

A Guide to Innovative Practices

A Guide to Innovative Practices in Welfare to Work Transportation

VERSION III

TO JOBS



PB99-109803



U.S. Department
of Transportation

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ACCESS

A Guide to
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Practices in
Welfare to Work
Transportation

TO JOBS

July 1998

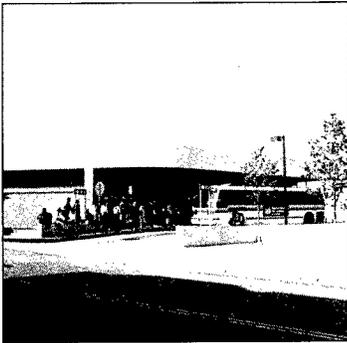
VERSION III



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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE ISSUE

Transportation's Key Role in Welfare Reform

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

Public transportation, as the innovative practices in this report illustrate, has a pivotal role in many Americans' journey from welfare to work. According to the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration of Children and Families, 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 (see chart on page 5). For these people, public transit is more than merely a ride — it is a lifeline.

Nearly 40 percent of the 10 million daily public transit riders in the U.S. are considered low-income.

However, conventional transit systems services, as they are currently constituted in many areas, cannot meet all the new transportation demands that welfare-to-work programs are generating. 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 service remains a genuine issue.

This means that additional public transportation and specialized services will be needed to fill the transportation gaps. And these public transportation options will need to be flexible and innovative to respond to the needs of people transitioning from welfare to work. Frequently success may be achieved by coordinating a variety of existing transportation providers to respond to this pressing national challenge.

This report summarizes those 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 current technical assistance efforts on the subject.

Welfare Reform is the Catalyst

President Clinton signed the welfare reform bill (the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996) 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. After the first year, many states reported 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

Although the downtown areas of many U.S. cities continue to be employment locations, in virtually all metropolitan areas there has been explosive job growth in the suburbs. Many of these newly created suburban jobs are 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 and rural areas where the majority of people on welfare currently live.

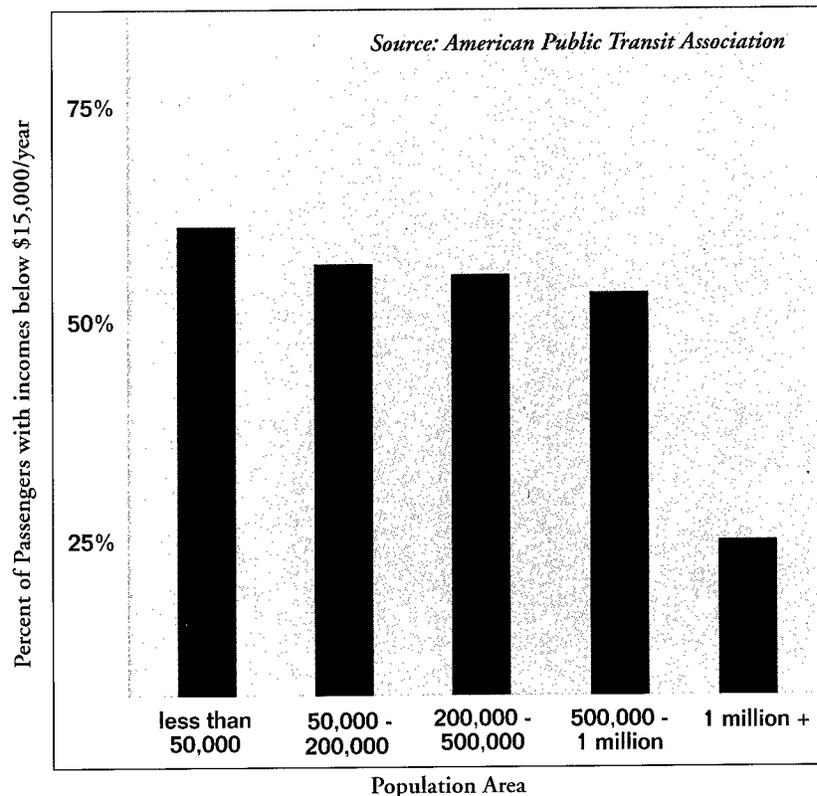
The Time Challenge: Work Hours and Service Hours Don't Match

An 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

It is a myth that welfare-to-work transportation is strictly an urban issue. 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 (CTAA, 1992), and one recognizes the growing crises in our nation's small towns and countryside.



II. DETERMINING TRANSIT'S NEEDS

Research is a valuable tool in identifying whether spatial mismatches (welfare recipients living far from job opportunities and having no transit to bridge the gap) and other local barriers keep welfare recipients from employment. In this section, 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.

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 (see table, page 7). 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 Reserve, 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 recipients' 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.

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 8 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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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?

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

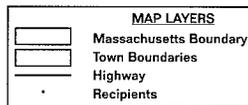
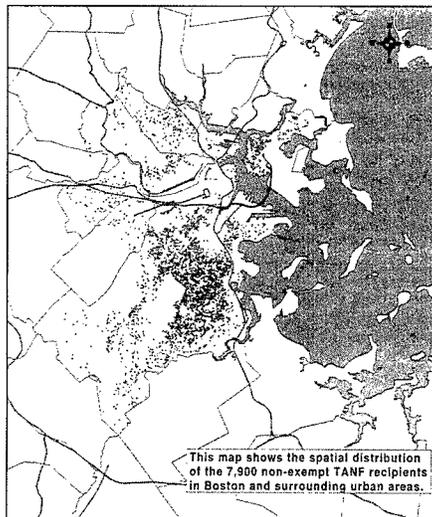
Using geographic information systems (GIS) mapping software to examine Georgia's Cobb County, Coughlin and Michael Rich, associate professor of political science at Emory University in At-

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

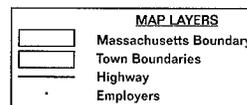
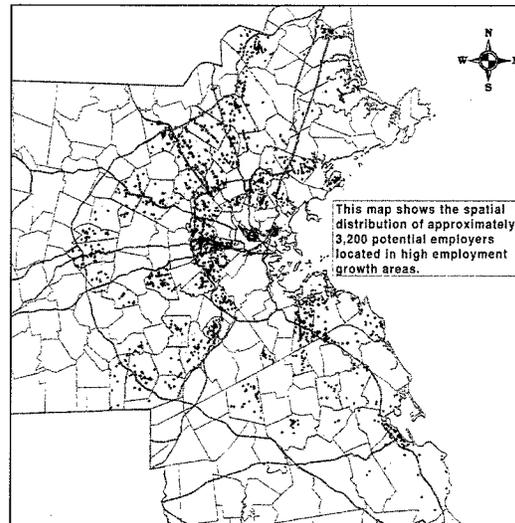
Neighborhood	Average Commute 20 min. 37 min.		75th Percentile Commute 25 min. 45 min.		95th Percentile Commute 40 min. 80 min.	
	auto	public transit	auto	public transit	auto	public transit
Cleveland - West Side	33.9%	11.5%	44.3%	16.6%	70.3%	43.4%
Cleveland - Near East Side	35.4%	12.7%	48.9%	16.5%	73.6%	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 and Brookline)**



Potential Employers in High-Growth Towns



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.

lanta, 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 were accessible by the Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transit Authority (MARTA). Further, the majority of these jobs entailed a one- to two-hour commute.

A similar study was conducted in the Boston metropolitan area by the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center for the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. It found that even though Boston-area wel-

fare recipients have good access to transit from their homes, they still have difficulty 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 inadequate 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 dispersed job sites? 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 transit 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 spatial mismatch, Coughlin and Rich demonstrate transportation's role as a crucial element of successful welfare reform. Coughlin and Rich, with Ford Foundation support, are working with researchers at the University of California Los Angeles and Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland to examine the problem in multiple locations and to develop viable transportation options.

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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 of people 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.

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, case workers can see where most public assistance recipients live, along with the location of suitable employment opportunities, day care 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

People receiving welfare face tremendous mobility challenges. 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 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 (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. Where 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 transit routes change, it may be necessary to work closely with the transit agency to make sure that the maps are accurate. In any case, it is 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. 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

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 intended use of the analysis will determine 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 entry-level 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 for spatial analyses: projections of industry employment and 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.

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III. STATE WELFARE - TO - WORK TRANSPORT

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.



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.

A key component of the welfare reform law is devolution of power to the states.

One of the components of the state program, *Project Zero*, is a demonstration effort intended to reduce the number of public assistance households in the pilot areas without earned income to zero. The pilot areas include: Alpena, Menominee, Midland and Ottawa Counties, and the Tireman and Romulus Districts in Wayne County. Due to the success of the program, *Project Zero* was expanded to include Berrien, Hillsdale, Kent and Manistee Counties, and the Greendale and Warren/Conner 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 its 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.

ON EFFORTS

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 more than \$1 million in state money to extend transit service hours and areas of operation.
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.

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 client needs and develop services that address their needs. Another critical feature has been to fund these services. While *Project Zero* was intended to be a one-year, intensive demonstration project focused on selected areas, the mechanisms used to implement the origi-

nal program have been used in expanded areas. Efforts to help FIA clients become self-sufficient continue.

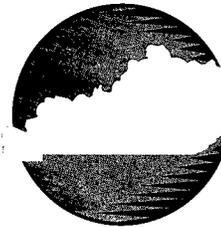
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Kentucky

On April 28, 1997, Kentucky Governor Paul Patton signed a federal transit allocation for public transportation agencies throughout Kentucky. A portion of this funding will flow through Kentucky's new welfare initiative, *EMPOWER Kentucky*, to guarantee transportation for TANF recipients throughout the state.

When 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. In fact, 28 counties were completely exempted from training and work activities.

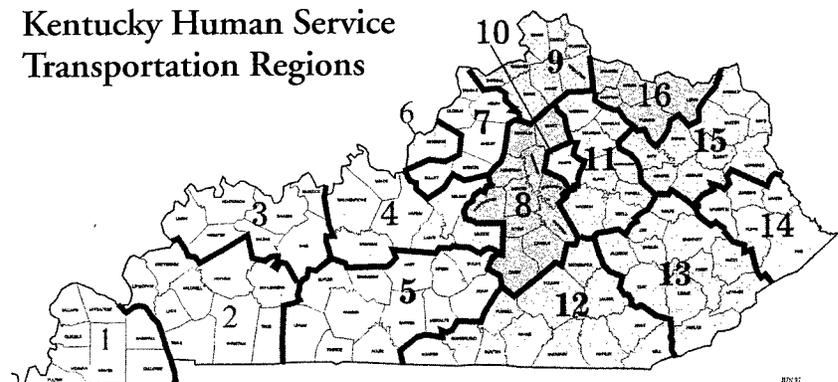


The *EMPOWER Kentucky* plan has set up a statewide transportation network composed of 16 regions (see map). The regions were determined by analyzing an existing transit provider's fleet size and capacity. Additionally, an estimate of historical utilization of transportation was made by looking at the sparse pre-reform welfare transportation data, but primarily by extrapolating from non-emergency Medicaid transportation 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 out 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. *EMPOWER Kentucky* officials estimate that the network will be implemented statewide within a one-year period. Demonstration regions are already underway.

The selected transportation provider will be paid a flat (or capitated) rate for each welfare recipient who resides within the designated service area — regardless of whether the recipient uses the service.

Kentucky Human Service Transportation Regions



In addition, Kentucky is including non-emergency Medicaid transportation in its plan.

In return, the selected provider guarantees service for all public assistance recipients and Medicaid clients who need it. This yet-to-determined fee, it is hoped, will be sufficient to cover the transportation costs of a limited number of consumers. Since the payments are made directly to the transit provider, the expenses of transporting clients in rural areas should be balanced by payments for recipients that do not use their transportation stipends.

FTA Section 5309 discretionary bus 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 will be based on a variety of factors, from the mileage and age of existing vehicles to the provider's service area. For instance, preference will be given to Appalachian areas and agencies with ridership that includes high concentrations of welfare participants.

Overall, *EMPOWER Kentucky's* ultimate benefits for welfare-to-work transportation lie in the guarantee of transportation for all recipients who 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 South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) received its legislative mandate through the *Family Independence Act* (FIA) of 1995 as the responsible agency to implement welfare reform in the state of South Carolina. SCDSS is also the designated agency to implement the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996. One of the many challenges facing the SCDSS in its implementation is the transport of customers to and from training, interviews and jobs, coupled with the transport of children to and from child care facilities or caretakers — so that customers can be employed.

Along with *Family Independence* (FI) customers helping themselves, SCDSS continues to offer transportation support services through 46 County DSS offices, which operate in the state's seven DSS regions. FI customers are assisted, in varying degrees, in accessing child care, interviews, education, job training and employment opportunities. Dependable, flexible, safe and affordable transportation is needed seven days a week with 24-hour availability to accommodate a multiplicity of customer needs. To increase capacity or to access dependable transportation, various approaches and options are used, namely:

- Contracting with existing general public and specialized transportation providers in South Carolina (bus and van operators) to assist customers in accessing child care, interviews, training and jobs;
- Purchasing transit tickets, passes and/or tokens from existing providers (where they exist) for customers;
- Reimbursing client providers (relatives, neighbors, or volunteers) for eligible transportation costs;



- Utilizing certified Medicaid volunteers to transport FI customers for low-volume transportation needs under an approved Memorandum of Understanding with the State's Health and Human Services Department;

- Providing payments to approved vendors for the cost of repairs of customers' personal automobiles so that safe and reliable transportation can be available;

- Referring FI customers who are job ready to transportation organizations for hiring consideration, as drivers and for other available positions. Also, the state has mandated that state agencies hire FI customers;

- Providing transitional transportation support to customers for up to 24 months after they have become employed;

- Providing temporary van rentals (through approved private vendors) to county offices for transporting customers;

- Rotating existing SCDSS-leased and owned vehicles among county offices which are used for agency-sponsored programs;

- Actively encouraging cross utilization of the agency's fleet among program areas to meet multiple transportation needs of customers;

- Modifying transportation policy guidelines to increase the capacity of county DSS staffs and to allow greater flexibility in meeting customer needs; and

- Encouraging employers to use the Transit Benefit Program to subsidize transit costs of employees, with the employer receiving tax credits.

SCDSS continues to plan, coordinate and develop new and/or improved short-

and long-term strategies to meet customers' transportation needs. The Transportation Resource Office (TRO) of the SCDSS also provides on-going resource assistance to county DSS offices in determining strategies for assisting customers gain mobility access. In addition, partnering efforts also continue with state, regional, and county agencies to improve service delivery.

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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.

The North Carolina State Legislature appropriated \$1.75 million to support the transitional transportation needs of *Work First* participants who are working and no longer eligible to receive cash assistance. To meet these needs, the apportionment has been divided into two components: a \$1 million formula-based allocation and

a separate \$750,000 allocation for local, regional and statewide demonstration projects to provide *Work First* and general public transportation services. Both of these grants are being administered through the NCDOT in collaboration with the NCDSS.

Counties have broad flexibility in spending their formula-based allocations. Funds may be used for car repairs, vehicle licenses, down payments on cars, coordinated transportation services, client and volunteer reimbursements, bus tokens and taxis. Because these are state transit funds, NCDSS provides ongoing transportation services to former *Work First* recipients without triggering the five-year TANF clock.

North Carolina is also in the process of developing a state car ownership model whereby individuals, businesses, nonprofit organizations and local and state governments will donate used cars to be sold to *Work First* participants at a nominal cost. Many of North Carolina's 100 counties have already incorporated some type of car ownership in their local *Work First* plans for FY 1998-FY 2000.

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 Departments 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.

Rural Vanpooling

The Department of Transportation is promoting rural vanpooling to help meet rural employment transportation needs: NCDOT provides a van to a county transit system with the expectation that the local employers 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.

The goals of the job fairs are: To encourage employers to develop a transportation plan for their employees which fosters 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 successful and will 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 they 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 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 five categories: *Work Pass* program; *Get a Job, Get a Ride* program; a 21-county planning project to develop solutions to transportation needs; a transportation innovation fund; and the financing of welfare-to-work demonstration projects in Gloucester and Monmouth counties.

NJ Transit's Work Pass Program

NJ Transit, the statewide mass transit agency, has created the *Work Pass* program to assist WFNJ participants in accessing public transportation to travel to work and work activities. NJ Transit provides training to WFNJ county agency staff on reading bus schedules, determining fares, determining transit availability for participants and on ordering bus/rail passes and transit tickets for participants. In addition, NJ Transit conducts research to determine transit availability of different work sites and work activities as well as establish resource centers at each WFNJ county agency which offer transit timetables, maps, guides and informational brochures on special services.



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 to any welfare recipients who leave cash assistance.

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

The NJDOT *Transportation Innovation Fund* will be 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, funds could be used to operate vanpools to transport WFNJ recipients to employment sites that have 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 commitment. Currently, the county provides 61 welfare participants with bus passes to get to work. This replaces the \$6-a-day transportation allowance 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, by emphasizing partnerships with the public and private sectors (including business) and through innovative programs such as a transportation brokerage programs that combine Medicaid and welfare trips, a work-pass program and vanpools developed through transportation management associations.

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Ohio

The state of Ohio is committed to coordinating transportation programs and services and is developing a plan to implement coordination statewide.

Over a dozen Ohio agencies provide transportation as part of their overall customer service package. Many agencies serve the same populations, provide services and issue policies and regulations which should complement, but sometimes conflict with, one another. At a time when human service agency and transit system budgets are under severe pressure, the best use of resources is critical. With the full support

and encouragement of Gov. George V. Voinovich, Ohio is working to coordinate transportation programs and resources at the state and local level.

Ohio's welfare reform plan, *Ohio Works First* (OWF), will move clients to self-sufficiency by emphasizing getting and maintaining gainful employment. More than 100,000 TANF recipients in Ohio will need to join the labor force by 2000 (Ohio has placed a 36-month time limit on TANF recipients). 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 its welfare reform law. One primary innovative aspect of the *Ohio Works First* effort is the funding of coordinated transportation efforts. The Ohio General Assembly and the Ohio Department of Human Services have committed \$5 million in each year of their current biennial budget as a result of dramatic reductions in the welfare caseload. Funds have been distributed to all of Ohio's 88 counties for the purpose of enhancing transportation services to participants in the work component of the *Ohio Works First* program.

Another innovative provision of the law requires each board of county commissioners to develop a written Transportation Work Plan that establishes policies regarding the transportation needs of low-income residents of each county seeking or striving to retain employment. The law requires the board to consult with their county Department of Human Services, Regional Transit Authority, Community Action Agency and other private nonprofit and government entities that work with issues related to economic development, employment, persons with disabilities and other community services.

A third provision of the law allows government entities to donate excess vehicles, not to exceed \$2,500 in value, to individual *Ohio Works First* participants and

other entities that provide direct transportation services.

Ohio's welfare reform legislation establishes a Transportation Work Group convened by the director of the Department of Human Services and composed of the directors of Transportation, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Bureau of Employment Services, a representative of an Ohio rideshare agency and the Rehabilitation Services Commission. The Work Group is required to review current state transportation resources and policies, consider new transportation coordination initiatives and review economic development issues related to the unemployed and underemployed. The Work Group is further charged with reporting its findings and making recommendations to the state House of Representatives and Senate.

Finally, the legislation requires the director of the Department of Transportation to apply for federal funds that are or may become available under ISTEA for welfare transportation services (Access to Jobs). These funds will be used for mobility efforts led by the Statewide Transportation Coordination Task Force which has been meeting since 1996. The membership of the Task Force represents 13 state agencies and/or organizations that are committed to improving and increasing access to state agency programs and services and enhancing service and program quality, and ultimately the quality of life, for Ohioans through transportation coordination. Methods of coordination include eliminating duplicative programs and services; eliminating conflicting state requirements and regulations; and, better use of local, state and federal resources.

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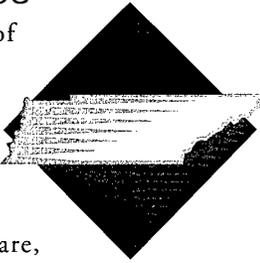
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Tennessee

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. The *Families First* program has provided transportation to more than 39,000 participants. They have also exempted more than 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 day care centers are prearranged

as part of vanpool services and the cost for children using the service is covered 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. More than 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 the 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 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, it 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 the cars in good working condition. This program is currently being replicated in two other counties.

In Blunt County, a local car dealer donated used cars to a foundation. Once a car is given to a recipient, the foundation retains the title of the vehicle for three 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.

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 allocate and program 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.

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 (CRCOG), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the city of Hartford and 28 surrounding municipalities, has formed a Welfare-to-Work Transportation Access Task Force.

Members of the Task Force 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 transit service); the Greater Hartford Transit District and rideshare company; the MPO; the Community Renewal Team; the Hartford area's Community Action Agency; the Connecticut Business and Industry Association and others.

The Task Force's goal has been to build consensus among participating 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 many areas of the country, Greater Hartford 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 many available entry-level jobs are for second and third shifts and/or weekends or in suburban locations not served by transit; jobs that job candidates from the city without an automobile cannot access.

MPO's are achieving success in creating coordinated employment transportation systems.

Transportation Solutions

To help address these gaps, the CRCOG received a \$300,000 grant of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) funds through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. CRCOG will also receive nearly \$2 million in state funding, over a two-year period, for welfare-to-work transportation projects. In fact, the success of the original program in Hartford was largely responsible for mustering support in the Connecticut legislature for a statewide program. This program will fund additional projects in the South Central (New Haven) and Southwest (Bridgeport, Norwalk and Stamford) areas of the state, as well as in Hartford.

The Task Force has coordinated transportation improvements in three general areas:

- Numerous opportunities exist in which relatively slight and inexpensive adjustments to the present fixed-route bus system can yield significant dividends in terms of improving access to jobs. For example, rescheduling the last buses leaving from the area's two major shopping malls to depart after the stores close resulted in a doubling of ridership. The later service allowed more entry-level retail workers to commute by bus. Deviating deadhead trips on commuter express routes is another low-cost measure that improves access to suburban job opportunities for city residents.
- New fixed-route service has been established to a rapidly developing retail and light industrial corridor south of downtown Hartford, and similar improvements are being planned for the Bradley International Airport area north of Hartford. Having all of the various

operators, planning agencies and job developers participating on the Task Force proved critical to building consensus on priorities for allocating limited resources for new transit services.

- Finally, the Task Force has recognized the need for flexibility in serving small clusters of workers whose destinations or shift times cannot be accommodated by the fixed-route bus system. Options include subsidized vanpools, subscription bus service and use of paratransit vehicles operated by the Greater Hartford Transit District. The Task Force has also implemented a *Guaranteed Ride Home* program to assure former welfare clients, working at suburban sites, that they can get home in an emergency during off-hours.

The Task Force has established a toll-free information phone number which has been widely publicized among job developers, employers and welfare clients. The toll-free line actually rings in CT Transit's customer service center where many inquiries about access to jobs can be satisfied with bus route and schedule information. The system provides a seamless transfer of calls to the Rideshare Company which matches prospective commuters with available carpools and vanpools. All other inquiries are referred to a Service Review Committee consisting of all the Hartford-area service providers that consider other possible service options.

Planners at the CRCOG 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 responding to shifting needs. Ultimately, the goal is to demonstrate a cost-effective reverse commuting system which can sustain itself with reasonable fare collections and public subsidies.

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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 in Florida. As the program grows, destinations to other beaches and inland areas will be added.

With support from 60 community businesses, local leaders and transportation planners, the vanpool program began with a three-month trial period in March 1997. 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 col-

lection. Emerald Coast Transportation, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, manages 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 in which potential employees are surveyed to determine the potential number of vanpool users.

Vanpooling is the right 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 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 (HUD) 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). 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 (EWGCC) — the city's MPO, which 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 through its 41 employment access initiative steps. While the Missouri Highway and Transportation Department is not a member of the governing board, it works in conjunction with EWGCC.

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, 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 EWGCC: The agency encourages existing services to better serve the public at large rather than targeting certain markets with special services, such as welfare recipients.

Planning and Implementation

The EWGCC 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 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 circulator will provide feeder service, connecting several pickup 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* hopes 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 EWGCC 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 federally 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

EWGCC 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

There is no single welfare-to-work transportation solution.

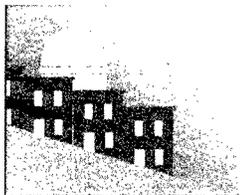
The innovative practices presented in this section represent a variety of welfare-to-work transportation designs tested in various areas and environments, including major metropolitan areas and rural areas. Diversity is also reflected in the populations served, which range from ordinary workers, to welfare 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 overall transportation system 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 publication, 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 co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development known as *Bridges to Work*. The program, operated by the Historic East



**HISTORIC
EAST BALTIMORE
COMMUNITY
ACTION COALITION, INC.**

Baltimore Community Action Coalition (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 high 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.

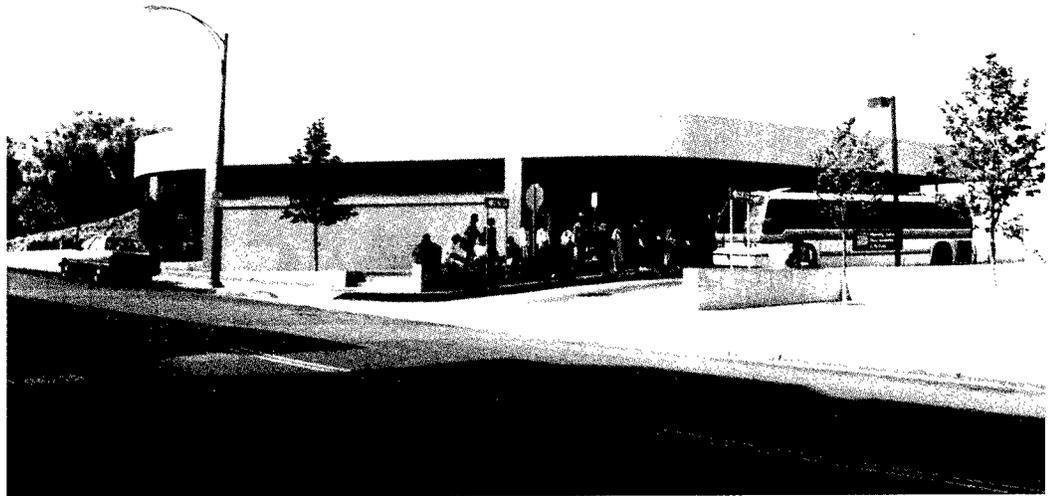
When HEBCAC assists people in obtaining employment in the BWI Airport district, it provides door-to-door van rides from East Baltimore to job sites. Since the project started in December 1996, two vans have been picking up workers in East Baltimore each morning, dropping them off at work, and transporting 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. Traditional public transit does not serve this route effectively. 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 two weeks. 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 participants seeking employment in the airport district, HEBCAC 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.



An NFTA bus arrives at a transit center

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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 limited transportation dollars.

Led by the Niagara Frontier Transit Authority (NFTA) in Buffalo, N.Y., the *Hublink* initiative is a model for planning

transportation systems 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 charac-



terized 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 these markets. 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. Modifications include implementing timed transfers at suburban hubs and key urban transfer points, expanding access to reverse commute trips on existing and new

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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 have been 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 10 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.

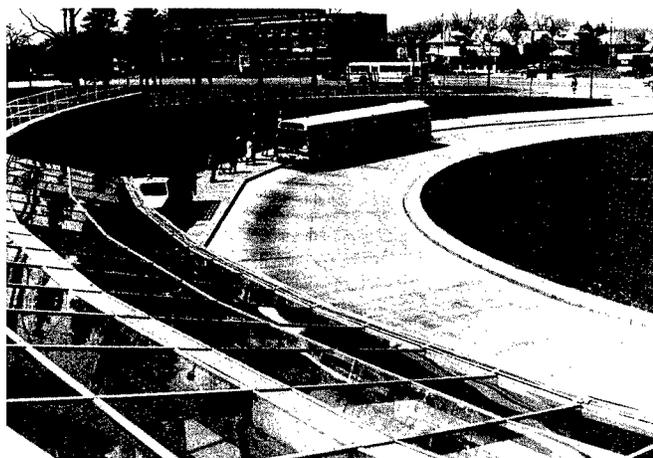
Chicago has been a showcase for efforts to overcome these mobility challenges. Two different kinds of service providers — the nonprofit Suburban Job-Link Corporation and the suburban transit agency

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 chronic 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; that provide enough take-home income and fringe benefits to allow workers to escape poverty; and that 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 provides 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 coach-



NFTA is exploring ways to better access job sites

suburban-to-city express routes and introducing limited-stop service 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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A Service of Suburban Job-Link Corporation

ing, 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 north-west suburbs. Half of the fleet are 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.

Suburban Job-Link develops well-traveled routes with its shuttle bus service. Once a route reaches a certain ridership threshold, Suburban Job-Link coordinates with PACE Suburban Bus Service, turn-

ing over the most popular routes to the traditional transit organization.

Ridesharing Management Services —

Suburban Job-Link is developing a program with PACE Suburban Bus Service to provide vans for reverse commuting. They hope that the vanpool program will provide a natural transition to independent forms of transportation.

The agency 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.

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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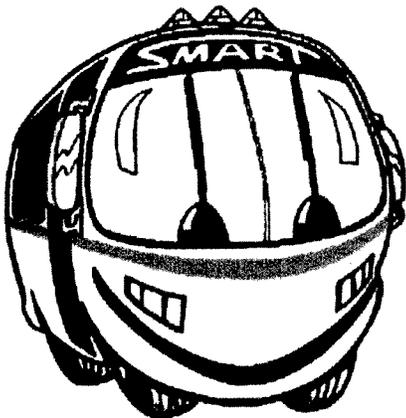
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Detroit, Mich. — Multiple Strategies

Southeast Michigan is home to the city of Detroit and myriad suburban municipalities. 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 these employment opportunities.

Transportation services in Detroit are provided by the Detroit Department of Transportation whose



services end at the city limits. In the suburbs, Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (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.

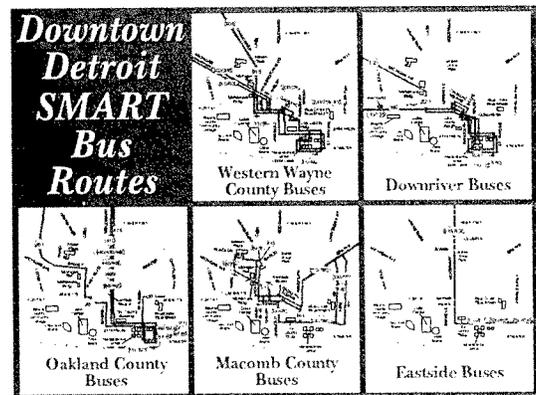
- **Outreach.** SMART networks with employers through *Buses to Business* breakfast forums. SMART works with the Michigan Department of Employment Security, local chambers of commerce, county economic development departments, the Michigan Jobs Commission and others who help get the word out to the business community that the agency wants to work with employers to change schedules and routing and will design special services to meet business needs.

At each forum, held at 7:30 a.m., employers complete a survey inquiring 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 businesses and invite them to the forums, SMART purchased a commercially-available mailing list of companies in the area.

Another outreach practice was 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 and following through inside the agency to make sure that employer needs are met.

- **Marketing.** Among the most inno-

vative 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 *Jobline*. SMART designates one of its telephone lines to play a recorded message of available jobs located along bus routes. Additional information on potential employment is provided through contacts with the chambers of



SMART operates both in the city and suburbs

commerce, shopping malls and other employers. SMART advertises the *Jobline* on targeted radio stations in the Detroit area with a particular emphasis on radio stations with a large African-American market. The information includes the nature of the job, its pay rate and how to get there using SMART. At a minimum, *Jobline* generates 1,000 calls each week.

- **Planning.** Since 1994, SMART has revised its fixed-route system to accommodate suburban job centers. This information was secured from the breakfast forums, local chambers of commerce, economic development groups, media reports and by plotting business data on a SMART route map through a GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping system. Consequently, the agency has significantly increased transportation to suburban job centers. The results have been noteworthy. Weekday fixed-route ridership is up over 15 percent since the change. On the

weekends, the increase is greater than 25 percent. More than 50,000 businesses, or 40,000 employees, received new or improved service since the SMART tax in 1995. Employee shuttles, suburban-to-suburban park and ride routes and flexible routing are all part of the SMART service system.

- **Job Developers.** SMART has taken the GIS mapping system one step further in helping people find jobs along bus routes. SMART is currently working with three separate employment agencies in identifying job openings along the suburban fixed-route system. SMART provides the job developers with a list of employers within 1/4 mile of the fixed route. Information on the employers includes the business name, address, telephone number, contact person, Standard Industrial Classification code and number of employees in the business. This approach allows job developers to target businesses that historically have openings for unskilled labor. The advantage to the welfare recipient securing a job is less travel time because there is better bus service and a permanent way of travel to work. Less travel time also means less dependency on day care. SMART is even working with a job development group to arrange bus connections and a stop at day care all in one trip.

- **Quality 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 SMART 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 coordination. This foundation led to the development of a computerized (*Quo Vadis*) reservation system allowing social-service agencies to schedule riders onto SMART vehicles, and vice versa. This concept is envisioned as an airline reservation system for transit, whereby users can book rides on vehicles from various providers through one coordinated system. SMART has been working toward this goal for three years, working out the technology and organization to allow a human service agency staff member to directly book client transportation. 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 Detroit, since those who lacked their own transportation faced several transfers and discouragingly long travel times to take jobs in the suburbs. Through a Federal Transit Administration Joblinks demonstration grant, Operation ABLE leased a SMART vehicle to bring people from the city 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 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.

SMART has made a major investment in working with community-based service providers. Many of the 100 communities in the SMART service area operate paratransit service. Since its tax was approved in 1995, SMART has teamed up with many of these providers by contributing operating money and paratransit buses to operate service. While the community-based service is designed around the needs of older adults and people with disabilities, SMART has begun work-based demonstrations. A number of communities are providing linkages between the SMART fixed-route system and employers not along the fixed-route system. This activity is expected to grow significantly during the next five years.

The innovative practices evidenced in Detroit include an creative marketing program, restructured service to better serve the needs of employers, new technologies, and close coordination with numerous social service agencies.

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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, faced 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 broad-based 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, and was designated a Federal Empowerment Zone. Bluegrass Industrial Park, the third largest development of its kind in the nation, is located in the eastern suburbs of the city and offers job opportunities in a wide variety of industries, at all levels of employment. Residents in the eastern side of Louisville enjoy 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. This area has double-digit unemployment, and 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 of 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), established 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, one-way 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 programs were launched to develop ridership. KIPDA and TARC held meetings with community agencies, the local 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 express-route riders tended to be transit-dependent commuters who lacked a vehicle. Generally, 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



TARC's J. Barry Barker (left), FTA Administrator Gordon Linton (center) and John LeMaster celebrate the NIA Center's opening.

comprised the target area for the service. The initial success of the reverse commute express service has since allowed it to become institutionalized.

In addition to cash fares, TARC secured cash assistance from the municipality and support from employers 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.

TARC has also developed an innovative joint development center — the Nia Neighborhood Travel and Jobs Center — which will become a focal point for public transportation service and information in the west end of Louisville. This innovative project was funded by the Federal Transit Administration under its Livable Communities Initiative. 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 is available on site as a liaison to the other tenant partners and to the surrounding community including employers and gov-

ernment agencies. The TARC Nia coordinator works cooperatively with employers to design and deliver specialized, cost-effective transportation services for employees living or working in the area.

Partners in the Nia Center and campus include: the Workforce Development Partnership Center which is dedicated to providing employer-driven training for residents in the Louisville Empowerment Zone; the LCBD Enterprise Group, providing 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, coordination of transportation and social service resources and development of public-private funding partnerships.

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Minneapolis, Minn. — Multiple Strategies

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

Destination JOBS

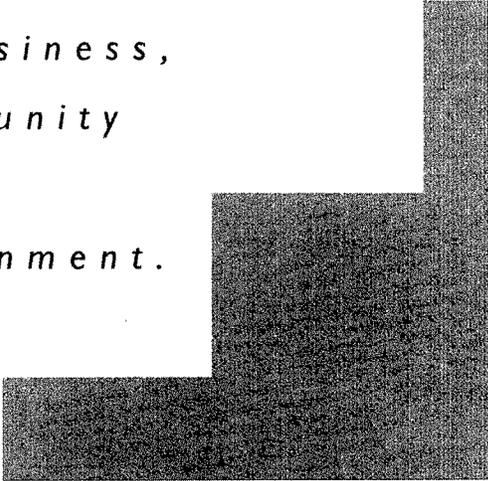
job seekers to workplaces in the suburbs. For example, one company used taxicabs, while another bought a used car for several workers to share. While effective for individual companies, these piecemeal attempts did not meet the larger need to connect inner-city workers with suburban employment; this need was the genesis for a reverse commute program known as *Destination Jobs*.

In 1992, the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce created the 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 a 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. It promoted the concept of reverse commuting and provided a new influx of riders.

Following the job fair, *Destination Jobs*, a two-leg reverse-commute route was es-

A
partnership
of business,
community
and
government.



tablished. An express bus picks up riders in the city and drops them off at a suburban transit hub, where two small buses take riders to work sites. The service is available Monday through Friday and currently serves 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 it.

To take advantage of the mobility provided by *Destination Jobs*, businesses have been willing to alter their shifts and community service agencies have provided 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 (SMTA), the non-profit inner-city neighborhood employment agencies, various community organizations and local governments. A key activity that helps sustain the reverse commute program is the previously mentioned annual job fair which provides a positive environment for prospective employers to meet with inner-city job seekers. *Destination Jobs*

is also marketed through job training agencies and the schedules published by the SMTA.

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.

Hennepin County is also launching several other initiatives designed to help welfare recipients get to work.

Fare Assistance Program

Additional funds have allowed Hennepin County to purchase bus passes from SMTA. The monthly passes are available to employment and training providers for distribution to *Minnesota Family Investment Program* (MFIP) clients. MFIP clients are offered passes at a greatly reduced rate. Bus passes are available for three months, or until the first paycheck, whichever comes first.

Employer and Agency Incentive Program

Selected employers and employment and training agencies are reimbursed \$100 per month for up to three months for each MFIP client whom they provide with transportation service during their first months of employment. Innovative pilot projects initiated by employers or agencies that serve MFIP clients transportation needs have been awarded start-up funding. Employers and agencies are selected to participate in this program if they have one or more of the following:

- On-site child care;
- New transportation service — carpools, vanpools, shuttles, etc.;
- Transportation service during second and third shifts or on weekends;
- Reverse commute service; i.e., from Minneapolis to suburban area employment transportation services; and
- Organizing transportation services between malls, industrial parks and other business-intensive developments.

Funding from employers and employment agencies financed transportation service for 700 clients, each for a three-month period. Hennepin County administers this program, including marketing and development of resource materials.

Transportation Coordinator

Central coordination of transportation services was needed during the early stages of the MFIP. A transportation coordinator would be responsible for:

- Distribution, interpretation and referrals of transit schedules;
- Referrals to agency, company and community transportation services;
- Referral to special programs

(vanpools, carpools and special low rate purchase);

- Training of workforce center staff on transportation options;
- Assist community volunteer coordinators in identifying opportunities for linking other volunteers with unmet client transportation needs; and
- Update electronic transportation service directory.

Continued need for the services will depend on how quickly training and employment providers and MFIP clients become familiar with transportation options

McKnight Foundation Matching Funds

One of the conditions of the McKnight Foundation funding to various geographic areas of the county is that local resources match a portion of the funding. Working groups were formed in seven geographic regions of Hennepin County to develop welfare-to-work strategies ranging from jobs and training development to building child care to transportation issues. The plan proposes to reserve a portion of metropolitan council funding for use in matching funds for McKnight Foundation resources.

Hennepin County regional networks have not submitted funding requests for specific transportation-related projects. The Hennepin County welfare-to-work transportation liaison will work with the regional networks to assure that expenditures are consistent with metropolitan council criteria and guidelines. The liaison will assist regional networks in determining specific data needed for reports to the metropolitan council.

The innovative practices evidenced in Minneapolis include: A 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.

For more information contact:

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Zuni, N.M. — Rural

The Zuni Pueblo 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 transporta-



tion and persons with disabilities.

Z.E.E. has developed a responsive and specialized transportation system:

- Z.E.E.'s Joblinks-funded vehicles have served 61 Zuni Pueblo residents, taking them to jobs, training, interviews and educational opportunities largely in Gallup.
- Z.E.E. has completed an application to develop a vanpool and submitted the application for financial assistance to the state of New Mexico to provide general public transit.
- Z.E.E. has developed a model for employment and education transportation services that can be replicated for other rural Native American communities in the country.

Z.E.E. is operating 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 is coordinated with all collaborating agencies.

The project keeps 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 and is operating services to address these unmet transportation needs.

*For more information contact:
Larry Alflen*

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Lowell, Mass. — Multiple Strategies

Approximately 16,000 people in Massachusetts will be transitioning off welfare assistance in less than 12 months. More than 1,300 live in communities covered by the Northern Middlesex Jobs Access Center. Even though the Massachusetts economy is thriving with plenty of work and higher incomes, there continues to be a mismatch between job openings and qualified workers. According to a recent study, 127,000 people are looking for work, and this number does not take into consideration the people due to come off welfare roles who must find a job.

The Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA) covers 11 cities and towns, with 1.6 million daily riders on 18 different routes. Located in Lowell, Mass., the LRTA serves an area with a high concentration of poverty (17.3 percent). Currently 613 people have been targeted to be the hardest-to-employ and are eligible for welfare-to-work initiatives in the Greater Lowell area. The majority of the recipients reside in Lowell, Billerica and Tewksbury.

The LRTA, in an innovative new approach to enhance transportation services, has developed a Transportation Access Center (TAC). The TAC is a nonprofit, public-private partnership dedicated to providing alternatives to commuting alone and to addressing related issues through the involvement of the private sector.

Driven by the business community, the TAC addresses the needs of a broad scope of individuals including both existing commuters and new commuters, many of whom will be transitioning from welfare to work. The TAC coordinates existing

transportation resources in the Northern Middlesex area with shuttle transportation service developed in cooperation with partner companies, a guaranteed ride home program to create increased opportunities for people to utilize public transportation, vanpools and carpools.

The TAC received approval for two grants from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC) in May of 1998. The first grant will provide partial funding for the TAC itself, while the second grant will furnish two new buses to be used to create a flexible shuttle service for area employees. The LRTA, in cooperation with University of Massachusetts/Lowell - Center for Work, Family and Community, conducted an in-depth survey of over 350 businesses that concluded that the lack of public transit was a major barrier to finding new employees.

The two grants were made possible by the hard work of a task force made up of over 20 community leaders and agencies who have worked diligently to develop a plan to improve access to jobs, and with the encouragement of EOTC Secretary Patrick Moynihan.

The TAC is the centerpiece of the proposed Jobs Access Center (JAC). The JAC will provide one-stop services for job training, job placement, child care services and public transportation or other commuter options such as vanpools and carpools. While past plans have focused on individual programs for job training, job placement, transportation and child care services, the JAC proposal brings all these elements together through partnerships with the private sector and existing community-based programs. Additional funding is being sought through various state, federal and private sources.

Key Innovative Elements

The JAC will maximize the available opportunities for employment, child care and transportation services for the hard-



Lowell's Robert Kennedy (right), Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater (second from right), U.S. Congressman Marty Meehan (third from right), and Under Secretary of Transportation, Commonwealth of Massachusetts Abner Mason (fourth from right) view plans for the Jobs Access Center.

est-to-serve recipients transitioning off public assistance. It will coordinate the activities of three centers: the existing "One Stop", the TAC and the Child care Services Center. The coordinators at these centers will work together to establish referral, eligibility and skills assessment of recipients, job readiness training and suitable placements; resolve child care concerns (second and third shift issues, as well as weekend child care); and provide transportation connections to employment and child care if it is identified to be a barrier to obtaining and retaining employment. The JAC seeks to serve all persons in the Northern Middlesex area identified by the state Department of Transitional Assistance as the hardest to serve individuals.

The Northern Middlesex JAC will be located in Lowell at the Career Center's One-Stop office. It will be easily accessible

by public transportation. The JAC services will be provided through a pre-established referral system that is linked to its community-based partner agencies and to the One Stop, the TAC and the Childcare Services Center (CSC). Many referrals will come directly into the JAC's Referral Information Center (RIC), while additional referrals will be received at the identified community outreach posts. The RIC coordinator will enter all client referral information into the JAC's integrated data base and then will forward the referral for eligibility determination to the One Stop and then to the appropriate service center who will provide a referral to the appropriate partner service agency. Additionally, recipients may be referred directly to the One Stop Career Center who require additional support services for successful employment. The Career Center's Welfare-

to-Work employment coordinator will screen the client for eligibility and enter referral information into the data base which will be a component of the JAC's integrated data base system. Support services requests will then be forwarded to the RIC coordinator for routing to the TAC and/or CSC.

Recognizing that there are significant employment barriers which characterize the target group (such as, substance abuse, lack of high school diploma or GED, low math and reading skills, poor job history or never employed before, learning disabilities and language barriers among others). The coordinators will work as a team to identify and procure assistance through community-based partners to remove these barriers.

The JAC model uses a holistic approach to assisting recipients in meeting

their employment goals. The JAC is interactive. It provides a link between area business partners who have positions to fill and partners serving current public assistance recipients who must find employment. The employer partners in the JAC have committed over 150 Work First employment slots to the 150 job placement candidates identified for service through the grant. The average wage at placement is expected to be \$8.75 per hour. The average wage after the first nine months of employment is expected to be \$10.25 per hour plus benefits. Additionally, the JAC expects to service 450 people (300 for Work-First slots and/or support services through this grant and 150 persons receiving placement services through formula funds who require transportation and family-based supports such as childcare to successfully transition from welfare to work).

Throughout this process described above, the transportation services delivered through the TAC are the centerpiece of the Jobs Access Center. Working in concert with the One Stop and the CSC, transportation profiles and transportation resource options are developed for each client which promote choice for employment opportunities and child care locations. The LRTA's formula for success is: JOBS + TRANSPORTATION + SUPPORT SERVICES = EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS.

For more information contact:

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*Andrea Leary
Northeast Transit Planning & Management
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Ventura County, Calif. — Service Design

The Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) has worked with the

county of Ventura on the welfare-to-work effort as part of a multi-agency, county wide team. In addition to VCTC, the team included representatives from the county social service agency, labor unions, local colleges, other human service agencies and the school system.

The goal of the taskforce was to increase welfare recipients' access to transportation services; more than 50 percent of the county's welfare recipients lack a reliable car to get to work.

VCTC which oversees the use of transportation dollars for the county, recommended, and is currently implementing,



the following changes to transit service:

Improving coordination between transit systems: By revising transit schedules, VCTC has significantly reduced the length of time that it takes for commuters to travel through the county. Adjusting bus schedules by just 5 minutes has meant that transfers to other transit vehicles are smooth; commuters no longer have to wait a long time to make connections. A testament to this improved coordination — ridership has increased in the county.

Extending hours and days of service: The largest transit operator in the area has extended hours of service on many of its routes, and has added four routes of additional service on Saturday. The motivation for adding additional bus lines on Saturday was an on-board survey of riders which indicated that people would use the Saturday buses to get to jobs at shopping malls and to other job sites. These changes clearly reflect the employment transportation needs of county residents; Saturday schedules currently match the hours of the weekday schedule.

Creating a Day Pass for Santa Clara

Valley Transit riders: Since September 1997, Santa Clara Valley riders have been able to use a \$1.50 "day pass" to travel to work. The pass, targeting Santa Clara Valley residents who are primarily low-income, enables riders to transfer between dial-a-ride service and a mainline feeder bus.

Developing a Smart Car-Sharing Program: The Smart Car-Sharing Program is designed to provide transportation in areas or at times when public transit is not available or the transit trip takes too long to get to the job site.

As part of its program, the VCTC will also be working with local welfare caseworkers to issue special smart cards that can be used on all county bus systems. Through new computer technologies, caseworkers are directly scheduling trips to work for clients. The VCTC has an Internet website <www.goventura.org> to help provide the latest information on transportation options. Finally, a Guaranteed Ride Home program is available to transit riders to quell fears of being unable to get home in an emergency. Currently, 1,500 people have registered for the Guaranteed Ride Home program, and transit riders are using it.

For more information contact:

*Ginger Gherardi
Ventura County Transportation Commission
Phone: (805) 642-1591*

Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services — AdVANTage Program

Anne Arundel County is located in central Maryland in close proximity to both Baltimore and Washington. Although the median household income is higher than the national average, there are very poor and isolated populations around the county. The county also trails only the city of Baltimore in the number of people



living in public housing in the state of Maryland.

The Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services (DSS) has had a long and successful history in helping people move from welfare to independence. For years, DSS has concentrated on the barriers to employment that are caused by the lack of transportation services.

In 1997, DSS undertook an effort to help ease the transportation burden in Anne Arundel County by creating a transportation micro-enterprise program for welfare recipients. People currently receiving cash assistance would be provided training and other help to start their own passenger transportation businesses.

The DSS recruited entrepreneurs from among its customers. The YWCA was then hired to provide business training to the selected entrepreneurs. Help was also provided to help the fledgling businesses obtain working capital, certification as a passenger carrier and follow-up networking. Six individuals completed the training course and four new businesses have been started as a result of the project. Each of these businesses has demonstrated the abil-

ity to continue past the demonstration phase of the project.

For more information contact:

Vesta Kimble

*Anne Arundel County Department of
Social Services*

Phone: (410) 269-4603

VI. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

National Transit Resource Center (NTRC)

The Community Transportation Association of America's (CTAA) National Transit Resource Center (NTRC) provides in-depth technical assistance on all aspects of welfare-to-work transportation efforts. The NTRC is jointly sponsored by the U.S. Departments of Transportation, Health and Human Services and Labor.



Transit Hotline

The toll-free Transit 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 Resource Center staff members who have extensive expertise on employment transportation issues, as well as numerous other transit topics. Resource Center staff have travelled the country attending welfare-to-work meetings and conducting special workshops explaining the welfare law and the Access to Jobs program.

Web Site

The Resource Center's site on the Internet's World Wide Web that houses articles, reports, proceedings and more addressing 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/> often for 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. A second conference is being planned for Fall of 1998 or Spring of 1999.

The NTRC will also continue to augment this *Innovative Practices* publication by collecting data and anecdotal information from various states and adding those profiles to the on-line version.

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 NTRC and have direct operational experience. Peers 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 Transit Hotline concern prospective funding for welfare transportation efforts. Resource specialists keep up-to-date with the most recent legislative proposals and their potential funding impact on public transportation. In addition, NTRC has prepared a handbook, *Building Mobility Partnerships*, on federal funding opportunities for public transportation which includes many sources for employment-related trips.

For more information contact:

Janet McGlynn
1341 G Street, N.W., Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 661.0213

Welfare Information Network

The Welfare Information Network (WIN) is a foundation-funded project to help states and communities obtain the information, policy analysis and technical assistance they need to develop and implement welfare reform. Through several vehicles, WIN has provided information pertaining to welfare-to-work transportation issues.

WIN has established and maintains a clearinghouse of welfare reform-related information and evaluations of welfare-to-work programs. The organization has created and maintains networks of related organizations, analysts and technical assistance providers and encourage the exchange of information among those networks. Finally, WIN assist states and communities to identify information and technical assistance needs and brokers access to appropriate providers and resources.

WIN's web site (www.welfareinfor.org) is updated weekly and serves as an important vehicle for disseminating information in the clearinghouse. The site has incorporated an extensive list of transportation resources.

WIN prepares *Issue Notes*, which addresses priority policy issues confronting policy makers, practitioners and others concerned with the implementation of welfare reform. WIN also prepares *Resources for Welfare Decisions*, which summarize publications, initiatives and contacts included in the WIN clearinghouse. Both publications are disseminated to a large audience and address transportation, welfare-to-work, employment issues and many other issues related to welfare reform. *Transportation and Welfare Reform*, Volume 1, Number 4, is available from WIN.

For more information contact:

April Kaplan
Welfare Information Network
1000 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 628-5790

National Conference of State Legislatures

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

receive articles in the *State Legislatures* magazine that will treat welfare-to-work transportation issues.

- NCSL also prepares a State Legislative Report which is sent to key state legislative members involved in appropriations and committees on transportation, welfare, employment and economic development.
- NCSL operates and maintains an information clearinghouse on transportation and welfare reform.
- NCSL incorporates transportation issues on its welfare reform website

For more information contact

Dana Reichart

National Conference of State Legislatures

1560 Broadway, Suite 700

Denver, CO 80202

Phone: (303) 830-2054

National Governors' Association

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 are developing comprehensive plans for welfare-to-work transportation. These plans include the coordinated delivery of transportation services as the means to support state welfare and health care reform.

NGA has developed a comprehensive planning approach to welfare-to-work transportation, and is providing 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.

For more information contact:

Thom Rubel

National Governors' Association

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Washington, DC 20001

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Federal Transit Administration Regional Contacts



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Region 10

Helen Knoll

Regional Administrator

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206.220.7954

Welfare-to-Work Sites on the World Wide Web

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

<http://www.fta.dot.gov/wtw/>

As a federal partner in welfare to work, FTA offers publications and other guidance to help states and communities provide transportation services that connect current welfare recipients to places where employment opportunities exist. Among

the many other resources on FTA's Internet site on welfare to work <www.fta.dot.gov/wtw>, you'll find publications, such as the Access To Jobs Brochure and Transportation Planning for Access to Jobs; speeches and statements on welfare reform; a listing of transit agencies providing information about their services; and information for new transit riders that explains the use of transit vehicles, schedules, maps, and routes.

Department of Labor (DOL)

<http://wtw.doleta.gov/>

The U.S. Department of Labor provides \$3 billion in welfare-to-work grants to states and local communities to create additional job opportunities for the hardest-to-employ recipients of TANF. On its web site <wtw.doleta.gov>, DOL offers guidance on use of TANF funds for transportation, links to daily news stories about welfare reform and welfare to work issues, an opportunity to ask questions about welfare to work, as well as other resources for individuals, employers and the employment and training community.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/news/welfare>

The Administration on Children and Families administers Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds in block grants to the states. ACF's web site at <www.acf.hhs.gov/news/welfare> describes policy on the use of TANF and Welfare-to-Work funds for transportation, provides national and state-by-state statistics on U.S. welfare caseloads, lists state maintenance of effort funding levels, and provides links to other useful sites.

Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)

<http://www.ctaa.org/welfare>

Because one of the greatest barriers to

getting and keeping a job is reliable, affordable transportation, CTAA has developed an Internet site to specifically focus on welfare reform and transportation. The site, located at <www.ctaa.org/welfare> provides easy-to-download reports, such as Mobility: Key to Welfare Reform and Transportation and Welfare Reform: States on the Move; information on welfare-to-work conferences; articles from Community Transportation magazine and clippings on employment transportation from national newspapers and magazines.

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

<http://www.welfareto.org>

CLASP is a national non-profit organization with expertise in both law and policy affecting the poor. Through education, policy research and advocacy, CLASP supports policies that enhance work and reduce poverty. The web site lists its publications and legislative analyses on TANF provisions, maintenance of effort, waivers and funding, child care, child support and minimum wage, among other issues.

The Welfare Information Network (WIN)

<http://www.welfareinfo.org>

WIN's site describes promising practices, lists a calendar of welfare-related meetings and events, and provides publication reviews. The site also reviews the activities of practitioners, researchers and activists in the following topics: child care, health care and Medicaid, rural areas, housing, communitybased strategies, TANF Work Requirements, transportation, among many others.

VII. FUNDING SOURCES

The cornerstone of welfare reform is the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). This program provides states \$16.4 billion annually. The 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 (see the state section of this publication for innovative examples). States often consider using a portion of TANF funds to provide transportation assistance to persons on — or moving off of — public assistance.

The federal government is poised to make a significant contribution to the funding pool for welfare-to-work transportation. President Clinton signed into law on June 9, 1998 the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, including the Access to Jobs program. Beginning in FY 1999, the bill authorizes \$150 million to be spent on innovative employment transit solutions targeting low-income people. See the final Access to Jobs language in Section VIII.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration has made available two short-term welfare-to-work grant programs, each of more than \$1 billion. Three-quarters of these funds are being awarded to states and Private Industry Councils (PICs) or Workforce Development Boards that choose to participate on a formula basis (some states have opted out of the program). The remaining 25 percent of these funds are being used to fund nationally competitive grants which the ETA has awarded to PICs and PIC-led partnerships. While there is no requirement that funds be spent on transportation, transportation is an allowable expense — but only when these services are not already available to program participants. In the first round of DOL Welfare-to-Work grants, transit agencies in Michigan, Illinois, California, Virginia and Massachusetts were among the recipients.

The following information highlights many of the 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 population. Nonprofits, public bodies, Indian tribes, and cooperatives are eligible. Transportation is among the eligible uses of borrowed funds.

Funding Level: \$3715 million

Contact: Wayne Stansbeey (202) 720-1400

Business and Industrial Guaranteed Loan Program

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: Mark Wyatt (202) 720-1400

Rural Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC)

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 TANE.” These purposes include moving welfare recipients to work opportunities.

Funding Level: \$16.4 billion

Contact: Paul Maiers (202) 401-5438

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

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 (SSBG)

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 (CDBG)

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 1997 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 (EZ/EC)

To be designated an urban 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

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 local

Private Industry Councils administer the grants.

Funding Level: \$3 billion

Contact: Dennis Lieberman (202) 219-0181

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

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 (FHWA)

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

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 (MPO)

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

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)

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

This program provides formula funding to states for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit 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

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 Transit Resource Center.

Funding Level: \$22 million

Contact: Edward Thomas (202) 366-4052

State Planning and Research Program

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

VIII. ACCESS TO JOBS

The following language is from the TEA-21 transportation legislation passed by Congress in May 1998 and signed into law by President Clinton on June 9, 1998.

SEC. 3037. JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE GRANTS.

(a) Congress finds that:

- (1) two-thirds of all new jobs are in the suburbs, whereas three-quarters of welfare recipients live in rural areas or central cities;
- (2) even in metropolitan areas with excellent public transit systems, less than half of the jobs are accessible by transit;
- (3) in 1991, the median price of a new car was equivalent to 25 weeks of salary for the average worker, and considerably more for the low-income worker;
- (4) not less than 9,000,000 households and 10,000,000 Americans of driving age, most of whom are low-income workers, do not own cars;
- (5) 94 percent of welfare recipients do not own cars;
- (6) nearly 40 percent of workers with annual incomes below \$10,000 do not commute by car;
- (7) many of the 2,000,000 Americans who will have their Temporary Assistance to Needy Families grants (under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)) terminated by the year 2002 will be unable to get to jobs they could otherwise hold;
- (8) increasing the transit options for low-

income workers, especially those who are receiving or who have recently received welfare benefits, will increase the likelihood of those workers getting and keeping jobs; and

(9) many residents of cities and rural areas would like to take advantage of mass transit to gain access to suburban employment opportunities.

(b) Definitions. In this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) Eligible low-income individual.—The term “eligible low-income individual” means an individual whose family income is at or below 150 percent of the poverty line (as that term is defined in section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)), including any revision required by that section) for a family of the size involved.

(2) Eligible project and related terms:

(A) In general. The term “eligible project” means an access to jobs project or a reverse commute project.

(B) Access to jobs project. The term “access to jobs project” means a project relating to the development of transportation services designed to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment. The Secretary may make access to jobs grants for

(i) capital projects and to finance operating costs of equipment, facilities, and associated capital maintenance items related to providing access to jobs under this section;

(ii) promoting the use of transit by workers with nontraditional work schedules;

(iii) promoting the use by appropriate

agencies of transit vouchers for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals under specific terms and conditions developed by the Secretary; and

(iv) promoting the use of employer-provided transportation, including the transit pass benefit program under section 132 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(C) Reverse commute project. The term “reverse commute project” means a project related to the development of transportation services designed to transport residents of urban areas, urbanized areas, and areas other than urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities, including any project to—

(i) subsidize the costs associated with adding reverse commute bus, train, carpool, van routes, or service from urban areas, urbanized areas, and areas other than urbanized areas, to suburban workplaces;

(ii) subsidize the purchase or lease by a nonprofit organization or public agency of a van or bus dedicated to shuttling employees from their residences to a suburban workplace; or

(iii) otherwise facilitate the provision of mass transportation services to suburban employment opportunities.

(3) Existing transportation service providers. The term “existing transportation service providers” means mass transportation operators and governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations that receive assistance from Federal, State, or local sources for nonemergency transportation services.

(4) Qualified entity. The term “qualified entity” means:

(A) with respect to any proposed eligible project in an urbanized area with a population of at least 200,000, the applicant or applicants selected by the appropriate metropolitan planning organization that meets the requirements of this section, including the planning and coordination

requirements in subsection (i), from among local governmental authorities and agencies and nonprofit organizations; and

(B) with respect to any proposed eligible project in an urbanized area with a population of at least 200,000, or an area other than an urbanized area, the applicant or applicants selected by the chief executive officer of the State in which the area is located that meets the requirements of this section, including the planning and coordination requirements in subsection (i), from among local governmental authorities and nonprofit organizations.

(5) Welfare recipient. The term “welfare recipient” means an individual who receives or received aid or assistance under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (whether in effect before or after the effective date of the amendments made by title I of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-193; 110 Stat. 2110)) at any time during the 3-year period before the date on which the applicant applies for a grant under this section.

(c) General Authority.

(1) In general The Secretary may make access to jobs grants and reverse commute grants under this section to assist qualified entities in financing eligible projects.

(2) Coordination. The Secretary shall coordinate activities under this section with related activities under programs of other Federal departments and agencies.

(d) Applications. Each qualified entity seeking to receive a grant under this section for an eligible project shall submit to the Secretary an application in such form and in accordance with such requirements as the Secretary shall establish.

(e) Prohibition. Grants awarded under this section may not be used for planning or coordination activities.

(f) Factors for Consideration. In awarding grants under this section to applicants under subsection (d), the Secretary shall consider:

(1) the percentage of the population in the area to be served by the applicant that are welfare recipients;

(2) in the case of an applicant seeking assistance to finance an access to jobs project, the need for additional services in the area to be served by the applicant (including bicycling) to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from specified jobs, training, and other employment support services, and the extent to which the proposed services will address those needs;

(3) the extent to which the applicant demonstrates:

(A) coordination with, and the financial commitment of, existing transportation service providers; and

(B) coordination with the State agency that administers the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act;

(4) the extent to which the applicant demonstrates maximum utilization of existing transportation service providers and expands transit networks or hours of service, or both;

(5) the extent to which the applicant demonstrates an innovative approach that is responsive to identified service needs;

(6) the extent to which the applicant:

(A) in the case of an applicant seeking assistance to finance an access to jobs project, presents a regional transportation plan for addressing the transportation needs of welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals; and

(B) identifies long-term financing strategies to support the services under this section;

(7) the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the community to be served has been consulted in the planning process; and

(8) in the case of an applicant seeking assistance to finance a reverse commute project, the need for additional services identified in a regional transportation plan to transport individuals to suburban employment opportunities, and the extent to which the proposed services will address those needs.

(g) Competitive Grant Selection. The Secretary shall conduct a national solicitation for applications for grants under this section. Grantees shall be selected on a competitive basis.

(h) Cost Sharing.

(1) Maximum amount. The amount of a grant under this section may not exceed 50 percent of the total project cost.

(2) Nongovernmental share:

(A) In general.—The portion of the total cost of an eligible project that is not funded under this section-

(i) shall be provided in cash from sources other than revenues from providing mass transportation, but may include amounts received under a service agreement; and

(ii) may be derived from amounts appropriated to or made available to a department or agency of the Federal Government (other than the Department of Transportation) that are eligible to be expended for transportation.

(B) Inapplicability. For purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii), the prohibitions on the use of funds for matching requirements under section 403(a)(5)(C)(ii) of the Social Security Act shall not apply to Federal or State funds to be used for transportation services.

(i) Planning Requirements:

(1) In general.—The requirements of sections 5303 through 5306 of title 49, United States Code, apply to any grant made under this section.

(2) Coordination. Each application for a grant under this section shall reflect coordination with and the approval of affected transit grant recipients. The eligible access to jobs projects financed under this section shall be part of a coordinated public transit-human services transportation planning process.

(j) Grant Requirements. A grant under this section shall be subject to:

(1) all of the terms and conditions to which a grant made under section 5307 of title 49, United States Code, is subject; and

(2) such other terms and conditions as are determined by the Secretary.

(k) Program Evaluation.

(1) Comptroller general. Beginning 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 6 months thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(A) conduct a study to evaluate the grant program authorized under this section; and

(B) submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate a report describing the results of each study under subparagraph (A).

(2) Department of transportation. Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(A) conduct a study to evaluate the access to jobs grant program authorized under this section; and

(B) submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate a report describing the results of the study under subparagraph (A).

(l) Authorization and Allocation

(1) In general:

(A) From the trust fund. There shall be available from the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund to carry out this section:

(i) \$40,000,000 for fiscal year 1999;

(ii) \$60,000,000 for fiscal year 2000;

(iii) \$80,000,000 for fiscal year 2001;

(iv) \$100,000,000 for fiscal year 2002; and

(v) \$120,000,000 for fiscal year 2003.

(B) From the general fund. In addition to amounts made available under subparagraph (A), there are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section:

(i) \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 1999;

(ii) \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2000;

(iii) \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2001;

(iv) \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2002; and

(v) \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2003.

(C) Additional amounts from the general fund. In addition to amounts made available under subparagraphs (A) and (B), there are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section:

(i) \$100,000,000 for fiscal year 1999;

(ii) \$75,000,000 for fiscal year 2000;

(iii) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2001; and

(iv) \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2002.

(2) Set-aside for reverse commute projects. Of amounts made available by or appropriated under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) to carry out this section in each fiscal year, not more than \$10,000,000 shall be used for grants for

reverse commute projects.

(3) Allocation. The amounts made available by or appropriated under paragraph (1) to carry out this section in each fiscal year shall be allocated as follows:

(A) 60 percent shall be allocated for eligible projects in urbanized areas with populations of at least 200,000.

(B) 20 percent shall be allocated for eligible projects in urbanized areas with populations of less than 200,000.

(C) 20 percent shall be allocated for eligible projects in areas other than urbanized areas.