTAA staff members who began working on employment transportation activities long before welfare reform. In recent months, CTAA staff have travelled the country attending welfare-to-work meetings and conducting special workshops explaining the new law and its mobility implications.

Web Site

CTAA has developed a site on the Internet's World Wide Web that houses articles, reports, proceedings and more dealing exclusively with welfare-to-work transportation. All of the documents on this web site are included in complete form to make printing and downloading easy.

Make sure you check back to <http://www.ctaa.org/welfare> often for the site's regular updates. Also, look for interactive forums on crucial welfare-to-work transportation topics which will soon be added to the site.

Publications

The Resource Center has already developed several publications covering the welfare transportation issue. Each of these publications is available through either the toll-free Transit Hotline or the web site.

Transportation and Welfare' Reform: States on the Move — This report describes the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, details crucial state obligations under the new act, offers an in-depth state-by-state analysis which includes each states welfare transportation provisions and spotlights several state welfare transportation programs.

The Link to Employment: Case Workers as Mobility Managers — Local-level welfare case managers are becoming de-facto travel agents, linking prospective job seekers with work and training. This newsletter highlights several state programs at the caseworker level and details how caseworkers can best determine available transportation resources in the community.

Mobility: Key to Welfare Reform — This newsletter provides an analysis of several state employment transportation initiatives and the impact these programs are having on their community.

People, Jobs and Transportation: Conference Proceedings — CTAA held its first national conference on employment and transportation in October, 1996. This report summarizes all of the two-day conferences sessions and includes the speeches given by numerous experts in the field.

The Resource Center will also continue to augment this Innovative Practices publication by collecting data and anecdotal information from various states and adding those profiles to the Best Practices Report on-line.

Peer Training

CTAA's National Transit Resource Center includes a peer-to-peer training program in which resource specialists connect callers with experts in the field. Peer trainers are certified by the Resource Center and have direct operational experience. They typically help through phone calls, though the peer trainers may travel to provide more direct help in certain circumstances.

Funding

Many of the calls to the Resource Center concern prospective funding for welfare transportation efforts. CTAA's resource specialists keep up-to-date with the most recent legislative proposals and their potential funding impact on public transportation. In addition, CTAA has prepared a handbook, Building Mobility Partnerships, on federal funding opportunities for public transportation which includes many sources for employment-related trips.

National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and the Federal Transit Administration have formed a cooperative agreement on a welfare reform project designed to promote and support customer-oriented full service public transportation.

The NCSL will track state legislation with the goal of highlighting state policy and legislation which are models in addressing the transportation problems associated with getting people from welfare to work.

Through a number of means, the NCSL will provide information and develop materials about welfare-to-work transportation issues:

- State legislators and key staff will receive articles in the State Legislatures magazine that will treat welfare-to-work transportation issues.
- NCSL will also prepare a State Legislative Report (SLR) which will be sent to key state legislative members involved in appropriations and committees on transportation, welfare, employment and economic development.
- NCSL will operate and maintain an information clearinghouse on transportation and welfare reform.
- NCSL will incorporate transportation issues on its welfare reform website

National Governors' Association (NGA)

Twenty-five states are involved in a program of the National Governors' Association (NGA), designed to promote transportation planning for welfare reform. State transportation and human service agencies and local planning organizations will develop comprehensive plans for welfare-to-work transportation. These plans will include the coordinated delivery of transportation services as the means to support state welfare and health care reform.

NGA will develop a comprehensive planning approach welfare-to-work transportation, and will provide technical as well as financial support to the states as they proceed with their plans.

This pilot project is the result of a cooperative agreement with the Federal Transit Administration.

Federal Transit Administration Regional Contacts

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Region 10
Helen Knoll
Regional Administrator
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Welfare-to-Work Sites on the World Wide Web

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
<http://www.fta.dot.gov/wtw/>

Department of Labor (DOL)
<http://wtw.doleta.gov/>

Administration for Children and Families (ACF)
<http://wv.acfdhhs.gov/news/welfare>
<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/news/tables>

Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)
<http://www.ctaa.org/welfare>

VII.

Funding Sources

The cornerstone of welfare reform is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or TANF, program. This \$16.4 billion program was created in the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reform Act, which revamped the nation's welfare system. States receive their TANF funds as block grants, and establish their own priorities for providing assistance. States often consider using a portion of TANF funds to provide transportation assistance to persons on — or moving off of — public assistance.

The potential impact of transportation on employment and training for people on welfare was not lost on the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Long before President Clinton signed the new welfare legislation into law, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) had launched an innovative demonstration program called Joblinks. Beginning in 1995, 16 demonstration projects have been underway in 12 states. The projects, ranging in scope from coordination efforts to new technology implementation, have all focused on innovative methods of taking people to work.

Then, in 1996, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), in cooperation with FTA, launched Bridges to Work (details below), to explore new ways to link urban welfare recipients with suburban jobs.

FTA's Livable Communities Initiative, too, has had a profound impact on access to jobs. Effective transportation can improve the quality of life for everyone in the community. A particular focus of the Livable Communities Initiative has been developing transportation in Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities - areas often in dire need of access to jobs. Also, the Livable Communities Initiative supports joint-use facilities where transit and services child care come together.

The federal government is poised to make a significant contribution to the funding pool for welfare-to-work transportation. Both the Senate and the House of Representatives have Access to Jobs programs in their funding proposals. Anywhere from \$40 to \$100 million may become available when Congress passes Intermodal Surface

Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) legislation in the spring of 1998.

The following information highlights many of the currently available federal funding sources for welfare-to-work transportation.

Department of Agriculture (USDA) Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)

IRP is a program of revolving loans that finance businesses and community development projects in rural communities and towns with less than 25,000 popula-

tion. Nonprofits, public bodies, Indian tribes, and cooperatives are eligible. Transportation is among the eligible uses of borrowed funds.

Funding Level: \$3715 million

Contact: Wayne Stansbee (202) 720-1400

Community Transportation Development Fund (CTDF)

CTDF can assist rural communities in improving or expanding local transit services, purchasing vehicles, building facilities and promoting economic development. Funded by the Rural Business and Cooperative Services Division.

Available Fund: \$2.1 million

Contact: Patrick Kellogg (202) 661-0210

Business and Industrial Guaranteed Loan Program (B &I)

The Business and Industrial Loan program of direct and guaranteed loans is designed to create and save rural jobs and to improve the economic and environmental climates of rural communities under 50,000 population. This may include financing for transportation-related facilities, vehicle acquisition or other infrastructure investments. Any legally organized entity is eligible.

Funding Level: \$738.2 million

Contact: Dwight Carmon (202) 690-4100

Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG)

RBEG supports rural economic and community development projects, including transportation facilities, infrastructure improvements, and the capital costs of transportation services.

Funding Level: \$41 million

Contact: Carole Boyko (202) 720-1400

Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants

Grants are targeted to certain purposes such as community development, medical care, educational technology, job training, business incubators and technical assistance, and can be used for transportation activities that fit with those purposes.

Funding Level: \$32.3 million

Contact: Joseph Binder (202) 720-1400

Rural Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities

The Rural EZ/EC program is an initiative that is designed to help distressed areas improve themselves through a comprehensive, coordinated approach integrating local initiatives with federal support.

Contact: Victor Vasquez (202) 619-7980

Department of Education (DoEd)

Vocational Rehabilitation Grants

Funds are provided to state rehabilitation agencies on a formula basis to provide a full range of rehabilitative services to eligible individuals with disabilities.

Funding Level: \$2.2 billion

Contact: Roseann Ashby (202)205-8719

Centers for Independent Living

This program provides support to local nonprofit centers for independent living, enabling them to provide training, counseling, advocacy and supportive services to individuals with significant disabilities. Transportation services are provided through this program.

Funding Level: \$42.8 million

Contact: John Nelson (202)205-9362

Even Start

Transportation services may be included if necessary to ensure participation in the adult literacy component of this program.

Funding Level: \$102 million

Contact: Patricia McKee (202) 260-0991

Education for Homeless Children and Youth

Funds from this program are used to overcome all identified barriers to homeless children's participation in public education, and may be used to provide transportation to homeless children not otherwise able to participate in appropriate public education programs.

Funding Level: \$23 million

Contact: Linda Mount (202)260-0960

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Administration for Children and Families

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

This eliminates the AFDC program, JOBS, and Emergency Assistance and creates a block grant to states. States may use the funding in any manner “reasonably calculated to accomplish the purposes of TANF.” These purposes include moving welfare recipients to work opportunities.

Funding Level: \$164 billion

Contact: Paul Maiers (202) 401-5438

Community Services Block Grant

Under this program, states and Indian tribes receive funding to provide a broad range of social services for low income persons. Transportation services commonly are provided by many of these local programs.

Funding Level: \$490.6 million

Contact: Margaret Washnitzer (202) 401-2333

Social Services Block Grants

Funds may be used for transportation projects that improve the delivery and effectiveness of human services programs.

Funding Level: \$2.3 billion

Contact: Margaret Washnitzer (202) 401-2333

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Substance Abuse Treatment for Rural and Remote Persons

The program supports six project sites, each of which uses a coordinated approach integrating substance abuse treatment, health and social service and related services including transportation.

Funding Level: \$1.8 million

Contact: Tom Edward (202) 443-8802

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Office of Community Planning and Development

Community Development Block Grants

Some communities have used CDBG funds to assist in the construction of transportation facilities, operating expenses and vehicle acquisition for community transportation services.

Funding Level: \$4.6 billion

Contact: Richard Kennedy (202) 708-3587

Bridges to Work

Demonstration program to connect inner-city residents with suburban employment opportunities by providing job placement, transportation services, and other support services. Program is on-going in five cities.

Funding Level: No new finding

Contact: James Hoben (202) 708-3700

Supportive Housing (Homeless) Demonstration Program

Transportation to link supportive housing residents with other necessary services may be funded.

Funding Level: \$82.3 million

Contact: Jean Whaley (202) 708-2140

Urban Empowerment Zones Enterprise Communities

To be designated an EZ/EC, an area had to submit a strategic plan for revitalization, which could incorporate strategies for addressing transportation needs and services.

Contact: Dennis Kane (202) 708-0614

Tenant Opportunities Program

Funding is allowed for transportation if public and Indian housing resident organizations are involved in job training.

Funding Level: \$5 million

Contact: Michael Levine (202) 708-3611

Welfare to Work/EDSS

Eighty percent of the funding in the welfare to work grants

will fund supportive services and economic development efforts that will enable residents of public housing developments to become self-sufficient, including employment training, counseling, transportation and child care. Public housing authorities are eligible applicants.

Funding Level: \$31 million

Contact: Patricia Aranado (202) 619-8201

Department of Labor (DOL)

Welfare to Work Grants

This new formula and competitive grant program provides funding for those who are the most difficult to move from welfare to work. The States are recipients of the grants while the local Private Industry Councils administer the grants.

Funding Level: \$3 billion

Contact: Dennis Lieberman (202) 219-0181

Trade Adjustment Assistance

Primarily, this is a program of temporary benefits to workers whose employment has been adversely affected by increased imports. It also provides benefits for job training and necessary related services, specifically including transportation to training programs.

Funding Level: \$8.5 million

Contact: Anthony Meyer (202) 482-2127

Employment Training Research and Demonstration Programs

Transportation services that are part of these projects will be supported.

Funding Level: \$10.2 million

Contact: Steven Wandner (202) 219-5677

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Federal Highway Administration (FHW)

Highway Planning and Construction

The program of federal aid for highways has many components, most of which can only be used for highway construction

and rehabilitation projects. However, funding is available to Metropolitan Planning Organizations and States for planning activities including those addressing welfare to work. Funding for other related activities such as ridesharing programs are also available through these organizations.

Funding Level: \$19.7 billion

Contact: Thomas Ptak (202) 366-0371

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

Capital Program

Formerly known as "Section 3," this program provides capital assistance for new rail systems, modernization of existing rail systems, and for new and replacement buses and facilities.

Funding Level: \$2.0 billion

Contact: Joyce Larkins (202) 366-0371

Metropolitan Planning Grants

Formerly known as "Section 8" this program provides formula funding for transportation planning activities in metropolitan areas.

Funding Level: 39.5 million

Contact: Sean Libberton (202) 366-0055

Urbanized Area Formula Program

Formerly known as "Section 9," this program provides funding to areas of 50,000 or greater population. Funds may be used to support either transit capital, planning, or operating expenses, although there is a statutory maximum of available operating assistance.

Funding Level: \$1.9 billion, up to \$400 million in operating assistance

Contact: Melton Baxter (202) 366-2053

Nonurbanized Area Formula Program and the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)

Formerly known as "Section 18," this program provides formula funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in areas of less than 50,000 population. The Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) provides formula funding to states for rural transit training and technical assistance.

Funding Level: \$115.1 million, \$4.5 million for RTAP

Contact: Mary Martha Churchman (202) 366-2053

Capital Assistance for Elderly and Disabilities Transportation

Formerly known as “Section 16,” this program provides formula funding to states for the purpose of assisting private non-profit groups in meeting the transportation needs of elders and persons with disabilities.

Funding Level: \$56 million

Contact: Sue Masselink (202) 366-2053

National Planning and Research Program

Formerly known as “Section 26(b),” this program provides support for public transit research, demonstrations and special projects that are in the national interest, such as advanced technology, transit finance initiatives, transit accessibility, human resource training and development and information initiatives including the RTAP National Resource Center.

Funding Level: \$22 million

Contact: Edward Thomas (202) 366-4052

State Planning and Research Program

Formerly known as “Section 26(2),” this program provides formula funding to states to carry out public transportation planning, research, demonstration and technical assistance activities.

Funding Level: \$8.25 million

Contact: Sean Libberton (202) 366-0055

Joblinks

Since 1995, the Federal Transit Administration has funded this demonstration program. CTAA administers the program, funding projects that demonstrate innovative employment transportation solutions.

Available Funding: \$1.0 million

Contact: Charles Dickson (202) 661-0208