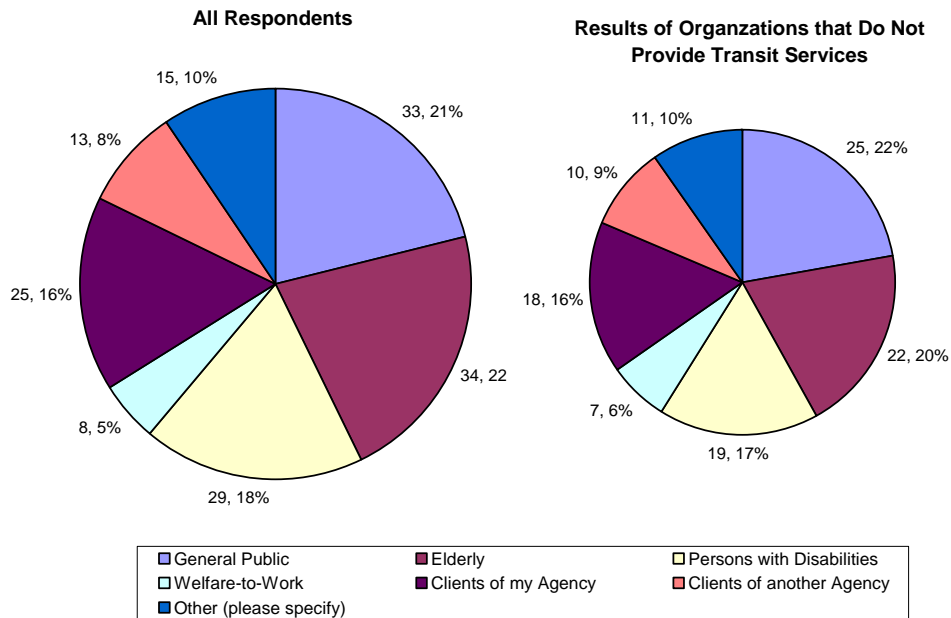


Q13: What Type of Clients Do You Serve?



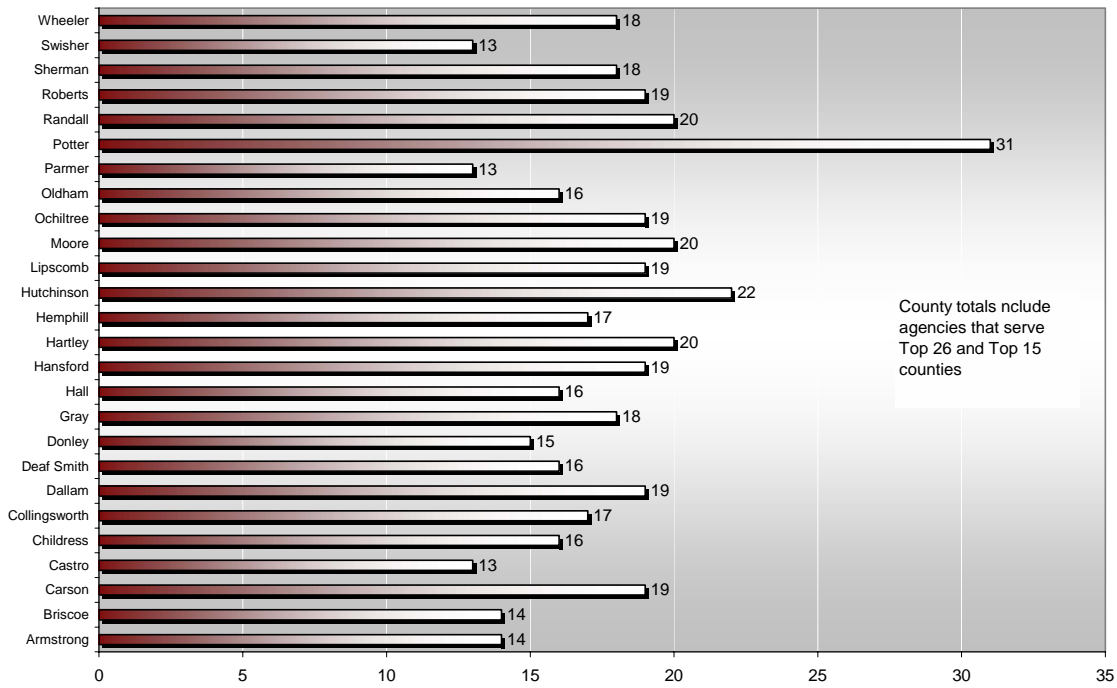
Q13: What type of clients do you serve?

A13: General Public, Elderly, Persons with Disabilities, Welfare-to-Work, Clients of My Agency, Clients of Another Agency, Other (Please specify.)

There were 54 respondents to this question. Nineteen organizations (or 35 percent) served a single client base. These organizations usually indicated service restriction to “Elderly” or “Clients of my Agency” and are predominantly nursing homes and assisted living centers. Nearly fifty percent (26 respondents) indicated both “Elderly” and “Persons with Disabilities” as the client based served. In total, organizations that serve the elderly or people with disabilities constituted nearly 70 percent of the respondents. On average, organizations usually served more than one type of client, averaging three types of client bases served. The most common type of client reported under the “Other” category is “children” and had five respondents.

Transit coordination in the Panhandle region is facilitated by the large number of organizations that serve multiple client bases. Since populations that are typically heavy transit users are receiving service from similar agencies, the potential to deliver coordinated service is enhanced. In fact, that is the experience currently in the Panhandle as transit agencies are already delivering trips to a large number of health and social service agencies that serve these populations.

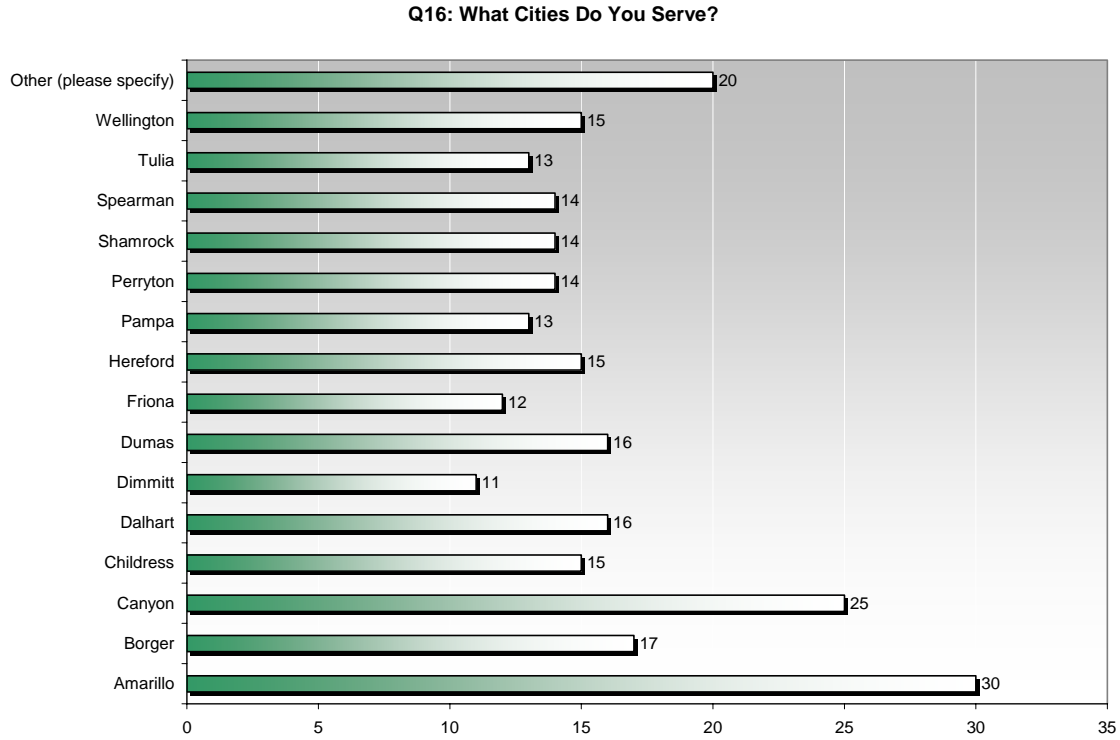
Q15: What Counties Do You Regularly Serve?



Q15: What counties does your agency regularly serve? (Check all that apply.)

A15: Top 26 counties, Top 15 counties, Armstrong, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Collingsworth, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Donley, Gray, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Moore, Ochiltree, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Swisher

There were 50 respondents to this question. The survey was sent to agencies and organizations that are active throughout the region in order to try to obtain insights that would be representative of the entire region. Thirteen respondents served the top 26 counties and 3 respondents served the top 15 counties. Nine agencies serve only Potter and Randall counties. Counties with no respondents other than that given by agencies with a region-wide service area include Castro and Parmer counties; Hemphill County had one respondent. The high response rate from region-wide agencies and/ Potter and Randall county agencies may skew the results to reflect more small-urban and region-wide issues rather than issues specific to rural counties. However, Panhandle Community Services has been deeply involved in the study and has a strong presence throughout all the counties and its involvement will help overcome any inappropriate emphasis on one region or area.

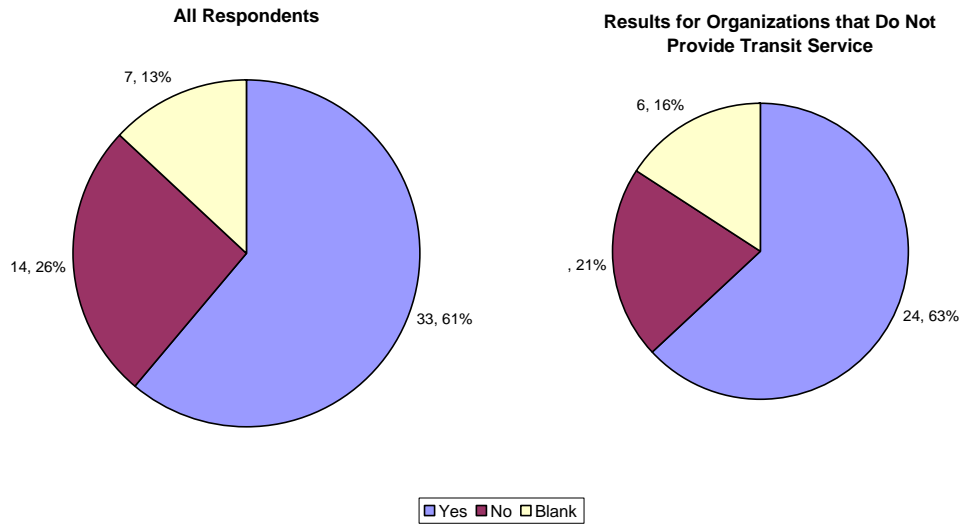


Q16: What cities does your agency regularly serve? (Check all that apply.)

A16: Amarillo, Borger, Canyon, Childress, Dalhart, Dimmitt, Dumas, Friona, Hereford, Pampa, Perryton, Shamrock, Spearman, Tulia, Wellington, Other (please specify).

There were 50 respondents to this question. The highest number of respondents were from Amarillo (30 respondents), followed by Canyon (25 respondents), and Others. Notable others mentioned include Fritch, Stinnet, Memphis, and Clarendon.

Q17: Do You Serve All Municipalities in Your County?

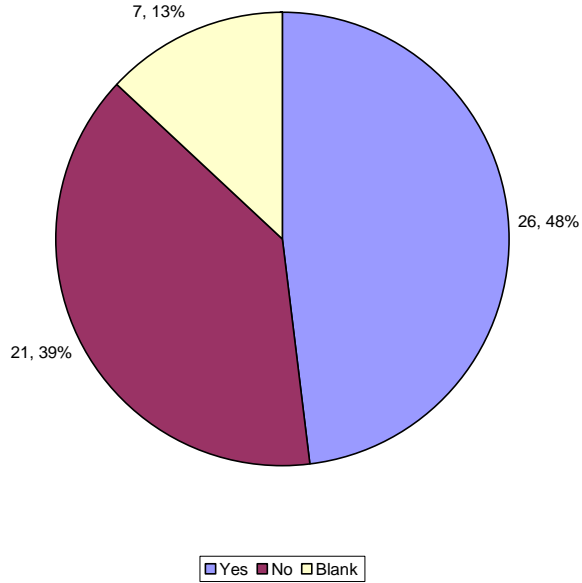


Q17: Do you serve all the municipalities within the counties you serve? (For example, does your agency work in Potter County but only serve residents of Amarillo?)

A17: Yes, No (Please describe limitations)

There were 47 respondents to this question. Sixty-one percent serve all the municipalities within counties served. Exceptions to this are organizations are predominantly those that only serve the City of Amarillo. These include Amarillo City Transit, Jan Werner Adult Day Care, and Region 16 Education Service. Other respondents answered “No” and then clarified what type of client base they served.

Q18: Does Your Agency or Clients Travel Outside Service Area for Special Destinations?

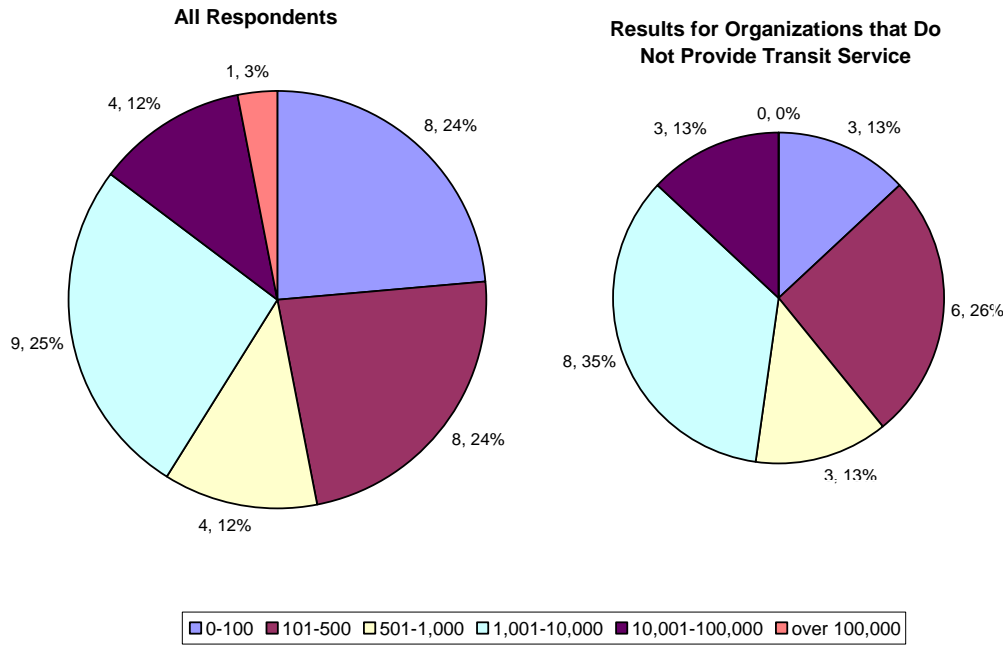


Q18: Does your agency or your clients travel outside these boundaries for special destinations, such as a regional hospital?

A18: No, Yes (Please list destination and address)

There were 47 respondents to this question. Destinations frequently cited included Lubbock (9 respondents); Amarillo (11 respondents); Plainview (3 respondents); Wichita Falls (3 respondents); Pampa (4 respondents); Dallas (4 respondents).

Q19: How Many Unduplicated Clients Served in 2005?

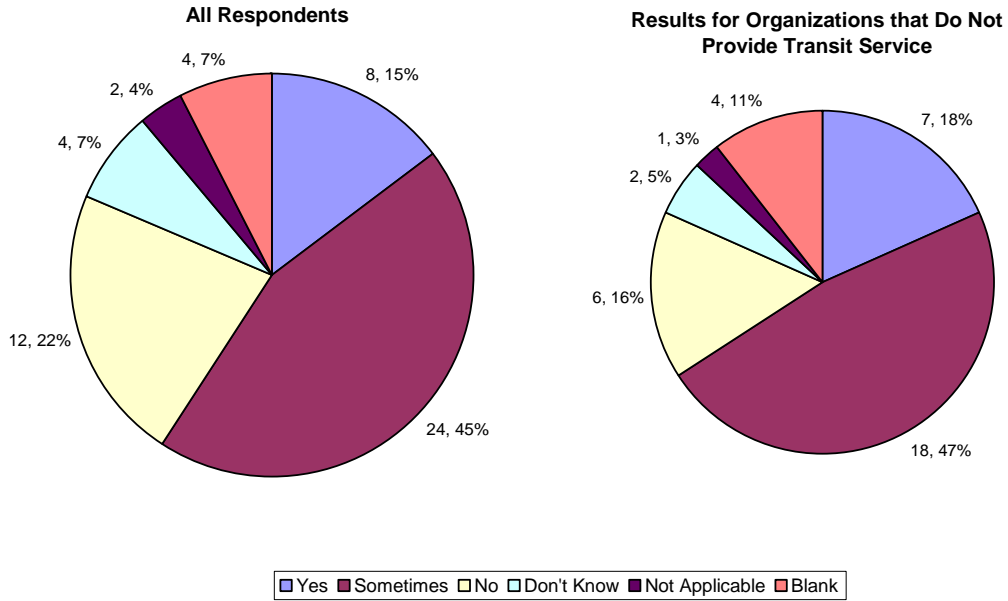


Q19: How many unduplicated clients did you serve in fiscal year 2005?

A19: (Open ended response.)

There were 34 respondents to this question. Nearly 50 percent of the organizations serve between 0 - 100 clients. These organizations tended to be the nursing homes, senior centers (Amarillo Senior Center), and groups with a narrowly defined market (e.g. the High Plains Epilepsy Association). Other respondents represented agencies that serve the whole of the Panhandle. In these cases, the number of clients served was much higher. For example, Panhandle Work Source served nearly 40,000 clients; Family Services has over 18,000 clients. Twenty-two respondents did not indicate how many unduplicated clients that are served.

Q20: Does the Lack of Transportation Keep People from Participating in Your Services?

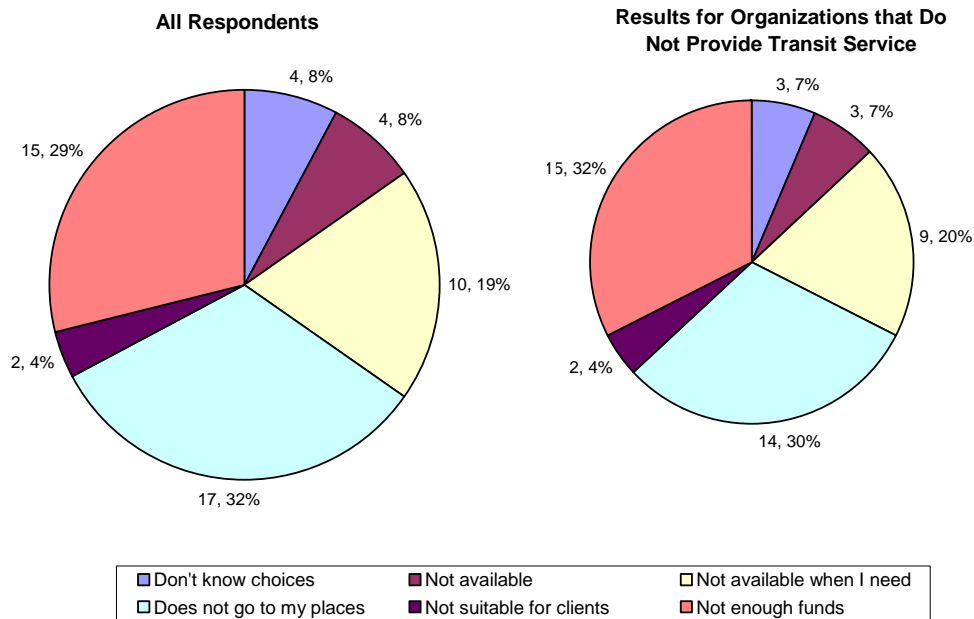


Q20: Does the lack of transportation keep people from participating in your agency’s services?

A20: Yes, Sometimes, No, Don’t Know, Not Applicable

There were 49 respondents to this question. Most people responded that they sometimes had trouble accessing transit services (24 out of 55 respondents or 44%). Comments included difficulty in accessing emergency transportation (transportation scheduled with less than 24 hours notice), and transportation to work-sites that are not located within Amarillo city limits and the International Airport. Agencies that did not provide transit services were less likely to respond “No.” This may indicate that those agencies have a higher level of satisfaction with the service they are receiving than is perceived by the agencies providing the service.

Q21: Why is Transportation a Problem for Your Clients?



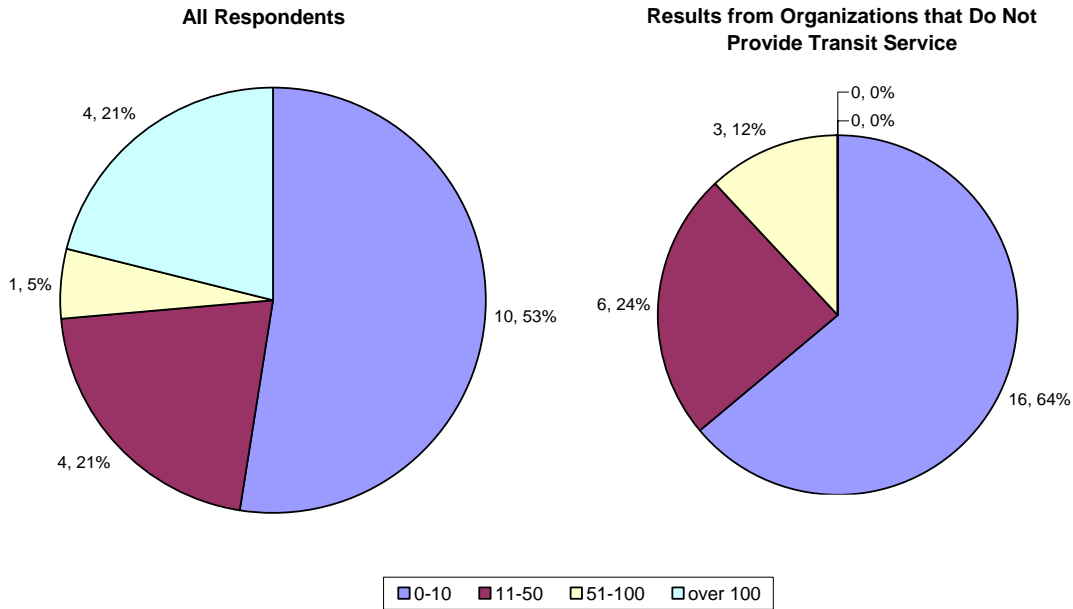
Q21: If yes or sometimes, why is transportation a problem? (Check all that apply.)

A21: I don't know what my transportation choices are available in my area; Transportation is not available to my area; Transportation is not available to my area during the times I need; Transportation does not take my clients where they need to go; Transportation vehicles are not suitable to serve my clients; There are not enough funds to provide transportation to our client.

There were 29 respondents to this question: 13 organizations named 1 problem, 7 organizations named 2 problems and 6 organizations named 3 problems. Taken together, "Not available when I need" or "Does not take my clients where they need to go" were 50 percent of the problems cited. The largest issue cited was "Transportation does not take my clients where they need to go" (17 out of 29 or 59% of respondents). Specifically, difficulty in getting transportation to worksites that are off the regular fixed bus route and to distant doctor's appointments. Respondents also cited that they needed service after regular business hours (when Panhandle Community Services stops providing service) or after 7:00 (when Amarillo City Transit stops providing service).

These results indicate the potential need for future coordination efforts to focus on filling after-hours service gap and distant worksite trip gap.

Q22: How Many Trips per Month are Unmet?



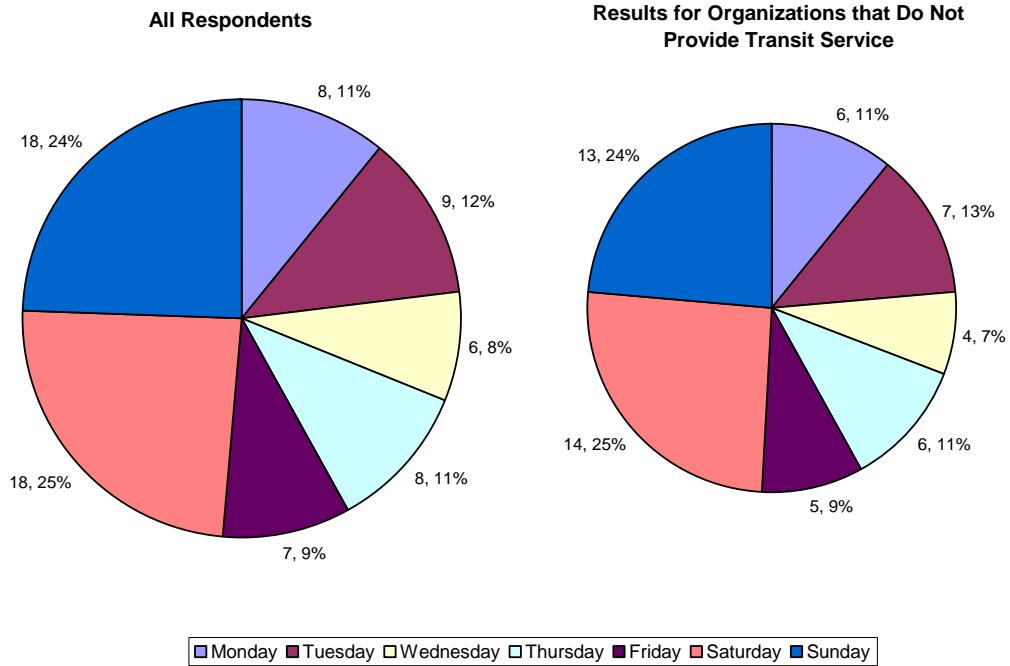
Q22: In your best opinion, approximately how many trips per month are unmet?

A22: (Open-ended response.)

There were 25 respondents to this question. Of those responding, over half miss less than 10 trips per month. The largest provider of trips, Panhandle Community Services, indicates between 0 missed trips (as reported from the headquarters) to a single missed trip (as reported by a local office). The difference in responses would indicate that, on a local level, schedulers may be aware of missed trips that are not reported to the headquarters or, simply, a discrepancy in reporting. Respondents that indicated a high number of unmet agency-related trips include the Health and Human Services Commission (estimate of 300 missed trips); Amarillo Area YMCA (estimate of 150 missed trips); Amarillo Senior Citizen Association (estimate of 75 missed trips); and Panhandle Worksource (estimate of 30 missed trips). Respondents that do not directly provide or arrange for transit or health and human services included a local citizen representing the public transportation community in Amarillo (estimate of 200 missed trips); the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (estimate of 300 missed trips). Over half of the respondents left this question blank or responded “unsure.” These results would support the finding that many health and social service providers do not track their transportation similarly to transit-focused agencies. One of the barriers that may be encountered in developing a coordinated system will be the difficulty in moving toward a more standardized approach to reporting transit service delivery.

Future coordination efforts may focus agencies with high unmet trip needs (HHSC, Panhandle Worksource, Amarillo Senior Citizen Center, and Amarillo Area YMCA).

Q23: Days on Which Service is Impossible to Obtain



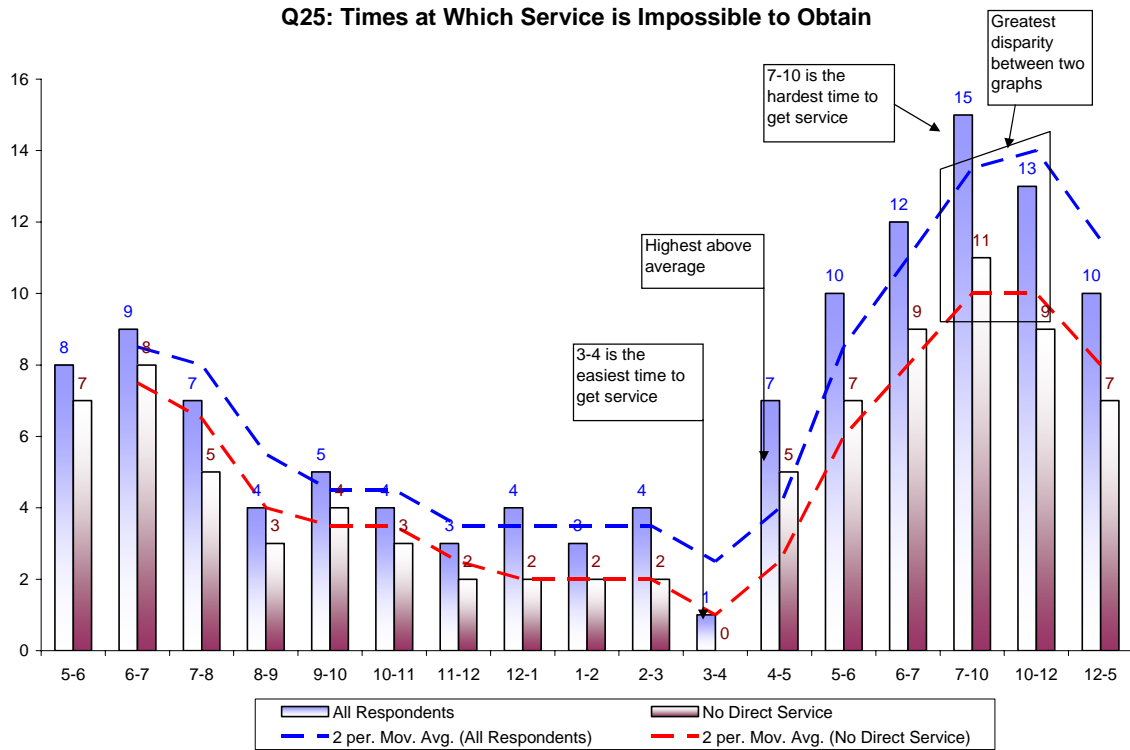
Q23: Days on which service is needed but difficult or impossible to obtain

A23: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday

There were 52 respondents to this question. Out of 52 responses, 31 respondents (or 41%) said that they could access transportation services every day of the week. For those that indicated that transit was difficult or impossible to access at least some of the time, Saturdays and Sundays were the most frequently mentioned (36 out of 74 or 49%). The responses between all the respondents and those that do not provide transit are nearly identical. This may indicate that there is no discrepancy of information regarding days of services between providers and consumers of transit.

For the weekdays, respondents indicated equal difficulty in obtaining service Monday through Friday. Four organizations responded that service was impossible to obtain every day; these included Salvation Army, Amarillo Senior Citizen Center, Amarillo YMCA, and one office of Panhandle Worksource. Five organizations responded that service was impossible to obtain every week day; these included Donley County Ministerial Alliance, Canyons Retirement Community, Health and Human Service Commission, Department of State Health Services, and one Texas Worksource office.

Panhandle Community Services does not provide service on weekends and Amarillo City Transit does not provide service on Sundays. This creates a gap in service that the RTAG may choose to focus on as a coordination priority.



Q25: Times at which service is needed but difficult or impossible to obtain

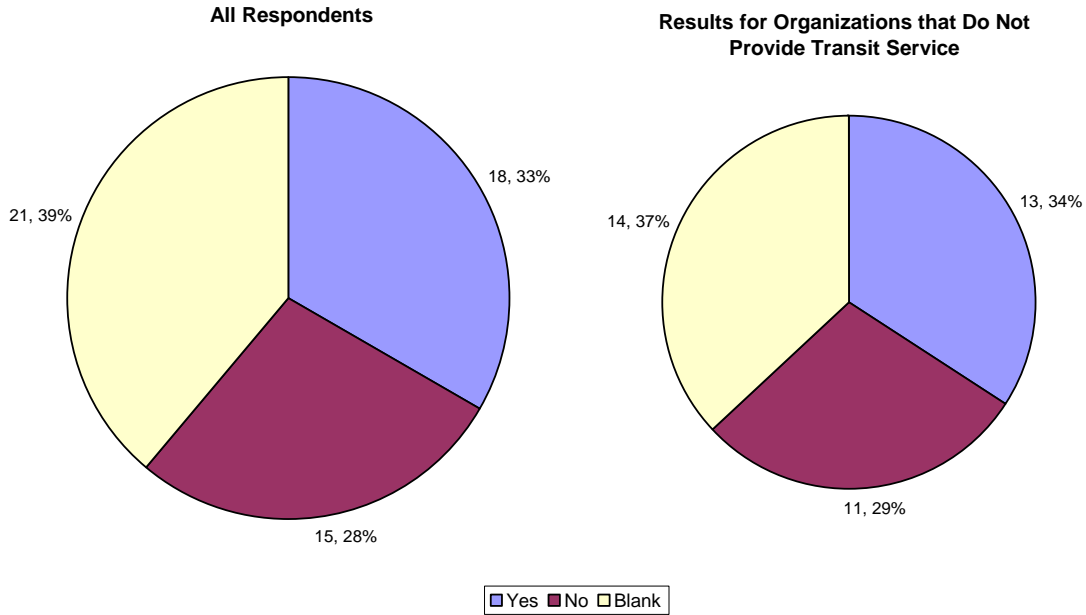
A25: (Time range begins at 5:00 am and extends to 5:00 am next day.)

There were 21 respondents to this question. (In the graph above, all respondents are represented by the blue bar. Respondents that do not provide transit services are represented by the red bar. A moving average for each respondent class is indicated by a blue or red dashed line.) Times in which it is more difficult to obtain a trip include morning hours (9 to 10 am) and after-work hours (4 to 6 pm). Interestingly, demand is relatively low from 3 to 4 pm. The jump in demand at 4:00 pm indicates, in part, providers’ difficulties in meeting trips (e.g. two Panhandle Community Services indicate difficulty in meeting trips during this time period).

Out of 21 responses, more than half (54%) indicated that there is a need for transportation after 5:00 pm. In particular, there is a need for transit services for people who are reliant on public transportation and have work hours that extend in the evening, after public transit is no longer available. This need has been reinforced during one-on-one meetings with the Panhandle Mental Health and Mental Retardation office and Work Source offices and in public meetings. Targets for coordination may include identifying providers or resources that are flexible and can be brought on to serve during high-demand periods. Another coordination strategy may be focused more on the supply side and exploring whether there are high users of transit services with flexibility in scheduling. However, at this time, the nature of the unmet

trips and the degrees of trip schedule flexibility during periods of heavy use is unknown.

Q27: Does Transportation Take Your Clients Where They Need to Go?



Q27: Does transportation take your clients where they need to go?

A27: Yes, No (Where do you need to go?)

There were 33 respondents to this question. For those that responded “No,” destinations where transportation was lacking includes: food/grocery (3); daycare (2); job or job-training (5); medical appointments/pharmacy (8); Lubbock (3); airport (1); and emergency (1).

Difficulty in filling all medical-trip and job-related trip needs were reinforced during public meetings and one-on-one meetings with providers. Additionally, the finding that long-distant trips are a need is reinforced by the responses cited to Survey Question 21: Why is Transportation a Problem?

Q28: Are there other transportation issues that have not been covered?

A28: (Open-ended response.)

There were 12 respondents to this question. The comments are noted below.

For some reason the topic of transportation in the Panhandle is always limited to medical/welfare needs. People who have disabilities, those without the financial resources etc must have transit or a means of getting to the nearest Amtrac station to Amarillo, to the airport, to and from Canyon, Texas, Plainview and other locations. Perhaps it is because most of the persons working on the transit issue are not limited by lack of a car or several cars, lack of ability to drive, or who are left with only the Grayhound or TMN bus system in the area. The bus depot downtown is a ghetto and no one will address the issue because allegedly it is a private business. But it affects our whole city. People from other states and towns come here and are appalled at the horrid, slum like conditions of this bus depot on Tyler, the smell, the lack of cleanliness, the lack of ventilation, the lack of food or water and the people who staff it. The toxic fumes are so bad under the staging port where you board the bus in early A.M. that people using inhalers are often at risk. It is a horrid situation and it leaves people here without any alternative. This aspect of transit in Amarillo has simply got to be addressed and integrated into the agency related medical travel issues. Our population is aging and many of the people driving in Amarillo right now should not be doing so. They put us all at risk because they are far too old. Yet because there is NO alternative to get out of Amarillo either by decent bus terminal, getting to airport, to grocery stores in a timely manner, it forces people who should not be on the road to be there. In the coming years more people will age. We must do something about the lack of an integrated transit solution which is not just focused on medical needs or welfare related needs. We all have to live and without transit solutions we cannot. The net result is that our city is going to feel the economic impact as many of the people who have money to spend simply cannot get places to spend it.

We need assistance during the summer months for our temporary clients that we service only during these months in the out lying towns, such as Fritch, Stinnett, and Panhandle.

People that are not Medicaid eligible but are still low income are very reluctant to go to appts because they cannot pay the fee (\$30) to be taken out of town to appts. There needs to be some type of income sensitive program for non-Medicaid clients.

Those from out of town are sometimes just walking or hitch hiking through and need a ride to the next town. What about the needs of homeless to look for employment w/o any source of income to pay for city transit? Transients needing gas money to leave town- when not broken down/ or robbed; Transportation options for those afraid/ unhappy with the bus system

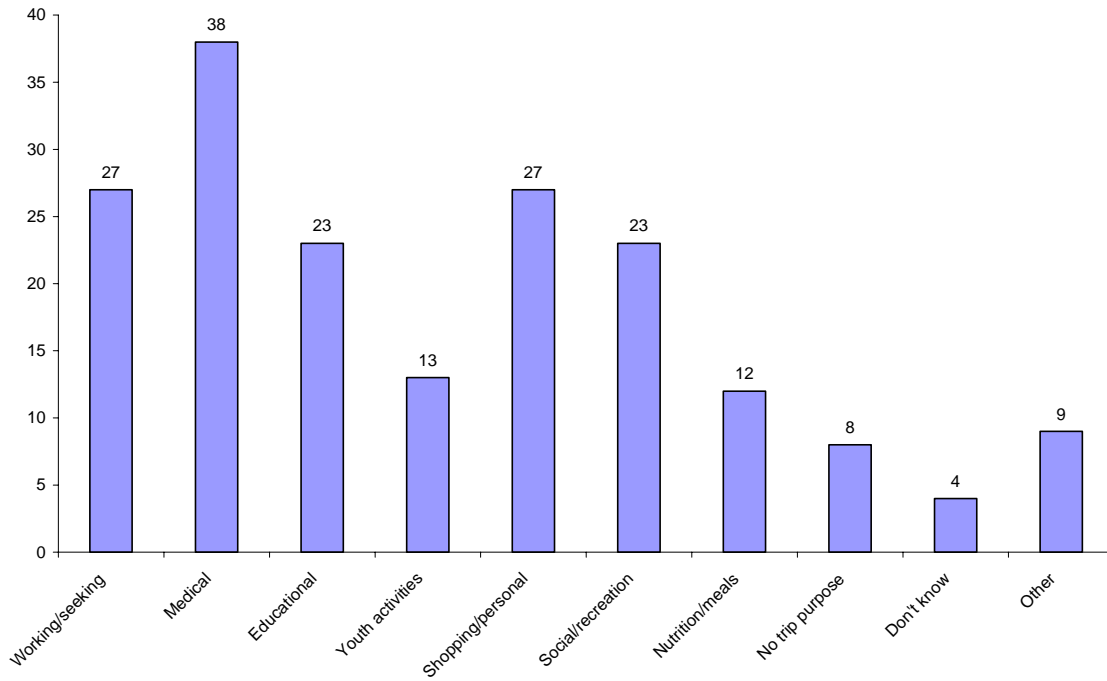
I feel like we are a burden when we call to schedule transportation for our childcare.

We have those who say they can't attend classes unless they have transportation.

People need daily transportation to work.

At times, appointments have to be changed due to other conflicting appointments.

Q29: What are Your Clients' Trip Needs?



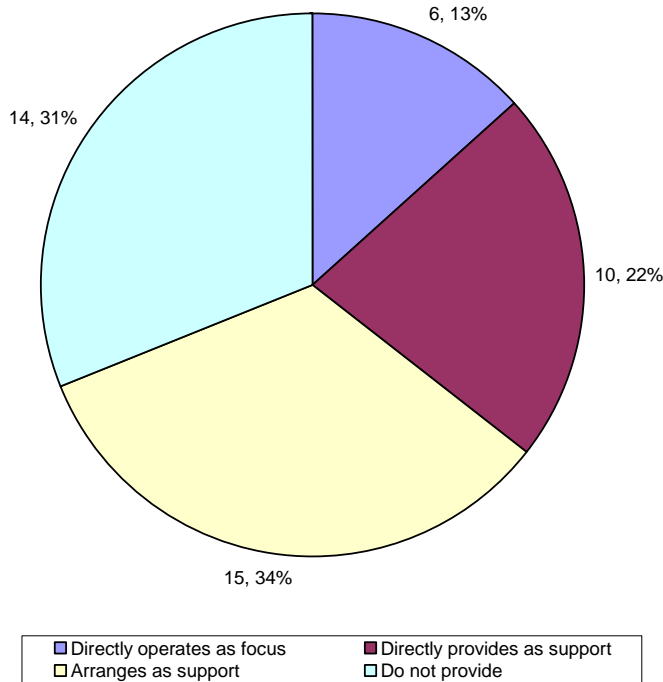
Q29: What are your clients' trip needs? (Check all that apply.)

A29: Working/seeking employment; Medical, Educational, Youth activities; Shopping/personal business; Social/recreation; Nutrition/congregate meals; No trip purpose exclusion; Don't Know; Other (Please specify.)

There were 46 respondents to this question. Medical trips, work/seeking employment, shopping, and educational trips were cited most frequently. These responses reinforce the finding that one of the most notable gaps in service relates to medical and work-related trips.

Respondents that cited nutrition/congregate meal trips include four senior citizen centers and agencies that very low-income and homeless. Respondents that cited youth activities include area YMCAs, United Way, and Girl Scout Council. Other destinations that were noted included adult day care, airport, counseling services, immigration services, and train stations.

Q32: Organization Provides Transportation in Following Manner

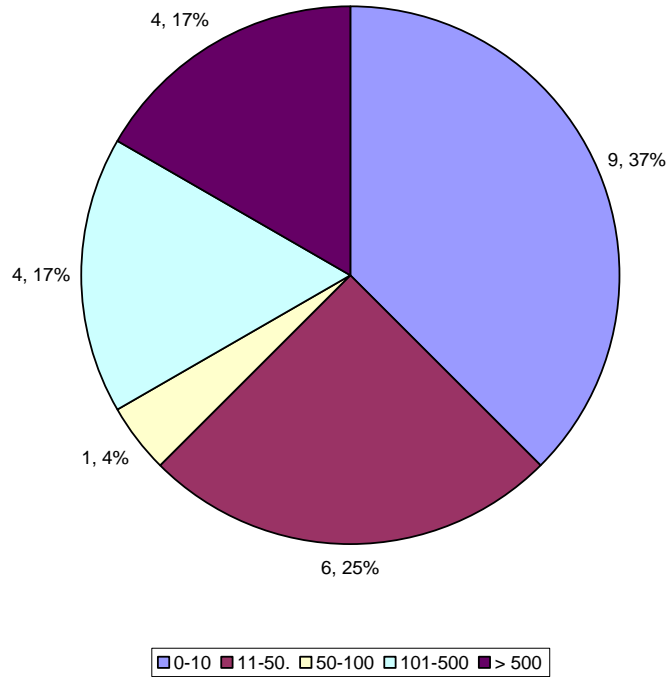


Q32: Your organization provides transportation to your clients in which of the following manner (Check one.)

A32: Directly operates transportation services as your primary focus; Directly provides transportation services as part of your support provided to clients; Arranges for passenger transportation services as part of your support provided to clients; We do not provide or use transportation in our delivery of services to clients

There were 45 respondents to this question. Respondents that indicated that they directly operate transit services range served between from 10 to 210,000 unduplicated clients. Of the 10 organizations that directly provide service as support, 1 was interested in providing services for other agencies, 4 were possibly interested, and 5 were not interested. Of the 14 organizations that do not provide transit services, 2 answered "Yes" for the lack of transportation affecting clients, 9 answered "Sometimes", 2 answered "No", and 1 answered "Don't know".

Q34: Average Trips/month

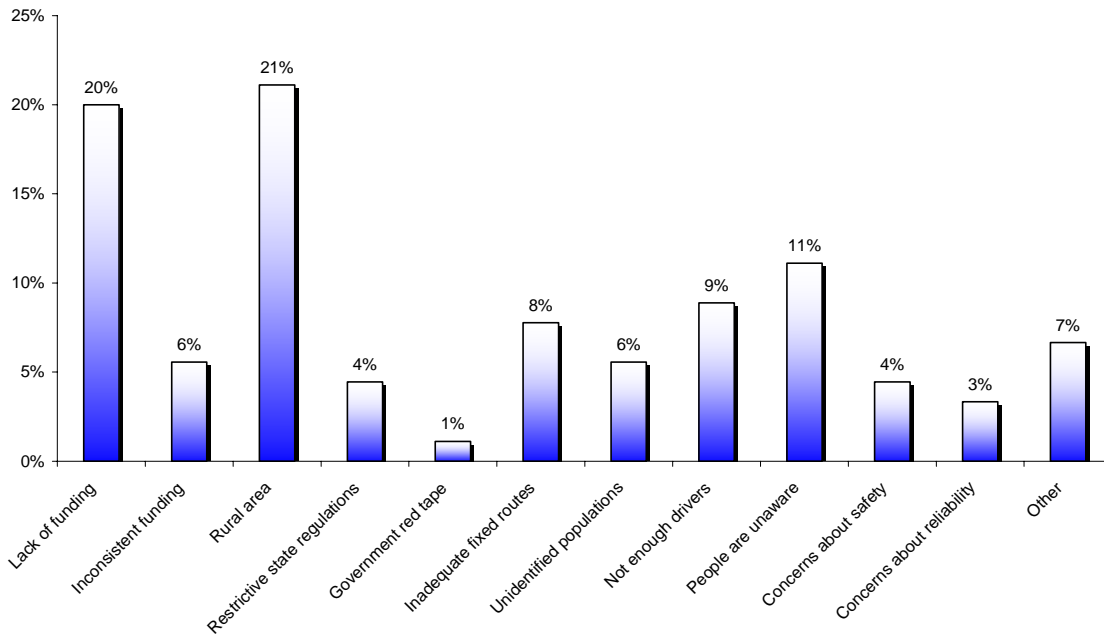


Q34: On average, how many trips do you provide in a month's time?

A34: (Open-ended response.)

There were 24 respondents to this question. Almost 40 percent of the organizations that responded deliver, on average, less than 10 trips per month. These organizations were typically senior living centers and small social service organizations. The respondents that deliver the highest number of trips included transit service providers – Amarillo City Transit and Panhandle Community Services.

Q35: What are Agencies' Greatest Challenges when Providing Transportation?



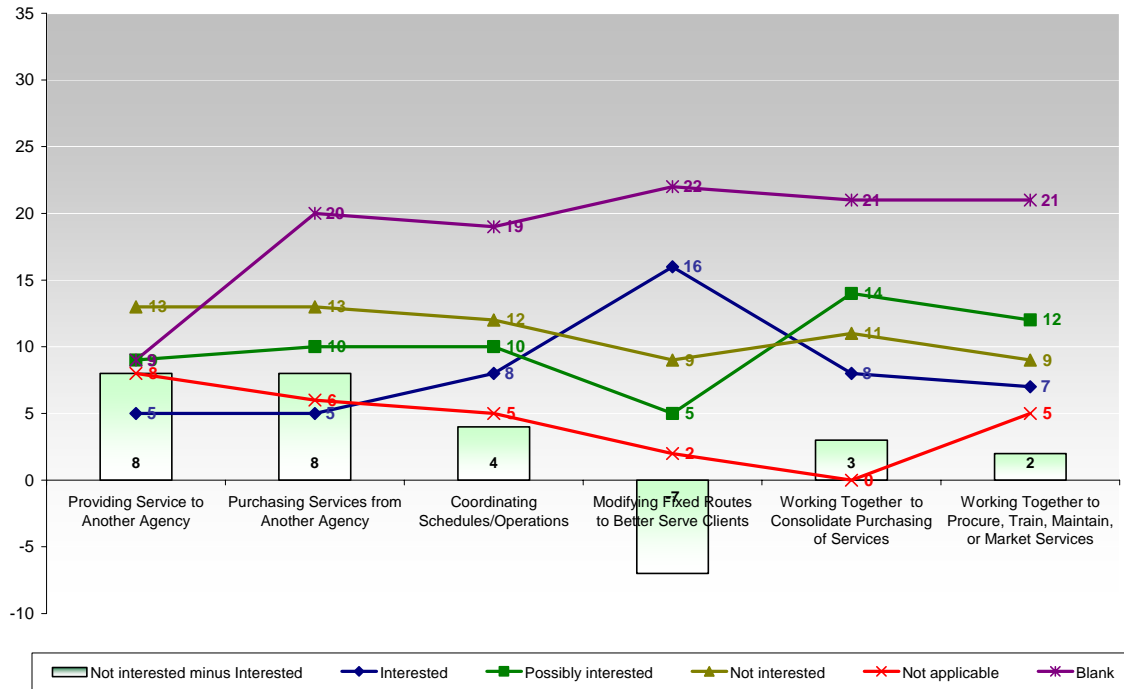
Q35: What are the greatest challenges to providing transportation to your clients? (Check all that apply.)

A35: Lack of adequate funding to serve need; Inconsistent or fluctuating fund amounts; rural and large geographical area; State or other regulations are too restrictive regarding criteria for who is eligible for our transportation services; Inadequate existing fixed routes; Hidden populations needing transportation are not being identified; Not enough qualified drivers to staff the need; People are unaware of the transportation services that are available to them; Concerns about passenger safety; Concerns regarding reliability of transportation provider; Other (please specify)

There were 25 respondents to this question. People that responded to the survey indicated that rural areas represented the largest challenge to delivering service (20%) followed closely by lack of funding (19%). Interestingly, a lack of awareness of transportation options available was listed as third highest challenge to delivery service to clients. Rural areas present a number of transportation challenges. Because distances are long and populations are sparse, it requires more resources to deliver services. The average distance for a Panhandle Community Services trip is about 5 miles. For a PCS trip provided outside the originating county is (____).

Lack of funding has been cited by Amarillo City Transit as a particular concern to the continuing viability of the system. The City of Amarillo is approaching the 200,000 population mark. Once the city surpasses this, the Amarillo City Transit will lose their federal funding support. Moreover, there are anticipated decreases in the state-supplied funding. In 2005, Amarillo City Transit was allocated \$626,489. By 2010, this will decrease by \$482,602. Assuming inflation continues to rise at 4%, this may mean a reduction in real spending power of nearly \$214,000 to \$412,530 by 2010.

Q36-41: Interest for Coordination/Collaboration Strategies



Q36-41: What is your interest in the following coordination strategies: Providing transportation services or more transportation services under contract to another agency; Purchasing transportation services from another organization assuming price and quality meets your needs; Coordinating schedules and vehicle operations so riders can transfer from one service to another; Modifying fixed routes to better serve your clients; Working together to consolidate the purchase (or contracting) of transportation services; Working together to coordinate procurement, training, maintenance, or marketing activities.

A36-41: Interested; Possibly interested; Not interested; Not applicable

There were 12 out of 20 organizations that left these questions blank because they do not use transportation services for their clients. Out of those that do provide service, more organizations indicated that they were “Not interested” in pursuing any coordination strategy. The strategy that solicited the most interest was “Modifying fixed routes.” Some of the organizations that indicated this as an interest include: Amarillo YMCA, Texas Panhandle MHMR Early Childhood Intervention, High Plains Epilepsy Association, Panhandle Worksource, Panhandle Crisis Center, and United Way of Amarillo. Another strategy that had higher interest was “Working Together to Purchase Service.” Some of the organizations that indicated this as an interest include: Health and Human Services Commission, Panhandle Independent Living Center, Amarillo YMCA and a number senior citizen centers and senior living centers.

On-Site and Phone Interview Summaries

Amarillo High Plains Dialysis Center

Program: The Amarillo High Plains Dialysis Center provides dialysis treatment. They operate from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and from 8:00 to 5:30 pm on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. (In order to meet the needs of all their patients, they have to have Saturday service. The lack of transportation on Saturdays creates a barrier to receiving treatment.) There are two centers in Amarillo and one in Pampa and Hereford. Between the four centers, 200 to 225 people are served daily.

Transit Resources: The center does not directly provide transportation but assists patients to access transportation resources if needed. The center depends upon Medicaid, Amarillo City Transit (Spec-Trans), Jan Werner Transportation, and Panhandle Community Service. The Center has no financial resources available to provide or support transportation. Texas Kidney Health is a state program available to patients. Texas Kidney Health reimburses drivers 13 cents/mile for transportation costs. In order to qualify for this program, patients must make under \$60,000 annually and the reimbursement limit is \$200 per month.

Transit Needs: About 50 percent of the patients served are transit dependent and require public transportation. This represents between 1,000 and 1,200 trips per week. The greatest challenge is delivering service on Saturday and holidays when public transportation is not available. The National Kidney Foundation will provide for taxi service on holidays but does not provide funding otherwise.

At one time, patients were able to access door-to-door service but it is now curb-to-curb. The lower level of service can be a problem for some patients if they are in a weakened state after treatment.

It can be difficult to serve clients who rely on Jan Werner Transportation because they have an early pick-up time (4:15 pm) and this can present difficulties if there are problems with a treatment.

No subscription service is available. Appointments must be set every week.

Coordination Issues: At one time, the center investigated the feasibility of establishing a brokerage. Insurance costs, training needs to meet insurance specification, staffing issues (who would drive, coordinate and dispatch) stalled the project. Prior to this, some level of service was provided through the Panhandle Transportation Consortium. However, this service ceased after funds were depleted and was plagued by questions the program was breakdown in communication over how much a ride would cost.

Other issues with coordination include:

- Public Acceptance: Patients believe there is a stigma with riding a bus.

- **Level of Service:** Patients want point-to-point service; especially after receiving treatment, they want to return to home quickly because they are exhausted. If coordination meant a longer trip, this would not serve dialysis patients well.

Desired Outcomes from Coordination Study: More accessibility and availability, especially in areas outside of Amarillo; more trips by PCS (currently they only come into Amarillo on Monday, Wednesday and Friday)

Amarillo Senior Citizens Association

Program: The Amarillo Senior Citizens Association (ASCA) is a non-profit organization that provides congregate meals, support services, and recreation to the seniors of Amarillo and Potter and Randall counties. They have 1,200 members who pay a \$35 annual membership fee and last year served 5,380 clients. The ASCA is open to the public for congregate meals which are available free-of-charge but a \$5 donation is strongly encouraged. The ASCA receives funding from private foundations and a small amount through a federal employment program for senior citizens (Senior Aid Program). They receive no support from the city or state.

Transit Resources: The ASCA does not provide transportation. Its staff of 20 includes a resource/referral clerk who is charged with reviewing member's needs and ensuring that appointments and resources are coordinated to ensure the needs are met. Transportation is one of the needs that may be reviewed. The resource/referral clerk will arrange transportation for members through its buddy system – other ASCA members who are willing to pick-up and take people to the center or an appointment. At its core, the buddy system reflects the friendship between people at the center and is fairly limited. On average, between 20 and 25 trips are provided each month.

Transit Needs: The ASCA owned a van that was used for group outings but that was sold about one year ago when the ASCA didn't have the funds to operate – especially stemming from insurance and the rise in fuel costs. The ASCA estimates they spent about \$2,000 annually on insurance and maintenance costs and felt like they didn't use the van enough to warrant the expense. The ASCA used to have a contract with Jan Werner Transportation but this was allowed to expire as the ASCA had some concerns with the level of service that Jan Werner was able to provide. (Jan Werner's service was in high demand and trips would be booked up 2 weeks in advance. Preference was given to medical trips and some members could not conveniently schedule personal or shopping trips.)

The ASCA felt like many members did not use the public transportation because: 1) the fixed route schedule was too structured; 2) bus stops were difficult to access; 3) the Spec-Trans service is perceived by members as charity and they do not want to accept charity.

Coordination Issues: The ASCA is a member of the Seniors Ambassador Program and would be interested in exploring a volunteer program directed toward providing service to seniors. The ASCA may have resources that it can access through its Senior Aid Program that could help cover overhead costs.

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: A transit program directed toward seniors that provides a higher level of service and greater flexibility

Area Agency on the Aging

Program: The Area Aging on the Aging of the Panhandle (AAAP) provides support services to individuals 60 years and older. The AAAP provides the planning, coordination and implementation of many services, such as: congregate and home delivered meals, emergency response services, adult day care, minor home repairs/modifications, homemaker services, personal care assistance, legal assistance/representation, and transportation. Most of AAAP's clients are low-income.

Transit Resources: The AAAP does not directly provide transportation but coordinates with Amarillo City Transit, Panhandle Community Services, Jan Werner Transportation. The AAAP may pay for 100 percent of the cost of the trip or will share the cost with the client, depending on income level. The AAAP does a direct purchase of service through an open bid. In 2006, the AAAP budgeted \$90,000 for transportation which calculates to 5,389 one-way trips at a cost of \$16.70 per one-way trip.

Transit Needs: The biggest challenges are: addressing trip cancellations; trips that need to be scheduled with less than a 24-hour advance reservation; and prejudice against riding the bus ("cultural expectations"). Another issue is finding drivers for their congregate meals program (a 2 to 3 hour task). These drivers will also provide a once-over of the client's home situation.

Coordination Issues: AAAP currently sits on the Senior Ambassador Coalition/transportation task force

Desired Outcome for Coordination Study: More flexible and higher level of service for seniors

American Cancer Society, Road to Recovery Program

Program: The Road to Recovery Program (RRP) is a volunteer program that provides medical trips to cancer patients. It is organized under the American Cancer Society. The service is free-of-charge but clients must be referred to the program by a practitioner. The American Cancer Society will reimburse drivers for costs but most drivers do not take advantage of this or ask for minimal reimbursement. Clients must be ambulatory.

Transit Resources: The RRP relies on volunteers who supply their own vehicles to drive patients to their medical appointments and the pharmacy. The American Cancer Society will indemnify the driver and provide training. They currently have five drivers who work in Hereford, Clarendon, Memphis, Pampa, Borger as well as Amarillo. The RRP will take clients to any destination. Lubbock and Wichita Falls are common destinations outside of the 26-county Panhandle region. The program is funded 100 percent from public donations.

Transit Needs: The RRP coordinator feels that there is a large, unmet need but does not have a measure of how many trips are unmet. Approximately, there are three clients that cannot be helped for every one that is. (In Amarillo, there are about 15 clients in the program. That would calculate into 45 clients who need, but cannot access transportation services.) The common denominator among the AAAP clients is that they do not have anyone else that they can turn to.

Coordination Issues: Many of the clients cannot take public transit because they are in such a weakened state and need help getting into their homes. The RRP is seen as the last resource and workers will trip to move patients out of RRP into existing transport programs once it is feasible. The AAAP works with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program to find volunteer drivers.

Desired Outcome for Coordination Study: Assistance in filling volunteer driver positions

ASC Industries

Program: Texas Panhandle Mental Health Mental Retardation (TPMHMR) has served individuals of the Texas Panhandle with mental illness, mental retardation or developmental delays since the mid 1960's. The Amarillo Service Center (ASC) has workshops located in seven locations in the Texas Panhandle: Borger, Clarendon, Dumas, Hereford, Pampa and Perryton. ASC offers Employment Assistance. This program is directed toward individuals securing competitive employment in the community and includes job development, employment planning and assistance in obtaining employment.

Transit Resources: ASC relies on Spec Trans to provide the bulk of their transportation. Spec-Trans provides work trips to clients who do not live in foster homes. Some clients live in one of 15 group homes. Usually, three people live in each group home. Group homes typically have one van and provide transportation to that home's residents. The attendant at the home will drive. ASC also owns sedans that are used for site visits.

ASC encourages clients to use Fixed Route if possible. ASC provides this certification.

ASC performs all their vehicle maintenance in-house.

It is not known how much is spent on transportation because it is not accounted for as a line item. Overall, the sources of funding include: DSHS/DADS; MHMR; other state programs; Medicaid/Medicare, local funding and federal funding.

Transit Needs:

- It is difficult to schedule a trip on short notice when there is an urgent need but not an issue that would normally be considered an emergency; for example, a client may have an acute case of the flu and needs to see a doctor that day. In these cases, they will call an ambulance.
- Transportation is very difficult/impossible to access before 6:30 am or after 6:30 pm. Many of ASC clients work schedules outside of transit operating hours.
- Transportation is very difficult or impossible to access out part River Road in Amarillo. Also, there are some employers, like Anderson Merchandiser, that would be good for our clients by they are not on a transit route.
- ASC vehicles may or may not have a wheelchair lift; however the ones with the lifts are in bad shape. They lack funds to purchase enough new vehicles.
- In rural areas, there are times when clients are unable to get to work or are stranded at work if the weather is bad and PCS is not running.

Coordination Issues: The bulk of ASC's transportation costs for Spec-Trans service is shifted from the TPMHMR to the public transit agency. Spec-Trans typically delivers over 500 trips to ASC clients each month. The average monthly ridership is about 2,000 trips. Therefore, about one-quarter of all trips are in support of a single state agency. A

single Spec-Trans trip is subsidized at \$29.50/trip. At 500 trips a month, this represents at \$14,750 subsidy per month that is provided by the public transit system.

Van pools would be difficult for ASC clients since they cannot exceed 3 percent of the workplace. Without a higher concentration of clients, operations would not be financially feasible.

Desired Outcomes from Coordination Study: Service that can respond to trips with a short-term notice (less than 24 hours)

Baptist Saint Anthony Home Care Hospice

Program: Outreach Home Care Hospice provides services and support during short, critical health periods. The program sends social workers to patient's home to check on their health and make sure they are in a safe condition. Because of this contact, BSA outreach workers become aware of the transportation needs of their clients.

Transit Resources: BSA does not provide transportation but the social worker will help the client to access transportation resources if needed. BSA has an occupational therapist that is trained in analyzing a patient's driving skills.

Transit Needs: Elderly people or those with medical issues need more flexible scheduling that does not require 24-hour advance notice. This need stems from people who may not be able to keep appointments because of their more fragile state of health. For example, on the day the appointment is made, the client feels fine but, on the day of appointment, he/she may be feeling unwell. Also, a client may need a medical appointment on short-notice (less than 24 hour) but one that would not ordinarily require an EMS trip.

There perception issues regarding transit services. Some clients feel like there is a stigma attached to riding and there is a perception on the behalf of the BSA that feelings of pride prevent clients from using the bus.

There are restrictions on the number of trips that can be made under one reservation and no service on Sunday (when many elderly people want to attend church). There is a need for more flexible (extensive) service and service on Sunday's.

BSA clients and some elderly people need a higher level of transit service – help getting into their homes and with packages.

Coordination Issues: The BSA is a member of the Senior Ambassador Program. A subcommittee of this group focuses on transportation issues for seniors. The group is currently researching the feasibility of forming a 501c(3) or c(4) corporation based on the Independent Transportation Network model (<http://www.itnamerica.org/>). One challenge identified thus far in setting up an ITN include recruiting volunteers. Another is the cost of the program may prohibit access to people on a fixed income.

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: More flexible service for seniors

Craig Methodist Retirement Community

Program: The Craig Methodist Retirement Community (CMRC) provides long-term nursing care and assisted living services for over 350 clients. It is organized on a model of progressive care where there are different facilities available to help clients transition between phases of dependency. The facility includes cottages, apartments, licensed assisted living and nursing care centers. Other facilities include a pharmacy and an Alzheimer's care unit.

Transit Resources: CMRC provides transportation to its clients. They operate one, 18-passenger bus and one 9-passenger van with lifts. They employ 1.75 full-time equivalents to provide service - one full-time employ who drives the bus and one who assists with scheduling and paperwork. Regular trips for grocery shopping are scheduled on Wednesday morning and personal trips are scheduled for Wednesday afternoon. Medical trips take up the capacity on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. CMRC has received funding support from TxDOT to purchase one vehicle.)

Transit Needs: Given their resources, the CMRC is limited to providing 13 trips per day. The transit coordinator estimates that they cannot meet about 5 trip requests each week.

Coordination Issues: There is not much use of ACT services by CMRC clients. They want to receive specialized services from their community.

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: None at this time

Department of Disabled and Aging Services (DADS)

Program

Transit Resources

Transit Needs

Coordination Issues

Desired Outcome(s) from the Coordination Study:

Department of Rehabilitative Services (DARS)

Program: Provides rehabilitative services to enable people to return to employment. Eligibility for DARS is determined by the presence of a disability. DARS serves about 2,000 clients annually. DARS does not directly provide transportation to clients but provides support for the purchase of transportation as long as the trip is related to training or rehabilitation for employment. DARS will also provide modifications to personal vehicles to assist with mobility. The DARS Independent Living Services Program will help with adaptive equipment.

Transit Resources: DARS provides a commute subsidy up to \$50 per week to help offset a client's transportation costs. The amount of the subsidy is determined by the distance traveled. DARS purchases about \$3,000 annually on PCS, ACT fixed route, and Spec-Trans tickets. Occasionally they will purchase taxi cab services.

Transit Needs: Estimate that about 98 percent of DARS' clients have transportation. The five percent of clients without transportation is estimated to be about 40 individuals. The largest transit needs is for fixed route, after-hours services.

Coordination Issues: DARS frequently coordinates with the Texas Workforce Commission on a broad range of employment issues but has not focused explicitly on transportation.

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: Extended fixed route hours

Health and Human Services Commission

Program: This section reflects the insights of the Medicaid and Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) eligibility oversight manager. This office oversees the Amarillo and Canyon offices and the hospital-based staff throughout these cities. Last year, it served over 15,000 unduplicated clients.

Transit Resources: The HHSC arranges for transportation as part of the support it provides to its clients but it does not fund any transportation. It directs clients to United Way's 2-1-1 referral service.

Transit Needs:

- The HHSC does not tabulate the number of clients it refers to transit but estimates that services for the low-income are in great need. In the HHSC office, welfare-to-work support services is one of the biggest needs in the Panhandle region. For example, in April 2006 there were 8,334 active cases. For low-income workers or those trying to move from welfare to work, transportation to and from the work site to child care to home is very difficult.
- The limitations of the ACT fixed route and its schedule is a limitation to some clients and there is also a gap in service between the cities of Canyon and Amarillo.

Coordination Issues: The HHSC believes that there could be a useful partnership between the HHSC and the Texas Workforce to fill the child-care transportation gap. In particular, there is an interest in exploring the use of Work Source funding to transport the children to day-care.

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: A greater coming-together among all the stakeholders; transportation resources to assist low-income families access child care.

Hereford Senior Citizens Center

Program: The Hereford Senior Citizens Center (HSCC) provides recreation, support and congregate meals to people 55 years old and above who live in the Hereford area. The program is operated by a paid staff of 12 and a regular volunteer staff between 20 and 25 who assist in the home-delivered meals program.

Transit Resources: The HSCC has four vehicles. Three vans are used to deliver meals and one van is used for client transportation. The delivery vans are used from 10 am to 12 pm. The lift van is used from 8 am to 4 pm and will take clients to medical, shopping, or other personal appointments. Approximately 1.5 full-time equivalents are dedicated to providing transportation. Currently, about \$350 per month is budgeted for transportation (this includes meal delivery).

Transit Needs:

- In the past, HSCC used to provide trips into Amarillo but this service has been discontinued because it was too costly. The HSCC would resume this service if it had the operating funds and capital to purchase an additional vehicle.
- In the course of providing home-delivered meals, volunteer staff will encounter individuals who are in need of immediate medical attention but not of the degree that would logically call for an ambulance.
- The HSCC feels like PCS has limited usefulness of its clients because of the need for a higher level of service. At the HSCC, the driver will also serve as a personnel attendant.
- The HSCC will provide last-minute trips if needed and use private vehicle if needed. There is difficulty in meeting trip needs if they are after 4:00 p.m.

Coordination Issues: The HSCC is working with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) to recruit volunteers for all its programs. The HSCC may be interested in working with PCS to resume service to Amarillo.

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: Higher level of service and more responsiveness for trips for seniors

Kings Manor

Program: Kings Manor is nonprofit nursing facility located in Hereford, Texas. An affiliated program is the Good Samaritan that provides hospice care.

Transit Resources: Kings Manor owns a 1997 van and a 2005 van with a lift that was donated. The Good Samaritan operates 3 sedans. They employ four van drivers who together work 2 full-time equivalents. Many of the drivers are nursing assistances and provide an additional level of help. Most the trips are medical or shopping trips. They will take clients to Amarillo or Lubbock if needed for medical purposes. Kings Manor has received funding support from TxDOT to purchase 2 vehicles.

Transit Needs: The Kings Manor transportation supervisor believes they have enough resources to fill their needs.

Coordination Issues: The Kings Manor transportation supervisor expressed a concern that it would be too difficult to coordinate trips with her clients and those of other agencies. Since many of her clients are in fragile health and have a high need for assistance, there is a concern about mixing them with other riders.

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: None at this time

Panhandle Community Services – Dumas, Dalhart, and Hereford

Program: Panhandle Community Services (PCS) is a nonprofit group that provides services to low-income individuals and people in need throughout the 26-county region. Panhandle Rural Transit is a demand-response transit program managed under PCS. The PCS has seven offices: Amarillo, Childress, Clarendon/Memphis, Dalhart, Hereford, Pampa, and Dumas. PCS provides in-county trips and out-of-county trips. Out of county trips are frequently to Amarillo, Lubbock, Wichita Falls, etc. for medical trips. These long-distance trips are scheduled on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Many of the riders are going for dialysis treatment.

Transit Resources: Demand response transit is provided Monday to Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The PCS office provides dispatching. Scheduling, maintenance, and training are managed by PCS headquarters in Amarillo. The offices are supported, in part, by county donations.

- Dumas: 2 vehicles, one FT driver and one PT driver
- Dalhart: 2 vehicles, 3 drivers
- Hereford: 4 vehicles, 2 FT drivers, 1 PT driver

Transit Needs: Each office expressed a need for newer vehicles since most were very high mileage. Also, offices must occasionally deny a trip request – usually a long distance one. This happens most frequently when there is a Medicaid trip that must be made and there are no other vehicles available.

Coordination Issues:

- Dumas
 - The Dumas PCS office has tried to start a van pool service to the Swift meat packing plant. Language barrier has been a problem with getting the service started.
 - There is a need for more vehicles. If the office gets a call for Medicaid trip, it can throw off the whole schedule because there are only two vehicles
 - Charter rules have interfered with providing service. For example, they use to take seniors on a Christmas Lights tour but this service was cancelled because it conflicted with charter service rules. Another example was when a church van broke down and they called PCS to help. PCS could not loan a van because of insurance and could not provide a van and driver because of charter rules.
 - There is a shared driver program that is coordinated through the Dumas RSVP office.
 - Medicaid trips can make scheduling other trips and serving other clients very difficult. For example, a dialysis patient who is not feeling well will have to wait on a Medicaid patient. Medicaid essentially dictates the schedule they want.
- Dalhart

- At one time, PCS use to provide services to Coon Memorial, the assisted living and nursing center. Their service is no longer needed since Coon Memorial has purchased a vehicle.
- In January 2006, the local school district stopped providing transportation due to the lack of funds. PCS provides school transportation for the return trip home. They do not pick the kids up in the morning.
- Does not currently know of a common workplace destination that could benefit from a van pool although a cheese factory is expected to be built in the near future. They are expected to employ about 385 people.
- Hereford
 - Provides trips for 15 to 20 individuals from the Hereford Satellite Center. This is a sheltered workshop that is operated by TPMHMR.
 - Provides trips to schoolchildren. They both pick-up and take home. Since this requires that drivers start earlier, they will take a longer lunch in the afternoon.
 - Provides a minimal number of trips to the Hereford Care Center

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: Newer vehicles and more funds to hire drivers

Panhandle Independent Living Center

Program: The Panhandle Independent Living Center (PILC) provides training, advocacy, and peer counseling to help individuals with disabilities lead independent lives. They are funded through the Department of Rehabilitative Services, the Department of Education and private foundations. All clients that are served have some disability and 75 percent are elderly.

Transit Resources: PILC budgets approximately \$8,000 for transportation (excluding salary). These funds come from federal sources (60 percent), state (25 percent) and private grants (25 percent). It operates 2 vehicles that they use to directly provide transportation to their center – a 1994 12-passenger van with a lift and 250,000 miles and a 1993 5-passenger van with a ramp with 120,000 miles. The PILC also obtains service from other providers. It operates a summer youth program and Laidlaw Transportation has provided transit services to this program. PCS has donated transportation to the PILC for various events in the past and bus tickets are purchased from ACT (last year: 100 fixed route and 430 Spec-Trans).

Transit Needs:

PILC's greatest need for transportation is before 6:00 am and after 5:00 pm. About fifty percent of the trips PILC provides fall into this category. Trips to the airport are another need because there is no accessible transport to the airport.

Coordination Issues: Through United Way referrals, the PILC has provided transportation for people in wheelchairs that need a trip that is critical but does not warrant an emergency call. They do not advertise this service because they do not have the capacity to fill. The PILC would like to be more available to the public but their insurance limits them to short trips. Conversely, they do not want to become a "taxi service" and would rather work together with existing providers. For example, the PILC would be interested working with a private provider like a taxi service to provide wheelchair accessible trips to the airport.

The PILC works with the city's transit system on a number of issues. The PILC works with ACT to complete eligibility reviews for Spec-Trans service. It serves on its Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities which input and feedback concerning transit issues for people with disabilities. Lastly, it provides personal travel training to 3 or 4 people per month.

Other coordination efforts include an initiative in 2002. Here, PILC worked with Easter Seals to provide transportation and mobility training to Easter Seals staff in a "Train the Trainer" workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to move people from the Spec-Trans service to fixed route. The program was considered a success by PILC and they had about 12 clients.

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: After-hours service or longer hours of service; an accessible service to the airport

Panhandle Regional Planning Commission – Workforce Centers

Program: Workforce Centers provide employment and training support to help people find and keep employment.

Transit Resources: The Panhandle Workforce Center provides clients with gas vouchers to subsidize transportation costs for job-related trips or payment authorizations for public transportation. In 2005, the PWC spent about \$120,000 in gas sales and \$12K in bus vouchers and personal car repair.

Transit Needs:

- Access to job sites that are outside of the existing transit service areas or operating hours are two of the biggest transit needs for those seeking employment.
- Service to Amarillo City College (ACC). ACC provides much of the training and resources used by PWC clients and currently it is off the Amarillo City Transit route.
- Access to day care that is convenient to transit.

Coordination Issues: Gas vouchers have worked well in the past because they best respond to the multiple trip needs for a client's personal work plan (training, interviews, etc.) The public transit system was considered not feasible because of the length of the trip, the difficulty in making multiple trips, lack of access to some areas, etc. However, the gas vouchers are becoming an increasingly difficult approach because of the rising cost of gas and the difficulty in preventing abuse. (That is, once a client has received a voucher, it is very difficult to control how it is spent.)

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: Better service to Amarillo City College¹

¹ During later discussions, desired outcomes was expanded to include better public transit service. Gas vouchers are difficult to control and can be easily be abused and spent for uses other than employment-related trips. A pilot project in Hereford, Texas, is being developed by PCS, Hereford Workforce Center and other stakeholders start a modest fixed route.

Park Central – Baptist Community Services

Program: Park Central is one in a family of nursing and assisted living centers owned and operated through the Baptist Community Services. Other facilities include The Continental, Ware Living Center, Harrington Living Center, The Talmage, Plemons Court and The Arbors.

Transit Resources: Park Central provides transportation for a fee from 8:00 to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. They provide about 24,000 trips annually. They operate four sedans, two vans with lifts, and one 30-passenger bus. Transportation staff includes 3 full-time drivers, 4 part-time drivers, and 5 transportation aides. (Transportation aides assist the rider to prepare for the trip 20 minutes prior to departure, transports the person to the vehicle, and completes all paperwork.) Park Central will accept Medicaid/Medicare for residents who have been long-term clients and are now facing a change in finances.

Transit Needs: Park Central needs a 30-passenger vehicle with room for 4 wheelchairs to meet the needs of the increasing number of clients who are not ambulatory.

Coordination Issues: Park Central is meeting the needs of its clients very well. The organization does not rely on federal or state funding for transportation.

Desired Outcome(s) from Coordination Study: None identified at this time.

Public Meeting Summary

Ten public meetings were held in the Panhandle region from June 1 to June 27 to solicit input regarding transit needs and barriers to coordination. Meeting locations were chosen based on population and geographical diversity. To encourage attendance, meeting announcements were sent to the Panhandle Agency contacts and a notice of a public hearing was sent to regional newspapers. Attendance at meetings ranged from one attendant (Perryton) to 22 attendants (Childress). See Table X.1: Panhandle Public Meeting Schedule.

Table X.1: Panhandle Public Meeting Schedule

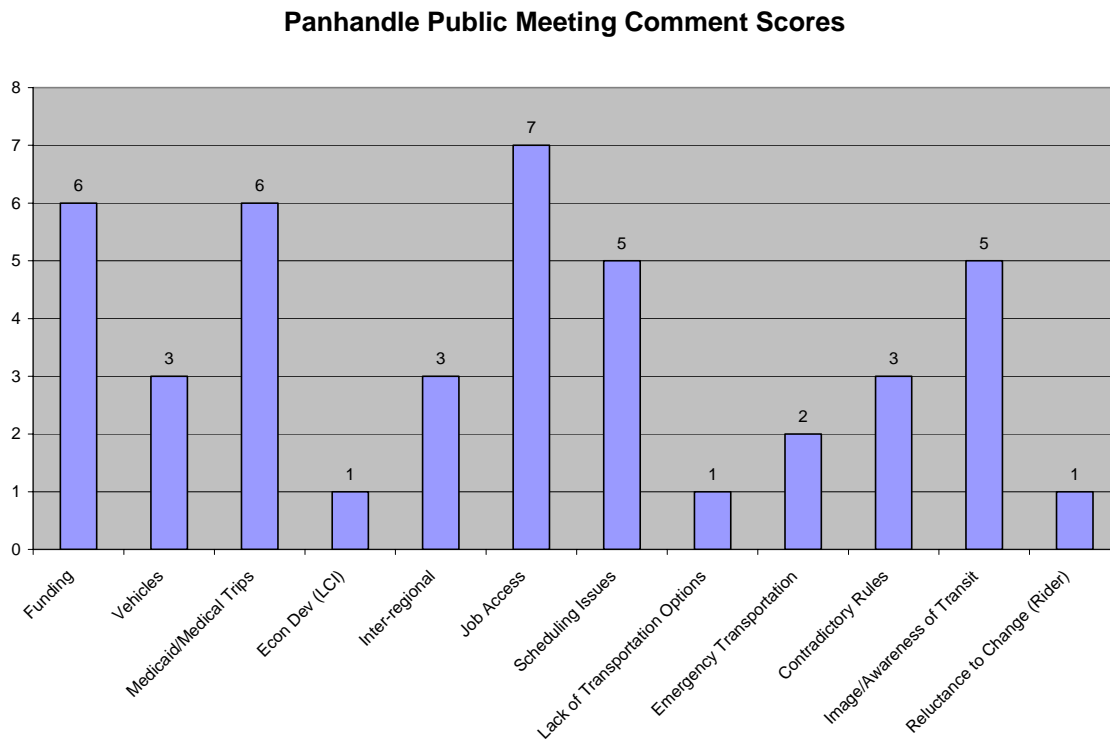
Date	City	Name of Meeting Facility	Address of Facility
Thursday, June 1			
12:00 noon	Amarillo	Room 306, City Hall	509 SE Seventh St
Tuesday, June 20			
5:00 PM	Dalhart	Dalhart Senior Citizens Building	610 Denrock
7:30 PM	Dumas	Moore County Community Building	16th and Maddox
Wednesday, June 21			
5:00 PM	Hereford	Hereford Community Center	100 Avenue C
7:30 PM	Tulia	Swisher County Memorial Building	126 S.W. Second St.
Thursday, June 22			
7:00 PM	Childress	Childress Auditorium - Reunion Rm	1000 N. Commerce
Monday, June 26			
12:00 PM	Pampa	Chamber of Commerce	200 N. Ballard
5:00 PM	Miami	Roberts County Community Center	103 Main St.
7:30 PM	Perryton	Frank Phillips College, Allen Campus Conference Center	2314 S. Jefferson
Tuesday, June 27			
7:00 PM	Amarillo	Panhandle Regional Planning Commission - Board Room	415 W. 8th Avenue

The format of the meeting included a short presentation explaining transit coordination followed by a facilitated discussion regarding transit needs and barriers. Materials accompanying the meeting included hand-outs of the presentation and three posters providing study information to-date – a county-by-county assessment of transit-related demographic information, a general overview of the levels of transit coordination, and initial findings from Panhandle Transit Survey. (See Appendix A: Public Meeting Presentation Materials.)

This section includes a summary of the public meeting comments followed by meeting comments and notes.

A facilitated discussion was held to solicit comments concerning two broad topics: 1) what are the concerns of community members regarding transit service in their area (that is, what are the gaps in service); and 2) what are the barriers and constraints that they have to accessing or delivering better transit service. The number of comments by topic is tabulated in *Figure 1: Panhandle Public Meeting Comment Scores*.

Figure 1: Panhandle Public Meeting Comment Scores



Most public comments revolved around four issues:

- **Job Access:** Transportation to jobs was a critical issue voiced in all the public meetings but particularly so for the cities of Hereford, Childress and Perryton. The city managers, county judges, and Texas Work Source staff of these cities were concerned that their communities meet the challenge of attracting industries to their areas and supplying an available labor pool. Industries that were cited as potentially needing a more readily available pool of workers included meat and pork packing plants, new ethanol plants, dairies and a new Wal-Mart. As one attendant put it: There are a lot of economic opportunities going on but there is a river between industry and the workers. Typical comments included interest in establishing a van pool service; the difficulty in ensuring Texas Workforce Commission gas vouchers are not abused and used only for employment purposes; and concern that the job access issue will continue to grow as the effect of high and rising gas prices takes effect.
- **Funding:** Attendance from the staff of the local Panhandle Community Service offices was strong at the many of the public meetings and Amarillo City Transit

staff attended the public meetings within that city. Most of the comments regarding funding came from transit staff and included more funding for vehicle replacement and operations; high driver turnover rates due to low wages that are the result of low state and federal operating fund levels; concerns over state; a concern about the City of Amarillo losing federal funding support for operations once the population exceeds 200,000.

- Medicaid/medical trips: The change of Medicaid contractors from a locally based provider, Panhandle Community Services (PCS), to a broker, American Medical Services, occurred in June 2006. This change in service delivery was the focus of many comments – not only from transit agencies but from health and human service agencies that depend on Medicaid. Types of comments that were made include: the number of providers that are willing to accept Medicaid clients is decreasing and this trend is making it more difficult to deliver trips; the timing of the removal of PCS as the Medicaid contractor has made this coordination planning process more difficult because Medicaid plays such a key role in medical transit, and to-date, AMR has not played a role in this coordination effort
- Scheduling: Overall, transit services received very positive support at the public meetings from members of the general public and social service agency staff. However, one area that was frequently mentioned as a barrier to good service was scheduling. Specifically, the PCS's and ACT's 24-hour reservation notification was perceived as difficult for certain members of the community to adhere to and, consequently, those members may be turning to other, more costly, solutions. Example comments include:
 - There is no way to handle emergency trips. Something may come up with less than a 24-hour notice that needs timely attention but does not require an ambulance. However, because people feel there are no other alternatives, they are calling 9-1-1 – an expensive alternative.
 - Older riders may have less ability to honor their reservations because they are more susceptible to quick changes in health and energy levels. Consequently, some of these riders are taking trips when they would prefer not to do so.

Hours of operation is another scheduling issue frequently mentioned. PCS stops service at 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. ACT stops service at 7:00 Monday through Saturday. No city has a taxi service with the exception of Amarillo. Consequently, transportation options are limited in the evening hours for the majority of the region. This lack was seen as particularly hard on minimum wage workers who frequently work evening and weekend shifts.

- Perception of transit services: Despite strong public support for transit agencies, there was an overall perception that transit was not a service that most people wanted to access, but rather accessed strictly out of need. In other words, it was a service that was needed only if one did not have the money, family, and/or friends to ensure a ride. Particularly for long-distant medical trips, transit was perceived as poor transportation option because of the duration of the trip

(frequently all day) and it was implied that those who relied on transit for these trips had no other choice. When asked why transit was not the preferred choice for a trip, typical comments include:

- We take care of our own;
- We rely on our friends and family to take us; and
- It's a service only for the disabled and elderly.

Other comments made related to how some communities knew little about the transit services available to them or how to schedule a ride (ex: Miami and Tulia).

In addition to the above four topics, other areas of interest included:

- Inter-regional coordination: Coordinating at the regional level to maximize use of resources is a de-facto practice within the Panhandle. Issues of inter-regional and inter-state coordination are of more interest.
- A concern that passengers would see an unwanted change in service. A concern voiced over the sharing of transportation resources solicited this response: Particularly for older riders, a trip on the PCS bus can be as much a social event as a transportation need. Passengers become accustomed to one driver and a group of familiar riders that they are reluctant to see changed.
- Dialysis trips consume vast amounts of transit resources. This situation is exacerbated when trips are scheduled for dialysis centers that are not the closest to the patient's home base. Patients need to know what their treatment and travel options are and communities with regional medical services are interested in serving those members that live within their market area.

Public Meeting Notes

Public Meeting

Location: Dalhart

Date: Tuesday, June 20

Time: 5:00 pm

Location: Senior Citizens Building, 610 Denrock

Note-taker: Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Opening remarks and presentation by Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Discussion by Rick Beverlin, The Goodman Corporation

Obstacles to Transportation

1. New Medicaid contractor
2. Inter-regional, inter-state coordination more of an issue than coordination within the region
3. Need more funds for vehicle replacement and operating
4. Urban v. rural coordination. (Funds and service)
5. Geographic operating considerations for our very rural area: distance require more time and funds for any one trip
6. Lack of understanding at the state level of the operating conditions in very rural areas – trying to have a “one size fits all approach” – when we are already coordinating because we have to just to survive
7. The number of providers that are willing to accept Medicaid clients is decreasing – it makes it more difficult to deliver trips
8. Formula funding will reward efficiency but Medicaid trips may decrease efficiency
9. Difficult to hire and keep drivers with what we are able to pay

Public Meeting

Location: Dumas

Date: Tuesday, June 20

Time: 7:30 pm

Location: Moore County Community Building, 16th and Maddox

Note-taker: Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Opening remarks and presentation by Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Discussion by Rick Beverlin, The Goodman Corporation

Concerns

1. Formula funding disparity
2. Minimum level of service needed
3. We are one of the counties with the lowest income (along with Parmer, Deaf Smith, and Castro) so we have a higher need for service.
4. The federal and TxDOT funding process is difficult
5. Program changes, such as the removal of PCS as the Medicaid provider, will make it more difficult to coordinate.
6. In Vega, the county provides volunteer drivers (Oldham County)
7. Need JARC funds for job trips into Amarillo
8. Limited hours of operations: M-F, 8 to 5 only.
9. No way to handle emergency trips that don't necessarily require an ambulance. By default, folks are calling 9-1-1.
10. One trouble is the reluctance of riders to have different riders and drivers. Particularly with the older riders, this is as much a social event as a transportation need. They become accustomed to one driver and have a relationship with that drivers and won't want to see it changed.

Public Meeting

Location: Hereford

Date: Wednesday, June 21

Time: 5:00 pm

Location: Hereford Community Center, 100 Avenue C

Note-taker: Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Opening remarks and presentation by Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Discussion by Rick Beverlin, The Goodman Corporation

Issues and Needs

1. Shelters are needed for the Fixed Route
2. Inconsistent rules when applied to Panhandle (over 100 mile VA rule)
3. Need Job Access support for Cargill plant in Friona. There are over 2,000 employees that work at this plant and 54 percent turnover rate. Also expect several new, large employers (dairies, ethanol plants).
4. It is very difficult to control how gas vouchers are spent.
5. Barriers to Coordination
 - a. Lack of Funds
 - b. Medicaid Rules that make it difficult to coordinate trips
6. Need for 24-hours advance notification for a ride
7. Expectations are high

Comment Summary

Comment: VA pays for bus riders from Childress but not from Hereford. VA told PCS that they could only serve citizens that lived more than 100 miles from Amarillo.

Comment: Have heard that PCS can't do a van pool and that the service is only for people with disabilities or the elderly.

Comment: One van pool opportunity would be for Cargill Meat Solutions in Friona. Have about 2,000 employees and a 54% turnover rate. Work in 3 shifts. Problem in controlling how a gas voucher is spent and that it won't just be used for work. Tried to put together a van pool for Cargill about 5 years ago.

Comment: Expect to see a large number of dairies (100?) being built in next 10 years. "There are a lot of (economic opportunities) go on but there is a river between industry and the workers."

Comment: Tried talking to Wal-Mart about putting a park-and-ride in their lot

Comment: It would make more sense to give the funds to PCS instead of gas vouchers for individuals.

Comment: There is need for a 24-hour notice is a barrier for people using the system. Also there are limited hours of service with nothing after 5:00 pm.

Comment: Would PCS consider renting vans for use after hours?

Public Meeting

Location: Tulia

Date: Thursday, June 22

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Swisher County Memorial Building, 126 S.W. Second Street

Note-taker: Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Opening remarks and presentation by Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Discussion by Rick Beverlin, The Goodman Corporation

Issues and Needs

1. High number of low-income people with transit need
2. Limited operating hours
3. Lack of funding, resources
4. Success in working with physician and patient schedules to meet trip needs
5. Need for coordinated and targeted marketing
6. PCS needs another van for this office
7. Medicaid for 5 day service to Amarillo v. 3 day service for everywhere else

Comment Summary

Comment: There is a lot people that should be here at this meeting but it's scheduled for time outside of when they can get a ride. There are a lot of low-income people in town.

Comment: Operating hours are not long enough. We serve Brisco and Swisher county. On MWF, we go to Amarillo; a lot of trips are for dialysis.

Comment: We can meet all our trips needs. Doctors are mostly willing to work with us so that we can provide a ride. Doctors are getting better at accommodating our limitations.

Comment: A veteran's bus will come through Tulia every day and pick up out on the highway at 6:30 am to take vets to the hospital in Amarillo. They return at 3:30. They are limited to stopping at the VA hospital and they can't take them on other trips.

Comment: Provide rides to schoolchildren. They both pick-up and take home. (District has rule that you can't pick-up inside a 2-mile radius.) We have leverage over the school kids because we will kick them off the bus if they misbehave. Parents like this: "We would rather pay you to take our kids rather than subject them to the school bus."

Comment: PCS policy to door-to-door. Those that need more help, door-through-door, we will help them or help find an attendant to ride. We'll go to great lengths to make sure everyone who needs one, gets a ride.

Comment: Small communities such as ours must coordinate just to survive. The people of Tulia work together closely.

Comment: Need for volunteers to serve as attendants may be able to be filled through the Methodist church.

Comment: There is a stigma that is attached to riding the bus. That it is only for the low-income. There is the belief in the Panhandle that “we take care of our own.”

Comment: People don’t know about the service. When Gerald Payton asked in Tulia if there was a bus service, the repair shop answered no.

Question: Beside PCS, any other transit vehicles/resources? At Mid-Tule Villiage, they have 3 buses and a minivan. We’ve had calls from one nursing home where they ask us to pick someone up and take them to another nursing home.

What is PCS Schedule: Every MWF, one bus to Amarillo, on T, Th to Lubbock or Plainview. Schedule is from 8 to 5.

Barriers:

Lack of funds – makes it difficult to hire and keep drivers

Marketing – people don’t know about the service or have misconceptions

Medicaid – requiring a 5-day service when others have 3-day

Question: What are the Job Access Issues?

Comment: There is a meat-packing plant, Cargill Meat Solutions, that employs a few people. Some people also go to Plainview to work in the nursing homes there.

Comment: Are there any faith-based grants that could help with this effort?

Public Meeting

Location: Childress

Date: Thursday, June 22

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Childress Auditorium, 1000 N Commerce

Opening remarks: Chris Coffman, Director of Local Government Services

Presentation by Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Discussion by Rick Beverlin, The Goodman Corporation

Issues and Needs

1. Perception of Panhandle as a welfare service (although it is open to everyone)
2. Access to employment – from outside of Childress into town is the major issue
3. New jobs are coming and with the price of gas, it may be difficult for us to get all the workers we need to into town.
4. Interested in what to do to get van pools and park and rides going
5. Medical Transportation is an issue when folks are leaving Childress (which has medical facilities) to travel to another facility out-of-town. These folks can be taking shorter trips. The regional medical services available will continue to grow.
6. Issues with how patients are referred to dialysis centers outside of Childress.
7. Need transportation of family members to the prison during the weekends
8. Need transportation from regional airport into town.
9. The Senior Citizen's center needs new vehicles
10. Barriers:
 - a. Rules and requirements that make it difficult to operate effectively
 - b. Lack of resources, manpower, and vehicles.
 - c. Multi-state and jurisdictional rules that may contradict
 - d. Lack of ongoing dialogues between entities (city, county, region, state)
 - e. Limited hours of operations

Comment Summary:

Comment (Jerry Cummins, City Manager): High number of commuters coming into Childress. We draw 467 workers from outside of Childress, including 3 different states. We need to address our lack of worksorce and would be interested in van pool potential. At one time there was a van pool from out in the county into Childress for a manufacturer of mobile homes. In the next 18 to 24 month, will create an additional 200 jobs. We need some transit help to get these people to work.

The prison may be another workplace that would benefit (100 people/shift). Possibly hospital.

Comment: We need to schedule a workshop with Panhandle Transit, WorkSource, and TxDOT to address issue.

Comment (County Judge): Why are they going to Amarillo when dialysis patients could get service in Childress.

Comment: Senior Citizen Center has an old van that will need replacing very soon.

Comment: No taxi cab service in town. When folks come in on Greyhound to see people in the prison on weekends, they are calling the sheriff's office for rides. We need a shuttle to the prison on weekends.

Comment: There is no taxi service in Childress. People who come into the regional airport can take PCS but most folks don't know about it. Plus, it's hard to schedule and if they come in after operating hours, they don't have a ride.

Comment: The type of medical services available in Childress is expanding. We are consolidating and becoming a regional medical center. For example, radiation treatment will soon be available in Childress. Patients need to know what their treatment and travel options are.

Public Meeting

Location: Miami

Date: Tuesday, June 26

Time: 5:00 pm

Location: Roberts County Community Center, 103 Main St

Opening remarks and presentation by Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Discussion by Rick Beverlin, The Goodman Corporation

Comment Summary:

Question: What are your opinions of transit services available?

Comment: For transit, we mostly rely on friends and family.

Comment: We don't really know how to get in touch with Panhandle Transit if we need a ride. I don't use it but I know that sometimes there are scheduling problems. Either they don't come on the day we need them or the trip takes too long or all day.

Comment: There are information gaps. We don't know how to schedule a ride. Right now, we call the judge's office and he'll give us the number.

Comment: There is also the perception that Panhandle Transit isn't for them – it's for people who are on welfare. You don't want your friend or family member to ride if you can take them.

Comment: Common destinations include Pampa, Canadian, and Wheeler.

Question: Besides Panhandle, are there any groups in town that have buses and provide rides for group trips?

Comment: There's the Baptist Church. They will someone borrow the bus if they are a member and if it's for a trip that would be approved of by the church. You can't use it though if you're not a member.

Question: What do you in case of an emergency?

Comment: Call EMS.

Comment: A lot of dialysis patients go to Pampa.

Comment: There was not a known need among those present at the meeting that there was a high demand for workforce-related travel.

Comment: School district takes kids, not Panhandle Transit.

Comment: If the judge's office gets a call, they will try to coordinate a trip.

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Public Meeting

Location: Perryton

Date: Tuesday, June 26

Time: 7:30 pm

Location: Frank Phillips College, 2314 S. Jefferson

Opening remarks and presentation by Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Discussion by Rick Beverlin, The Goodman Corporation

Comment Summary:

Comment: Agencies just handle their own needs. For example, the assisted living center has a van that they use for their clients' appointments. (Senior Living Center is managed by Jean Pshigoda)

Question: Being so close to the Kansas, do you have transit issues related crossing state lines. A: Not that I know of.

Comment: Panhandle Transit takes care of most our needs. They have one 12-passenger vehicle and one 15-passenger vehicle.

Comment: Sometimes it can be a problem getting folks to Amarillo for dialysis. Sometimes they go to Pampa.

Comment: Daycare center has a vehicle to pick-up and drop-off kids.

Question: Any job access issues?

Comment: Texas Farm is the largest employer and they process pork. They have a worksite about 25 miles from county. There is already an impromptu carpool that is happening. You can see cars parked along the highway where folks meet.

Question: Do you know if there is high turnover?

Comment: Don't know. They have an employment base of about 350. They work and 8- to 10-hour shift. (Corby Barrett is the contact at Texas Farms.)

Comment: We are trying to attract other businesses. We are attracting ethanol plants and dairies. Texas Worksource out of Pampa covers Perryton.

Comment: The area where we are drawing from is very vast. We reach up into Liberal, Kansas, down to Pampa.

Comment: We are semi-regional trade area for medical services. We draw from Spearman, Booker, Darronzett, Fawlett, Balco OK. To contact hospital administrator, Wally Boyd (806) 435-3606.

Comment: High Hispanic population, 37 percent, that probably has a higher need for transit

Public Meeting

Location: Amarillo

Date: Tuesday, June 27

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Panhandle Regional Planning Commission Offices, 415 West Eighth Avenue

Opening Remarks by Chris Coffman, Local Government Services Director for the Panhandle Region

Presentation by Susan Maclay, The Goodman Corporation

Discussion by Rick Beverlin, The Goodman Corporation

What are the Issues & Concerns concerning transit services in Amarillo?

1. Operating Funds
2. Need for operational and route changes
3. Concerns about changes in formula funding (Sec 5307)
4. 45 + minute headways
5. Lack of sales tax
6. Maximizing available funding resources
7. Availability of low-sulfur diesel
8. Access to employment – JARC and reverse commute funds.
9. Bike racks needed on buses
10. PCS needs more vehicles and \$ for operating and maintenance
11. Changes in local Medicaid contract
12. Inequity in funding formulas for federal and state
13. Number of bus stops

Comment Summary

Comment: Gas prices are a very big concern. How will this process help to address rising fuel costs?

Comment: Amarillo City Transit (ACT) exceeded its fuel budget by \$150K this year. ACT is actively looking at solutions to operate within its budget. ACT is studying implementing a flex route system. ACT already owns the software to do this.

Comment (JP): ACT needs to prepare for a potential change in funding status if its population exceeds 200,000. Once that happens, it will lose its state funding for a small urban. This will severely cripple the system. I am a member of the 100 Bus Coalition, a group of small urban providers that are working on how to re-define the ceiling for when an area loses its state support. We are working for a system that is based on the number of buses that are in operation instead of a population ceiling. The city contributes at a very healthy level. They have budgeted \$1.8MM for local match.

Comment (JP): It is difficult for this system to grow and expand because we have such poor headways now. They are at least 45 minutes and can be longer. Sometimes, we will completely slip in the schedule. You can drive from Amarillo to Lubbock quicker than you can get across town.

Comment: The City has reached the ceiling for its taxing authority. A look at an additional fee for car registration may be a way to supplement some of the funds that are lost.

Q (RB): Since there is a good bit of investment going on within the Panhandle to produce ethanol, what is the interest in pursuing an ethanol vehicles pilot project?

A: (JP): Very little interest. We only want the tried and true. We don't have the funds to mess around with unproven technology.

Comment (Rick Beverlin): One of the opportunities that this process may present is the ability to leverage funds for streetscape improvements. This can be done through the LCI program. What is the level of interest in looking at these types of issues?

Comment (GP): Judy is talking about how she doesn't have any money to run her system and you're talking about fixing sidewalks. I don't see how that helps.

Comment: LCI can help increase the number of bus riders and that helps the system. For example, what do you use right now as a station.?

Comment (GP): There is a transfer point downtown that works well. Actually there are very few transfers between urban and rural riders. Also, if we move toward a flex route, will we even need a transfer point?

Comment (JP): Right now we have 12 vehicles. This would increase to 17 vehicles if we move to flex b/c we can move STS vans onto that route. We would still use the station.

Comment: Someone needs to look at how the Economic Development funds can be used to support transit in Amarillo and the Panhandle. Getting folks to work is certainly an economic development interest from what we have learned in the counties. These groups have a lot of funds. For example, Tyson Foods and Big Texan are big employers that have difficulty in accessing Amarillo's employment base.

Comment: From a user's perspective, the 45 minute headway is a problem. Also, we need bike racks on the bikes to enhance people's ability to move within the system. Plus, we just need more buses.

Comment: Even if we had all the buses in the world, we still money to put drivers in seats. For example, in my fleet, I have an average of 125K miles per vehicle. For my TxDOT vehicles, I have 87K miles. My maintenance is 170% over budget. Also, there

are problems with Medicaid not providing the manifest until 6:00 pm the previous night. Right now we are getting \$9/rural trip and \$3/urban trip for Medicaid reimbursement.

Comment (GP): Also, the rurals received \$10MM from Federal and TxDOT has taken \$3MM of this off the top for special projects. We just need the money to operate. It's hard to know that TxDOT is sitting on funds intended for operating, turning them into discretionary funds, when they know we are starving for the funds just to operate.

Comment (Transit User): We need more bus stops on the routes. If we had more, the bus would be more accessible to people with handicaps.

Comment (JP): We have 500 stops on 8 routes now. If you identify a place that needs a stop, let us know. We have a process that we go through the evaluate new stops.

Comment (Transit User): What about re-routing vehicles to places that have higher use?

Comment (JP): We have looked at the capacity of our vehicles. During peak periods, vehicles are full. We have looked at having peak- and off-peak schedules and haven't found a consistent pattern so that it would make sense to do so.

Comment: Our area is a net giver. We give more funds then we get back.

Question (RB): What about CDBG funds?

Comment (JP): We receive some CDBG funds through the purchase of tickets for the homeless. It's about \$7,500. CDBG is looking at getting cut and the budget is already strapped.

Comment: Who is going to be responsible for funding this coordination planning effort in future years? Will it just fall into the city's lap? Does it make sense for the MPO to do it if there scope of interest is really the metropolitan area?

Comment: There is a difference between capital and operating improvement plans. Is it important or a priority to make capital improvements when there is a need for operating funds? Yes – the system needs to be improved as a whole and if we improve the capital structure, it will improve the operating numbers.

Comment: Biggest barrier to transit is lack of access. There are not enough accessible bus stops and there are a lot of problems crossing major intersections.

Comment: What about moving to a system that had multiple transfer points/transfer stations. We could pursue ICB funds for this and LCI funds to help with access to stations.

Comment: Have looked at this issue before. We looked at a system where we divided city into 3 zones.

Comment: We also have problems finding drivers. ACT has 11 driver vacancies and Panhandle Rural Transit also has problems filling driver slots.

Comment (GP): Issues with coordinating among regions. For instance, it's not uncommon that we have to take a rider from Quanah to Wichita Falls. Issue is not the coordination needed in the Panhandle – but between regions and state.

Comment (GP): Issue with allocation formulas that harm areas that are rural. We tell our people that before you turn down a ride – make sure you have to and then figure out what you can do.

Appendix A: