

# Waccamaw Regional Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan



*Prepared by*



*for the*

South Carolina Department of Transportation

and the

Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments

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## Report Edits

September 12, 2007

Page and Location	Change / Edit
Cover	Removed draft; changed month to September
Footer, all sections	Removed draft
Page 5	Edited punctuation in funding programs list; Changed funding category "5" to "Older Americans Act"
Page 6	1 <sup>st</sup> bullet: changed "various programs" to "Older Americans Act" programs
Page 8, table	Inserted new row after "Medicaid"; changed "Grants for Supportive Services.." to "Older Americans Act"; Changed last row to "Dept. of Labor, Education and Training Administration" and added "Individuals age 55 and older"; Changed "Dept" to Department
Page 8, table	Updated info about Medicaid Program in South Carolina
Page 10	Paragraph 2, changed four to three; Updated overall population paragraph with 2006 US Census data
Page 17	Changed "will be held" to "was conducted"
Pages 19-20	Updated Tables 6 and 7 with latest data as well as supporting text.
Page 29	Added a general statement directed at the improved access to jobs as a priority for the plan.
Page C-1	Added new paragraph after paragraph 2, "Consideration was also given..."
Throughout document	Standardized use of: SCDOT, FTA, federal, New Freedom Program; spelling out numbers one through ten; indention of bulleted lists

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## **Section 1: Purpose and Background of Coordination Plan**

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The purpose of this plan is to ensure that federal requirements regarding coordination are satisfied as well as assist the Waccamaw region in its continuing efforts to develop an efficient and effective transit service network.

### **1.1 Background<sup>1</sup>**

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) created a requirement that a locally-developed, coordinated public transit/human service planning process and an initial plan be developed by 2007 as a condition of receiving funding for certain programs directed at meeting the needs of older individuals, persons with disabilities and low-income persons. Plans must be developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human service providers, as well as the general public. Complete plans, including coordination with the full range of existing human service transportation providers, are required by federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2008.

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) through the consulting team of TranSystems/URS and in partnership with Councils of Governments (COGs) and interested stakeholders has developed regional coordinated plans that meet the requirements of SAFETEA-LU and the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM). While at a minimum projects funded under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula programs for Sections 5310, 5316 and 5317 must be derived from a coordinated plan, the coordinated plans will incorporate activities offered under other programs sponsored by federal, state and local agencies. These programs would include, as appropriate, FTA's Section 5307 and 5311 programs as well as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Vocational Rehabilitation, Medicaid, Community Action (CAP), Independent Living Centers, and Agency on Aging (AoA) programs among others.

On October 1, 2006, the CCAM released the following policy statement:

*“Member agencies of the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility resolve that federally-assisted grantees that have significant involvement in providing resources and engage in transportation delivery should participate in a local coordinated human services transportation planning process and develop plans to achieve the objectives to reduce duplication, increase service efficiency and expand access for the transportation-disadvantaged populations as stated in Executive Order 13330.”*

SCDOT has attempted to facilitate this by developing a plan in each region of the state and inviting all of the agencies that meet the letter and intent of this policy to the table and encouraging their participation throughout the plan development process.

Development and content of coordinated plans are intended to be specific to the needs and issues of each region. The coordinated plans will be developed to address intra-

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<sup>1</sup> Much of this section was written by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT).

and inter-regional needs and issues, and in a manner that allows the COGs, concurrent with regional long range transportation plan (LRTP) updates, to directly update the regional coordinated plan. Further, the coordinated plans will be developed in a manner that allows the COGs to adapt and expand the plans to incorporate programs and initiatives specific to their regions.

Each coordinated plan's development will at a minimum:

- Assess and document transportation needs in each region for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with limited incomes;
- Inventory available services in each region and identify areas of redundancy and gaps in service;
- Identify and document restrictions on eligibility for funding;
- Identify and document short- and long-range strategies in each region to address the identified gaps in service, including mobility management strategies;
- Identify and document technological resources currently available and appropriate for coordination of transportation services;
- Identify and document coordination actions in each region to eliminate or reduce duplication in services and strategies for more efficient utilization of resources; and
- Document and prioritize implementation strategies to increase coordination of transportation services in each region.

SAFETEA-LU also allows two significant changes to the standard procedures defined by previous legislation. Under the new regulations, project proponents are allowed to use dollars other federal programs as match to FTA funds, and expenses related to mobility management can be considered a capital expense. These are two significant changes that allow greater flexibility for budgeting and financing human service transportation.

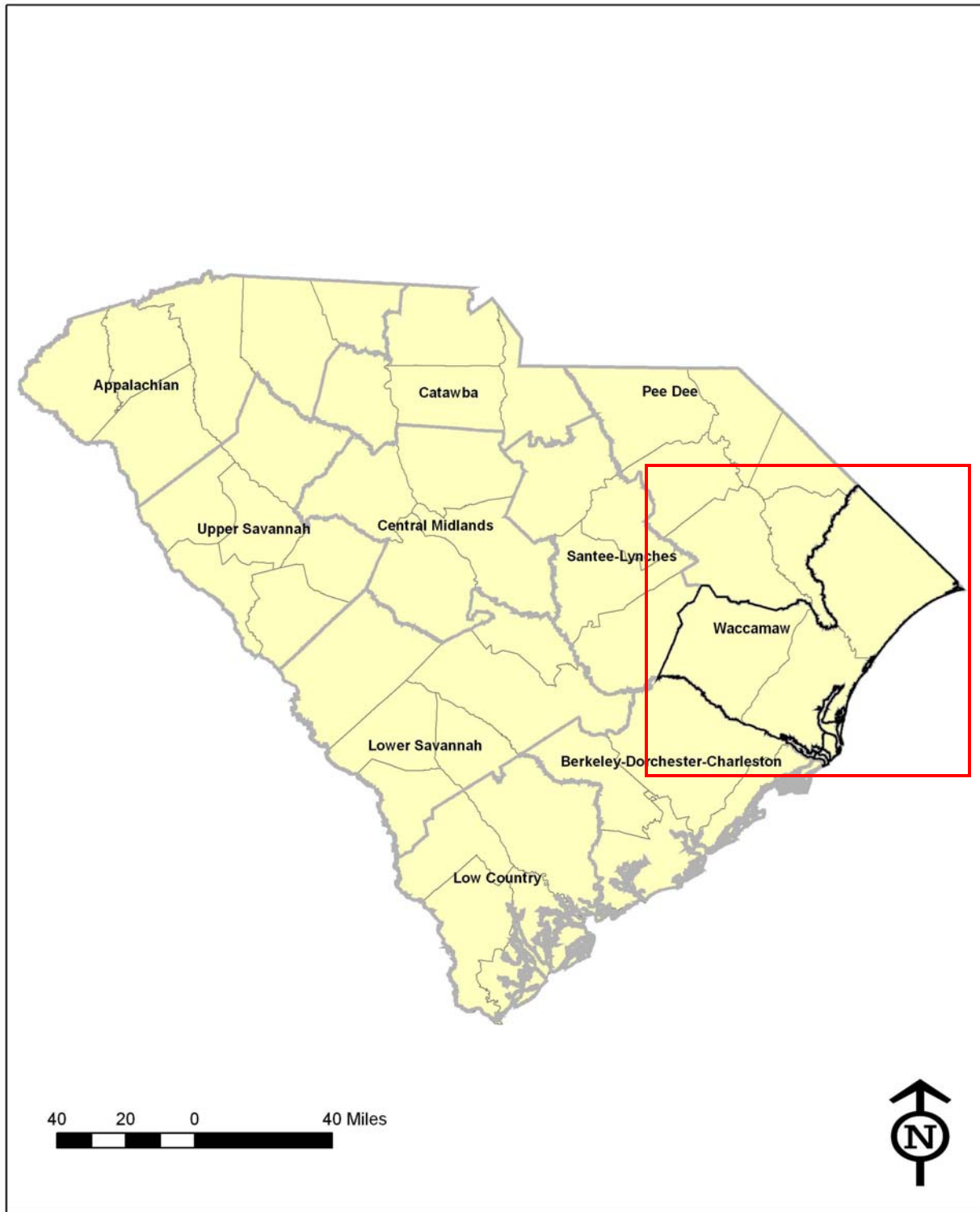
## **1.2 Planning Process**

The consultant team of TranSystems/URS, with oversight from SCDOT and a committee of COG representatives, has developed ten regional coordinated plans, one plan for each of the South Carolina's COG regions (refer to Figure 1). The regional coordination plans are intended to meet the requirements of SAFETEA-LU and the guidance detailed in the Federal Register Notice dated March 29, 2007 entitled, "Elderly Individuals and Individuals With Disabilities, Job Access and Reverse Commute, New Freedom Programs: Final Circulars effective May 1, 2007."

The development of the Waccamaw COG plan involved three basic steps:

1. Developing an inventory of services in the region as well as a sense of transportation needs.
2. Development of strategies and actions.
3. Development of the regional plan document.

Figure 1: South Carolina's Ten Council of Government (COG) Regions



Source: South Carolina Department of Transportation.

At each step SCDOT and its consultant team met with representatives of each COG region to solicit input and feedback.

This regional coordination plan also benefits from a parallel statewide planning effort undertaken by SCDOT. The statewide transportation plan’s transit element involves significant public outreach, including key stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and general public attitudinal surveys. In addition, socio-economic and demographic data as well as provider statistics were compiled. These data will be used selectively in this regional coordination plan.

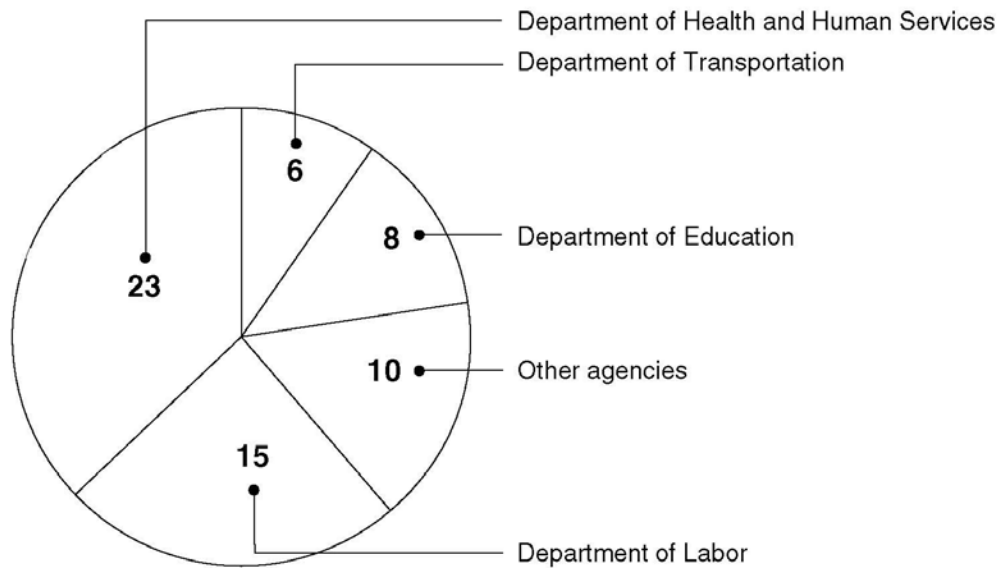
### 1.3 Funding Barriers to Coordination

One area of common concern to all regions is the role of federal and state funding in promoting coordination. In this regard, this section analyzes to what extent federal funds inhibit coordination. Included in this discussion is a brief review of important transportation funding programs and associated regulations that could affect coordinated transit. These programs do not restrict coordination through regulation; however, there are practical and programmatic issues that add to the challenge of coordination.

#### 1.3.1 Regulatory Review

In June 2003, the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) issued a study on federal transportation funding and coordination entitled *Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations*. The study reported that there were 62 federal programs that fund transportation. Of those, 16 are regularly used for public transportation, with six from the USDOT through the FTA (refer to Figure 2).

Figure 2: Sources of Federal Transportation Funds



Source: *Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations*, Figure 1, page 9, USGAO, June 2003.

The ten, non-DOT funding programs most commonly used for transportation are:

1. Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) - provides assistance to families with children. Such assistance can include help in funding transportation needs.
2. Vocational Rehabilitation - targets persons with disabilities and provides a variety of vocational services including transportation.
3. Medicaid - assists people with accessing medical services including transportation to such services.
4. Head Start - assists pre-school children with a variety of services including education readiness, health care, and transportation to/from such services.
5. Older Americans Act - assists in developing services for older people which include nutrition services, senior centers, and transportation.
6. Workforce Investment Act (WIA): Adults - provides job skill training services as well as transportation to/from such services.
7. WIA: Youth - provides job skill training services to youth as well as transportation to/from such services.
8. WIA: Displaced Workers - provides job skill training services as well as transportation to/from such services.
9. Program for Native Americans (under Older Americans Act) - provides a variety of social service funding (e.g., nutrition and caregiver services) for Native Americans.
10. Senior Community Service Employment program - provides work opportunities for older Americans.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, these six US DOT programs were listed among the top human service transportation funding programs:

1. Capital Grants (Section 5309)
2. Urbanized Area Formula Program (Section 5307)
3. Nonurbanized Area Formula Program (Section 5311)
4. Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316)
5. Over-the-Road Bus Program (Section 3038)
6. Transportation for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310)

Table 1 on the next page summarizes these 16 programs. In addition, one more program is included in the table that was not part of the 2003 GAO study. Since that study, the “New Freedom Program” was enacted. The New Freedom Program (Section 5317) is intended to provide operating and capital assistance to services that go beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit requirements.

Table 1 explains, in brief, each of the top 16 transportation programs (plus the New Freedom Program) including the responsible federal agency, typical recipients, target population, and the scope of funding. As shown in the table, each funding program covers a variety of transportation costs. Some programs are targeted to specific populations while others (such as many of the USDOT programs) are open to the

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<sup>2</sup>Table 1, page 10 of *Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations, Figure 1, page 9, USGAO, June 2003.*

general public. Those programs that are intended for specific populations must only serve those populations.

In South Carolina, many of the non-DOT funding programs are administered through the state. Only the Head Start Program provides funds directly from the federal government directly to a local entity. The USDOT programs are generally handled through the state or directed toward designated recipients.

In February 2004, Executive Order 13330 (Human Service Transportation Coordination) was issued and "...direct[ed] Federal agencies funding human services transportation services to undertake efforts to reduce transportation service duplication, increase efficient transportation delivery, and expand transportation access for seniors, persons with disabilities, children, low-income persons and others..." This order reinforces that federal programs, through regulation, do not prohibit coordination and the sharing of resources.

While funds at the federal level would appear to offer no regulatory barriers to coordination, the administration of those funds at the state and local levels were also reviewed to determine if those governmental units created any barriers to coordination.

The following state entities were contacted to determine whether the State of South Carolina and others placed any requirements that would burden coordination:

- Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging (Older Americans Act programs)
- South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs (Older Americans Act as applied to Native Americans)
- Department of Health and Human Services (Medicaid)

Based on discussions and research with these agencies, none of the non-DOT transportation programs, as administered, imposed any restrictions that would prevent coordination.

However, because each program has an intended targeted population, transportation services provided under the given program must honor the regulatory intent. While this presents a challenge, it does not, per se, prohibit coordination.

Section 1: Purpose and Background of Coordination Plan

Table 1: Summary of Top Federal Human Service Transportation Funding Programs (Continued on next page)

Program	Responsible Agency	Recipients	Target Population	Transportation Funding	Coordination Issues	Other Information
Capital Grants (Section 5309)	US DOT (FTA)	Designated Recipients and States.	General population	Wide variety of capital funding including for vehicles and facilities.		Congressional earmarks popular method in securing this funding.
Urbanized Area Formula Program (Section 5307)	US DOT (FTA)	Designated Recipients in urban areas over 50,000 in population.	General population	Wide variety of funding for capital, planning and operations (for areas with less than 200,000 in population)		
Nonurbanized Formula Program (Section 5311)	US DOT (FTA)	For States to assist rural areas under 50,000 in population. Recipients can be public agencies, non-profit agencies, and Native American Tribes.	General population	Wide variety of funding for capital, planning and operations.		
Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316)	US DOT (FTA)	Local governmental agencies and non-profit organizations.	General population of workers with nontraditional work schedules.	Wide variety of funding for capital and operations.		
New Freedom Program (Section 5317)	US DOT (FTA)	Designated Recipients and States.	Persons with disabilities	Operating and capital assistance that go beyond ADA requirements		
Over-the-Road Bus Program/Over-the-Road Bus Accessibility (Section 3038)	US DOT (FTA)	Private operators of over-the-road buses	General population	Capital projects relating to improving accessibility including retrofit of lifts and the purchase of new vehicles.		
Transportation for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310)	US DOT (FTA)	States on behalf local recipients such as non-profit and public agencies	Elderly and persons with disabilities	Mainly capital though services can be purchased if through a contract.		
Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	Payments directly to clients	Persons on Welfare looking for unsubsidized employment	Gas vouchers, bus tokens, car repairs, \$0 down/0% car loans, some contracts with Transportation providers	Clients living in rural areas, 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> shift needs, need to take children to day care	No specific regulations dealing with transportation

## Section 1: Purpose and Background of Coordination Plan

Program	Responsible Agency	Recipients	Target Population	Transportation Funding	Coordination Issues	Other Information
Vocational Rehabilitation Department	US Department of Education	Payments directly to clients	Persons with a physical or mental disability that is an impediment to employment	Up to the individual client, although the program is described as a gas money or bus ticket program	No statutory or regulatory issues noted. There are certain options that they choose not to do to "stretch" funds.	Issues with rural areas where there is no public transportation services
Medicaid	US Department of HHS (Medicaid)	DSN Boards (in South Carolina a major portion of revenue from State General Funds)	Medicaid eligible with physical, social or mental disability	Provided directly by DSN for residential clients. DSN's may contract with transit providers for community based customers	Unique needs of clients, specifically the need for van aides to ride with clients due to behavioral issues	Since mainstreaming is an ultimate goal, a client could be trained to use transit and community placements try to take into account bus service
Medicaid, Title 19	US Department of HHS	The South Carolina Department of Human Services has recently converted this program to a brokerage system	Low-income households with need for non-emergency medical transportation	Brokers are paid a capitated rate, based on the total number of eligible clients	Program allows client to choose the facility where they will receive care, which can lead to long trips	
Head Start	US Department of HHS	Direct to agencies	Pre-school children (3 to 4 years of age)	Agencies may operate own service or contract	No restrictions, though vehicles and needs of children may be in conflict with adults	
Older Americans Act	US Department of HHS		Seniors			
Workforce Investment Act (3)	US Department of Labor	State works with regions which has contracts with educational institutions.	Unemployed, under employed workers	Provides compensation for transportation costs which can be for private automobile as well as public transit.	None.	Job training; WIA has three programs targeting dislocated workers, adult and youth services.
Program for Native Americans, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian Elders	US Department of HHS (Older Americans Act)	US provides grants directly to Federally recognized tribes	Native American Seniors			Only one tribe in South Carolina (Catawba); 23 other tribes not recognized.
Senior Community Service Employment Program	Department of Labor, Education and Training Administration	Individuals age 55 and older	Seniors needing job training or re-training	Can fund a variety of transportation costs including gas money and bus fares.		

### **1.3.2 Non-regulatory Challenges**

While regulatory factors do not prevent different social programs from sharing resources, there are practical and programmatic considerations that can make coordination challenging. Some of these are service delivery issues and others relate to administrative issues.

Service delivery related issues include special requirements imposed by certain funding streams that are unique and not common to other funding streams. For example, Head Start requires on-vehicle monitors and use of safety restraints for passengers. These requirements are not typical with general public services funded by FTA. Thus, for an operator of FTA-only funded services, transporting a Head Start client would require these additional features, creating additional expense.

Administrative-related issues refer to the documentation of the use of a funding stream's dollars. For example, Medicaid only pays for medical-related transportation. A service provider who transports the general public as well as a Medicaid traveler would need to document to Medicaid the incremental cost of the trip. This would demonstrate to Medicaid that it is paying for only its share of the service. While a cost allocation formula can overcome this, this still presents an administrative hurdle in providing shared services.

### **1.3.3 Conclusion**

This review found that solely on a regulatory basis, federal transportation funding does not, per se, prohibit or restrict coordination. However, some programs present service delivery and administrative issues that require creative thinking and tenacity to overcome practical and programmatic challenges to sharing resources.

## **1.4 Organization of the Document**

This regional plan has these three main parts:

1. *Section 2: Introducing the Waccamaw Region* profiles the region's population and service providers. It also contains information regarding transit needs in the region.
2. *Section 3: State of Coordination* examines current efforts at human service transportation coordination and explores some of the barriers and opportunities to further coordination.
3. *Section 4: Coordination Strategies and Actions* provide initial ideas for the region to continue its development of coordinated transit.
4. *Section 5: Next Steps* provides direction for the region in implementing the strategies and actions from Section 4.

## **Section 2: Introducing the Waccamaw Region**

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The Waccamaw region consists of three counties in northeastern coast of South Carolina: Horry, Williamsburg and Georgetown (refer to Figure 1). This section provides a demographic and service profile of the region as well as an identification of needs.

### **2.1 Profile of Region<sup>6</sup>**

The Waccamaw region is comprised of three counties in northeastern South Carolina: Georgetown, Horry, and Williamsburg.

#### **Overall Population**

According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, in 2006, the combined population of the Waccamaw region reached nearly 335,500 persons. Horry was the largest county in the region at 238,500 persons, while Williamsburg County was the smallest at 36,100. Between 2000 and 2006, population in South Carolina grew by 7.7 percent. Overall, the Waccamaw region grew at a much faster rate, 15.8 percent. Horry County grew by 21.3 percent and Georgetown County grew by 9.1 percent. Conversely, Williamsburg County declined in population by three percent.

#### **Elderly Population**

In 2004, 12.4 percent of the South Carolina's population was 65 years and over. All counties in the Waccamaw region had greater proportions of persons age 65 and over than was found statewide. Overall, the proportion of persons age 65 and over in the region was 15.6 percent. The proportion of persons age 65 and over in Williamsburg County was 16.8 percent, the second highest in South Carolina, behind McCormick County.

#### **Disabled Population**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 810,857 persons age five and over were identified with a disability in South Carolina, representing approximately 22.2 percent of the total population in this cohort. The greatest proportion of persons identified with a disability was found in persons age 65 and over, 48.5 percent in 2000. The Waccamaw region had a slightly higher proportion of persons with disabilities than found statewide, 23.7 percent (64,071 persons). Williamsburg County had the greatest percentage of persons with disabilities at 29.3 percent (10,070 persons), followed by Horry County at 23.2 percent (42,673), and Georgetown County at 21.8 percent (11,328 persons).

#### **Persons Below the Poverty Level**

In 2003, 13.8 percent of South Carolina's population was living in poverty. Of the three Waccamaw counties, only Horry County, at 13.1 percent, had a lower percentage of persons living in poverty than the statewide average. Williamsburg and Georgetown

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<sup>6</sup> This section is from the Statewide Transportation Plan, 2007.

Counties had higher poverty levels, with 22.9 percent and 14.7 percent, respectively. Williamsburg County had the second highest poverty rate in South Carolina.

### Median Household Income

In 2003, the median household income in South Carolina was \$38,003, which is higher than all three Waccamaw counties. Georgetown County had the highest income level at \$36,458, followed by Horry County at \$35,606. The median income in Williamsburg County was \$24,712, the second lowest median household income in the state behind Allendale County.

### Change in Daytime Population

Horry and Georgetown Counties experienced small daytime population increases of two percent and 1.9 percent, respectively, while Williamsburg County experiences a loss of seven percent of its daytime population, due to residents commuting to jobs outside the county. U.S. Census information is based on year-round residency and does not represent what is expected to be more substantial changes in daytime population during the height of the tourist season.

### Demographic Summary

The Waccamaw region is comprised of two rapidly-growing counties along the coast and one inland county that has experienced a decline in population in recent years. The Waccamaw region is an attractive retirement destination, as shown in its relative high percentage of elderly population. However, the region as a whole remains relatively poor, especially Williamsburg County. The Myrtle Beach area is home to many of the region's jobs, and existing transit services are geared to transporting residents of outlying areas to hospitality and tourism-related jobs along the Grand Strand. As the Myrtle Beach area continues to urbanize, there is likely to be additional demand for transit. In the more rural areas, transit will continue to be needed to connect residents to jobs and basic services.

## **2.2 Services<sup>7</sup>**

The Waccamaw region is served by the Coast Regional Transit Authority (Coast RTA) and the Williamsburg County Transit Authority (WCTA), which provide general public transit service with complementary ADA paratransit as well as provide direct transportation services to human service agencies. Human service transportation is predominantly provided in each respective county.

- Coast RTA operates a variety of services in Horry and Georgetown Counties, including fixed route service centered in Myrtle Beach and Conway, demand response services throughout the two counties, and special services such as shuttle service at Coastal Carolina University.
- WCTA offers demand response services for agencies and the general public throughout Williamsburg County as well as an extensive commuter transit

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<sup>7</sup> From the Statewide Transportation Plan, 2007.

service, linking residents of Williamsburg County with job opportunities in Myrtle Beach.

**Regional Overview**

Collectively, the two public transit operators in the Waccamaw region had 100 vehicles actively providing service in FY 2005. In the same year, the systems together provided nearly 1.3 million passenger trips, split nearly evenly between the two systems.

Table 2 shows the trends in the number of vehicles actively providing service. During the four-year period between FY 2002 and FY 2005, the number of vehicles in service was at its maximum in FY 2002, and then the number dropped the following year. Service increased again in FY 2005. Since FY 2005, Coast RTA has been forced to cut some services due to local funding constraints but is working to secure additional local funds to increase its services again.

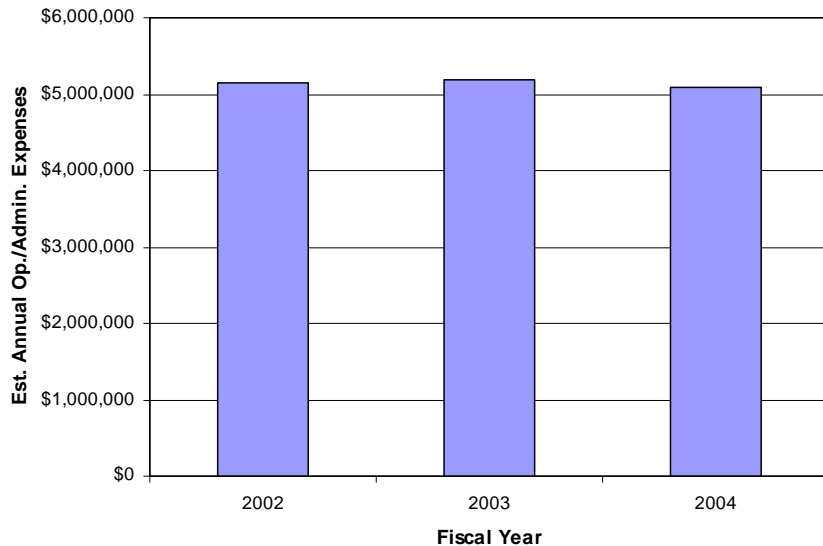
**Table 2: Waccamaw Region Composite Vehicles in Maximum Service (FY 2002 to FY 2005)**

Area	Fiscal Year			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Fixed Route	68	54	43	48
Demand Response	21	20	26	32
Other	28	22	18	20
Totals	117	96	87	100

**Source:** Data by SCDOT

The estimated annual operating costs of the systems in the region have remained quite stable in recent years, as illustrated in Figure 3. In FY 2004, the combined systems had operating costs of approximately \$5.1 million. No data is shown for FY 2005 because cost data were not available from the Coast RTA for that year.

**Figure 3: Annual Operating Expenses (Region Totals FY 2002 to FY 2004)**



**Source:** Data by SCDOT

*Trends in Ridership and Amount of Service Provided*

Transit is generally growing in the Waccamaw region, reflecting the growing population base. The Coast RTA has struggled with funding constraints in recent years, but conditions are improving. Tables 3 through 5 show composite data for ridership, vehicle miles of service, and vehicle hours of service, broken down by type of service as well as by urban and rural setting.

Table 3 illustrates ridership by type of service (fixed route, demand response, other) as well as by geographic area (urban versus rural). Ridership generally increased in all geographic regions and on both fixed route and demand response service. A spike in ridership, particularly rural demand response service, stands out in 2003. However, it is acknowledged that some more recent reductions in service at the Coast RTA are not reflected in these data.

**Table 3: Waccamaw Region Composite Passengers by Service Type and Geographic Area (FY 2002 to FY 2005)**

Service Type	Fiscal Year			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Fixed Route	511,883	652,048	653,626	750,969
Demand Response	61,110	170,458	91,891	109,671
Other	511,668	507,281	479,289	426,463
Totals	1,084,661	1,329,787	1,224,806	1,287,103

Area	Fiscal Year			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Urban	347,411	469,884	471,142	484,353
Rural	737,250	859,903	753,664	802,750
Totals	1,084,661	1,329,787	1,224,806	1,287,103

*Source: Data by SCDOT*

Tables 4 and 5 show the volume of service provided in terms of vehicle miles and hours, respectively. Service provided is shown both for type of service (fixed route, demand response, other) and geographic area (urban versus rural). Service has increased for both fixed route and demand response operations, and the volume of service has grown fairly equally in urban and rural areas.

**Table 4: Waccamaw Region Composite Vehicle Miles (FY 2002 to FY 2005)**

Area	Fiscal Year			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Fixed Route	1,015,044	1,313,820	1,269,365	1,466,148
Demand Response	707,112	804,756	931,674	942,840
Other	1,128,245	1,217,908	805,873	807,627
Totals	2,850,401	3,336,484	3,006,912	3,216,615

Area	Fiscal Year			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Urban	1,098,369	1,266,723	1,454,618	1,263,848
Rural	1,752,032	2,069,761	1,552,294	1,952,767
Totals	2,850,401	3,336,484	3,006,912	3,216,615

*Source: Data by SCDOT*

**Table 5: Waccamaw Region Composite Vehicle Hours (FY 2002 to FY 2005)**

Area	Fiscal Year			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Fixed Route	62,027	88,704	112,125	84,601
Demand Response	37,737	48,851	47,805	53,853
Other	106,342	101,888	80,890	91,068
<b>Totals</b>	<b>206,106</b>	<b>239,443</b>	<b>240,820</b>	<b>229,522</b>

Area	Fiscal Year			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Urban	54,796	76,260	101,233	63,862
Rural	151,310	163,183	139,587	165,660
<b>Totals</b>	<b>206,106</b>	<b>239,443</b>	<b>240,820</b>	<b>229,522</b>

*Source: Data by SCDOT*

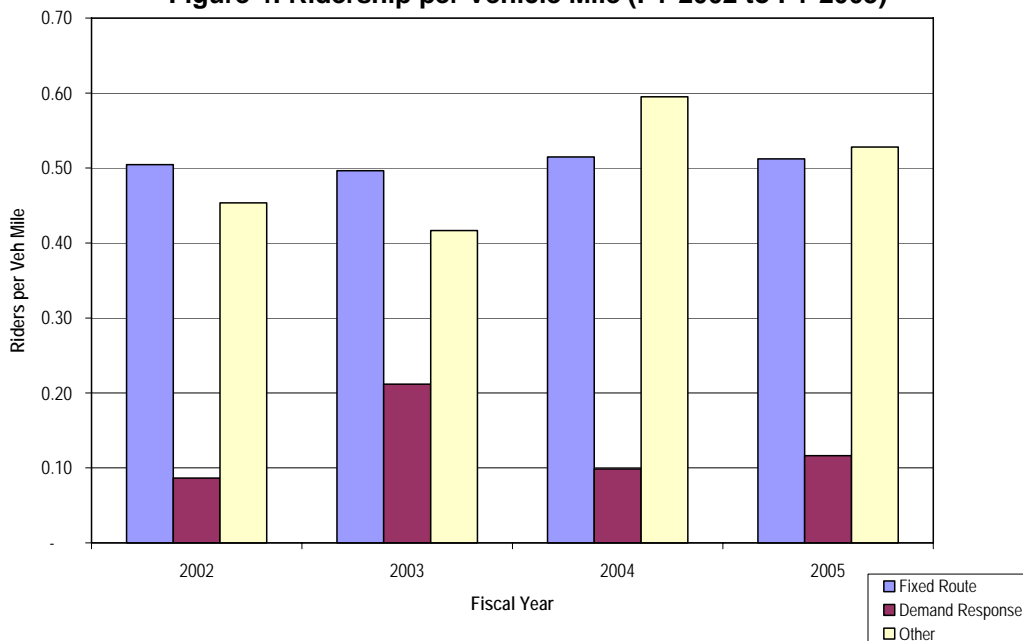
**Trends in Efficiency and Effectiveness**

Figures 4 through 5 present regional trends in revenue and expenses as well as measures of key cost efficiency and service effectiveness. These measures include the following:

- Ridership per vehicle mile;
- Ridership per vehicle hour; and
- Operating cost per rider, per mile, and per hour.

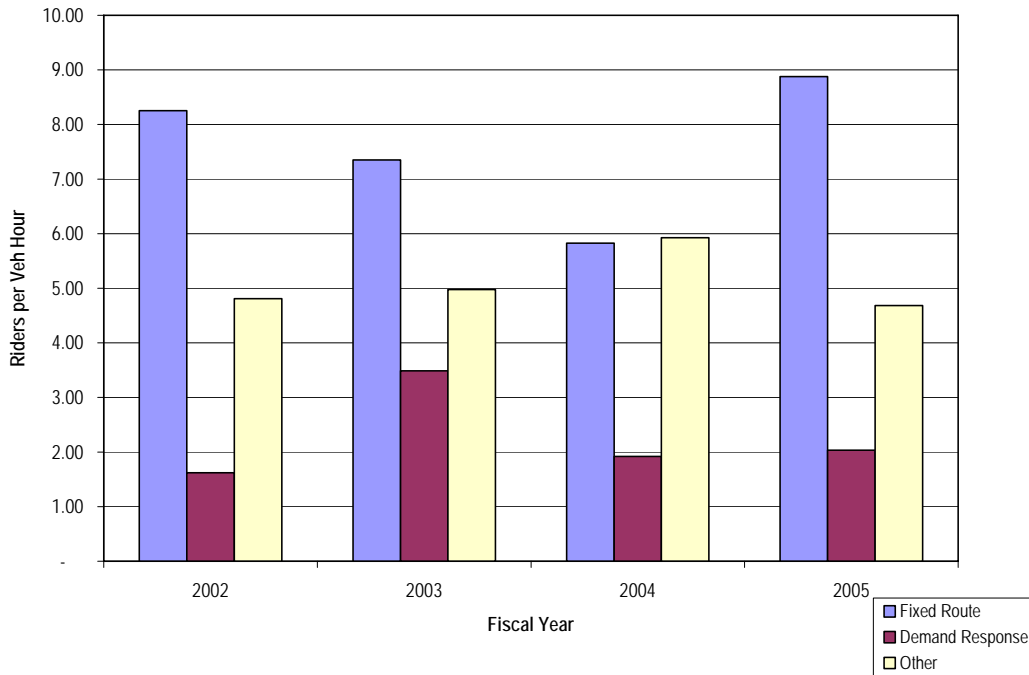
As shown in Figures 4 and 5, there has been some fluctuation in ridership per mile and per hour. It is notable that the fixed route measures are similar to the demand response measures, illustrating the nature of much of the fixed route service as long-distance commuter shuttles. This type of service typically does not fare well in these types of effectiveness measures.

**Figure 4: Ridership per Vehicle Mile (FY 2002 to FY 2005)**



*Source: Data by SCDOT*

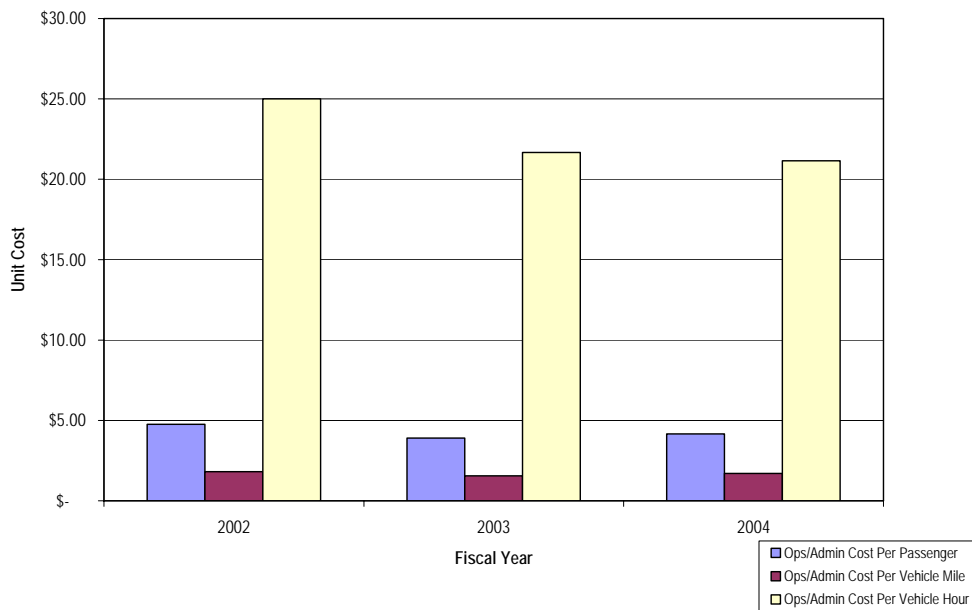
**Figure 5: Ridership per Vehicle Hour (FY 2002 to FY 2005)**



**Source:** Data by SCDOT

Figure 6 demonstrates that the region’s public transit providers have maintained a relatively stable cost per passenger, per mile, and per hour. In fact, the operating cost per vehicle hour has decreased notably. FY 2005 operating cost data were not available.

**Figure 6: Operating Cost per Passenger, per Vehicle Mile, and per Vehicle Hour (FY 2002 to FY 2004)**



**Source:** Data by SCDOT

### Other Transportation Services

Other agencies that currently provide their clients with transportation using in-house resources in the region include the following (this is not an all-inclusive list):

- The Georgetown Department of Disabilities operates group homes that are each assigned with one or two vehicles to provide residents transportation for any purpose. The Georgetown Department of Department also provides some transportation to their work enclaves and vocation center. Clients are offered job placement services, and the Department will provide transportation up to one year to that job.
- Baskerville Outreach in Pawley's Island operates one vehicle between the hours of 9 AM and 3 PM to transport residents of that facility to medical appointments.
- The Horry County Council on Aging operates 18 vehicles to transport their clients to and from four senior centers. They also provide some recreational field trips for groups.

### **2.3 Identified Transportation Gaps and Needs**

Two key sources of information describe Waccamaw's human transportation service providers as well as their needs. The first was a survey conducted specifically for this coordination plan by SCDOT. The second was through meetings of Waccamaw human services agencies and other stakeholders conducted on December 19, 2006; February 6, 2007; and April 12, 2007.

#### **2.3.1 2006 SCDOT Survey**

In addition to the statistical information provided by SCDOT in Section 2.2, a number of human and other service providers were surveyed to determine the nature of their services as well as factors that could help or hinder coordination. This section summarizes that survey.

In late 2006, about 40 surveys were distributed to Waccamaw region service providers. The survey was approved and tabulated by SCDOT and distributed by WRCOG. Five questionnaires were returned. The survey covered 17 areas including:

- Descriptive information about provider (budget, number of vehicles, quantity of service provided)
- Types of clients and destinations served
- Times of day and days of week of service
- Vehicle restrictions
- Use of advanced technology
- Areas of interest with respect to coordination

Key observations from the survey are:

- The region is comprised of three, relatively large counties.
- Varied destinations are served, but the primary issue is getting to remote rural areas.

- Many operators have similar peaks.
- Most of the surveys did not include a response to the question regarding areas of interest for coordination.

A tabulation of survey responses and a copy of the survey instrument can be found in Appendix A.

### **2.3.2 Waccamaw COG Sponsored Meetings**

During the course of the project, Waccamaw COG has sponsored three meetings attended by representatives of human service agencies and transportation providers. The meetings were held to facilitate discussion about transportation issues and potential strategies to address these issues. Attendance at the December meeting was very low, so a supplemental meeting was held in February to encourage more participation from regional stakeholders. All three meetings advanced the development of the coordination plan through the identification of transportation gaps, discussion regarding the barriers to and opportunities for coordination. Short summaries from each meeting are included in Appendix B, and the discussions at these meetings served as the basis for Sections 3 and 4 of this Plan. A fourth meeting was conducted July 24, 2007, to present the draft Plan as well as an evaluation process to regionally prioritize projects.

## **2.4 Use of Technology**

As part of the statewide transit service assessment, the survey distributed as a part of this process included specific questions about how technology was being used in transit operations. This section presents general findings about technology use from the survey questions statewide including the Waccamaw region. The survey instrument and complete summary of responses are included in Appendix A.

Transportation providers were asked what advanced technologies were used to support the following operational functions: office, scheduling, reservations, dispatching, mapping/planning, accounting, eligibility determination, vehicle maintenance inventory, and in-route vehicle location. As one would expect, across state transportation providers, the greatest use of technology—supported by computers or other electronic systems—is for office functions, followed by accounting, vehicle maintenance inventory and scheduling. Approximately one-quarter to one-third of all the responding providers use technology to support reservations, dispatching, mapping/planning, and eligibility determination. Fifteen systems are utilizing in-route vehicle location systems. A summary of responses by COG is shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Number of Transportation Providers Using Computers or Electronic Systems for Operations by COG**

Region	Office	Scheduling	Reservations	Dispatching	Mapping/ Planning	Accounting	Eligibility Determination	Vehicle Maint. Inventory	In-Route Vehicle Locating
Appalachian COG	10	6	3	3	4	8	2	8	0
BCD COG	7	4	2	1	5	7	4	3	2
Catawba COG	9	4	0	1	2	8	4	2	1
Central Midlands COG	8	4	4	4	2	7	2	3	2
Low Country COG	6	4	1	1	3	6	4	6	2
Lower Savannah COG	11	7	4	4	4	7	1	7	2
Pee Dee COG	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
Santee-Lynches COG	5	3	1	3	2	6	2	3	3
Upper Savannah COG	5	4	4	2	3	5	2	5	1
Waccamaw COG	4	3	2	2	2	4	4	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>15</b>

The transportation providers were asked whether they used web-based or internet applications to aid in performing operational functions. Approximately one out of five providers indicated they use the internet or web-based applications to assist with mapping/planning or scheduling. One out of eight providers use web-based or internet applications for the following functions: office, reservations, accounting and in-route vehicle location, as shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: Number of Transportation Providers Using Internet or Web-based Applications for Operations by COG**

Region	Office	Scheduling	Reservations	Dispatching	Mapping/ Planning	Accounting	Eligibility Determination	Vehicle Maint. Inventory	In-Route Vehicle Locating
Appalachian COG	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	1
BCD COG	1	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	2
Catawba COG	2	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
Central Midlands COG	1	3	2	1	1	1	0	1	2
Lowcountry COG	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1
Lower Savannah COG	0	4	3	2	2	2	0	0	2
Pee Dee COG	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

Santee-Lynches COG	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2
Upper Savannah COG	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
Waccamaw COG	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>

Providers were asked open-ended questions about coordination opportunities and interests. Nearly all providers indicated they were interested in service coordination in order to reduce costs, meet service demand, achieve greater operational efficiencies and productivity, expand service areas and improve transportation services. The types of coordination opportunities desired by the providers include those to:

- **Use staff and operators more efficiently ✓**
- **Serve a greater geographic area and serve more patrons ✓**
- Improve training
- Enhance marketing
- **Schedule rides ✓**
- **Assist with maintenance ✓**
- Provide contracting and grant administration support
- **Coordinate between different service providers and types of service ✓**

The types of coordination opportunities that have the greatest potential for enhancement and assistance through technology tools are indicated by bold text and a checked. Appendix C provides an introduction to the types of technological tools that are currently available to assist with transportation service provision. It also includes a discussion about what tools are being utilized nationwide and current trends, based on literature review.

Another statewide effort to utilize technology for the provision of transportation services is the Virtual Transit Enterprise (VTE). Beginning in FY 1998, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and its successor, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), authorized the FTA to award capital grants to SCDOT for the development of the VTE project, a shared technology solution to bring the state’s public transit providers together to solve mutual problems.

The concept takes advantage of the economies of scale that result when a group of independent, self-sufficient organizations with common purposes share information technology (IT) resources rather than duplicating high-cost technological investments at numerous locations. A virtual enterprise works best when the individual organizations have a common type of business, are geographically dispersed with limited competition with each other, have mutual respect for each other, and are motivated to reduce IT infrastructure costs through standardization and increased revenue through integrated services among members. The enterprise is “virtual” because the organizations communicate and share information with each other and conduct their business from remote sites using web-based communications with standardized software and hardware infrastructure resources located in a central location.

The main goal of the VTE project was to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of rural public transit providers through the use of state-of-the-art information technology by:

- Making available to smaller public providers the same modern resources as large providers;
- Providing more timely and accurate planning and reporting via electronic means to reduce overhead and turnaround time;
- Minimizing cost of implementing computer technology as well as total cost of ownership over the product life cycle; and
- Optimizing transportation runs and routes to make transit more flexible and responsive.

As a result, VTE would increase transit ridership through increased rider satisfaction, and improve mobility particularly for transit-dependent people, disabled persons, and Welfare-to-work participants.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> This section taken from the "Evaluation of South Carolina's Virtual Transit Enterprise", FTA-SC-03-1002-05.1, Schwenk, Volpe Center, September 2005

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## **Section 3: State of Coordination in the Region**

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This section reviews issues associated with coordination in the Waccamaw region and describes the efforts already under taken to coordinate as well as stated barriers to and opportunities for coordination.

### **3.1 Efforts to Coordinate**

In December 2006 and February 2007, Waccamaw COG sponsored meetings of area human service providers to discuss transportation coordination. The discussion revealed that some coordination already exists within the region especially at the county level. Evolution of services in Williamsburg County has resulted in much of the transportation for human service agencies being consolidated under contract with WCTA. In addition to their general public services, WCTA operates transportation services for the Williamsburg Department of Disabilities, the Council on Aging and non-emergency Medicaid services. There may be some changes to Medicaid services depending on how the new brokerage system impacts operations.

A similar set of services are provided by the Coast RTA in Horry County. They also provide services to the Council on Aging, Medicaid and the Horry County Department of Disabilities. The Coast RTA operates limited fixed route services in Georgetown County; however, there are no agreements with human service agencies in the county to provide services. Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority (PDRTA) provided Medicaid service in Georgetown County through April 30, 2007, but it is unclear who will be under contract with the new Medicaid broker to provide services after May 1, 2007. Presently, the other human service agencies in Georgetown County are providing their transportation as part of in-house operations.

### **3.2 Regional Transportation Gaps/Barriers to Coordination**

As a result of facilitated meetings and survey findings, there are over a dozen identified gaps in human service transportation within the Waccamaw region. The list of gaps is not intended to be inclusive of all gaps, but the gaps identified are considered by meeting participants as the most significant and should be the focus of projects and strategies funded under the three FTA programs.

Many of the gaps in transportation for the Waccamaw region stem from its size geographically and the number of remote rural areas that are difficult to serve. The group agreed that any improvements in the reliability of service, both in terms of decreasing wait times and overall on-time performance should be a high priority for the region. Transportation providers cited the long travel times to remote areas and limited resources (vehicles and revenue) contribute to these issues. The group identified several rural areas that need more service including: Little River, Green Sea Floyds, Pawley's Island, northern Williamsburg County, and the southern and western portions of Georgetown County.

Several populations were considered to be underserved, the most notably of which were low and fixed income individuals just above the Medicaid threshold that need transportation to medical services. Many of these individuals are either elderly or live in

the remote areas of the region. The group also felt that seniors have difficulty in getting to other destinations other than senior centers primarily for basic needs like groceries and other non-medical services. The DSN Boards expressed concern for their clients, who have been through their program and placed into jobs, who find that transportation is a critical barrier to maintaining their employment.

The group also identified several other issues that either represent gaps or barriers to coordination. They include:

- The Dash service hours provided by the Coast RTA need to be expanded.
- Need more public transportation in Georgetown County.
- Fares for service need to be standardized and in some cases reduced to ease burden on passengers.
- Fleets need replacement and expansion.
- Insurance is a major expense and could be pooled among providers.
- Need more information about cost allocation and contracting among agencies.
- Need more funding from sustainable sources.
- Improve accessibility to services in terms of a well advertised one-stop call center to help individuals identify potential service providers.
- Seasonal service demands – Myrtle Beach is a major employment center during summers, which requires cooperation among RTAs to accommodate inter-regional trips.

### **3.3 Opportunities to Coordinate**

Many opportunities for coordination were identified early in the process across all the regions, including but not limited to:

- Information on available transportation capacity (may be posted on a web site for all to see and know that space is available to key destinations). Some mention of setting up something similar to a 211 phone number.
- Mobility manager who can be a clearinghouse for centralized information availability as well as scheduling and dispatching of services.
- Regional vehicle maintenance to share that expense.
- Cooperate in driver training.
- Establish a fare structure for non-program riders.
- Develop common standards for driver training and qualifications as well as for maintenance and insurance coverage.
- Develop insurance pooling programs.
- Develop cost allocation formulae to encourage cooperation and coordination among transportation providers.
- Use real-time scheduling among operators in an area to utilize available capacity, especially for return trips which tend to be on an “on-call” basis.
- Continue and expand use the statewide vehicle leasing and fuel program.
- Take advantage of new matching regulations by pooling the funding from multiple federal programs to enhance services.

## Section 4: Coordination Strategies and Actions

Based on the coordination and other issues identified in Section 3, several strategies and actions were developed to advance the region's efforts to promote coordination to a higher level. "Strategy" is defined here as a general direction for a course of action, while "actions" are more specific steps in fulfillment of the given strategy. Actions will lead to "projects" which implement the actions and strategies. This regional coordination planning effort will only go to the "action" level, with projects to be developed later in concert with Waccamaw COG.

Draft coordination strategies and actions were developed at a meeting of human service providers on April 12, 2007, hosted by Waccamaw COG. This section presents the results of that meeting.

### 4.1 Coordination Strategies

The coordination strategies and actions were developed to address the transportation needs and issues confronting the region identified in Section 3. The primary issues and needs include:

- More service (more days, hours, geographic coverage)
- Centralized scheduling
- Regional application for §5309 funds
- Insurance coverage
- Explore mobility manager concept
- Address cost allocation among operators

Table 8 presents the strategies and actions developed for the region. Three strategic areas were developed which attempt to address at least one of the identified needs and issues. Some strategies address multiple issues. The three areas are:

- The *administrative* strategy is intended to reduce procedural and similar paper barriers (both perceived and actual) that inhibit coordination.
- The *information sharing/capacity management* strategy area is intended to facilitate the sharing of resources, such as vehicles.
- *Future operations planning* targets emerging needs by creating efficiencies from better resource sharing.

### 4.2 Recommended Actions

As shown in Table 8, there are strategies identified to alleviate gaps in transportation service. From these strategies several action items can be defined for the region to consider while developing projects.

**Table 8: Coordination Strategies (From the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting)**

Gaps	Administrative	Information Sharing/Capacity Management	Future Ops. Planning
4/12/2007	Any arrangements among agencies to coordinate expenses, pool resources, change procedures, expand eligibility.	Combining schedules, vehicle sharing, offering access to training programs, etc.	Service expansion, facilitating transfers between services, new service, etc.
Wait times an issue for people with health issues-no "seasonal constraints other than traffic congestion	---	Centralized scheduling system could reduce wait time.	---
Reliability	---	Centralized scheduling.	---
Program needs flexible hours.	---	---	Increase staffing & perhaps fleet size to increase hours.
Rural areas need more service.	A centralized system to delegate service throughout rural areas.	---	General Public Demand Response Service
Seniors above Medicaid threshold-need service	Grants to help subsidize.	---	---
Seniors have needs for trips to the grocery store, but lack mobility.	New Freedom grant will provide funding for non-medical trips.	Mobility Manager	---
Wait list (other need service)	---	Mobility Manager	Increase fleet size.
Vehicle replacement	---	---	Utilize State contract and/or leasing program
Overcrowding	---	---	Increase service
Insurance is an issue	Insurance pooling program.	---	---
Different pricing by RTA	A lead agency needs to be responsible for all pricing and its consistency.	---	---
Contracting is not possible for some programs	A centralized system is needed to sort out the program rules.	---	---
Inter-regional trips	---	Organized transfers among providers	Coordinate with other regional providers.

#### **4.2.1 Administrative Actions**

There are three action items under the Administrative Strategies for consideration.

1. Several issues regarding fares/user fees for services were raised during discussion that lead to the recognition that the region should examine fare policies altogether. Generally, fares are set to generate a certain level of revenue based on a percentage of operating expense and are critical to the financial health of transportation providers. New programs designed to reduce the expense to the user, such as voucher programs and distance-based fares (some are already in place), should be explored.
2. Related to fare policy, the agencies should examine eligibility requirements. Policies allowing non-program clients access to program vehicles would allow the system to take advantage of available capacity. Defining the user fee in that situation would be critical to the success of the policy. Expansion of eligibility for the use of ADA services and other human service programs to seniors and rural residents will improve mobility but not without a cost implication.
3. Any efforts to pool expenses among agencies will take advantage of economies of scale for items such as insurance, vehicle maintenance, driver training, drug and alcohol testing and employee benefit programs.

#### **4.2.2 Information Sharing/Capacity Management Actions**

Three Information Sharing/Capacity Management Actions are:

1. Define a scope for a mobility manager to create a clearinghouse for transportation information as well as provide someone to facilitate resource pooling. The region will need to find a willing agency, or there is the possibility of a call center or web-based Statewide Mobility Manager Program.
2. Manage driver and vehicles to better share resources by attempting to create an information resource or real-time scheduling function where providers will know what each has available in the way of capacity.
3. Coordinate transfers among RTAs to improve service on inter-regional trips.

#### **4.2.3 Future Operations Planning Actions**

Several of the gaps identified in the Waccamaw region simply require the expansion of services, fleets and/or driver pools. Actions under this category require additional resources for implementation. They include: a regionally coordinated application for capital funds potentially under FTA Section 5309; the introduction of general public demand response services into new areas on a limited basis until ridership warrants increased levels of service; improving wages for drivers to improve retention; and for the region to continue to take advantage of state contract and leasing programs for vehicles.

## **Section 5: Considerations for Implementation**

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The strategies and actions presented in Section 4 only set the stage for enhanced coordination. More is needed if those actions are to be converted into concrete steps. This section presents some ideas on how the region may go about converting actions into well-defined projects. “Project” will be the steps necessary to fulfill the strategies and actions.

Three areas of implementation will be addressed:

- Development of projects
- Prioritizing projects
- Carrying out projects

### **5.1 Considerations for Developing Projects**

If the actions and strategies in section 4 are to be implemented, more concrete steps are needed. These steps or “projects” need, obviously, to correspond to a given strategy and action. For example, the action to “rationalize performance and service standards among funding partners” under the “Administrative Strategies” in Table 6 needs specific steps or projects if the action is to be realized.

Some key steps in making an action into a project or projects would be:

1. Form a working group for the specific area.
2. Describe the desired end result.
3. Define the steps to achieve the end result.
4. Identify and take the first step.

#### **5.1.1 Form a Working Group**

Coordination, by definition, involves a collection of agencies or groups working toward a common end. Any effort to promote coordination needs to be achieved by mutual cooperation of the affected entities. A working group, facilitated by Waccamaw COG or another agency to tackle a given action, would be an important step in forming and executing implementation projects.

The working group might be formed based on the scope of activity to be undertaken. In the Waccamaw region the Coast RTA and WCTA have already provided service to many of the human service agencies in Horry and Williamsburg Counties, respectively. A cooperative effort to increase service to Georgetown County would be an excellent way to bring those agencies on-board.

The working group should be composed of stakeholder agencies and with persons who are committed to finding common ground and can be counted on to attend meetings as well as to carry out assignments outside regular meetings. As with any group working together, meetings should be documented with summaries distributed to all participants as soon after the meeting as possible.

### 5.1.2 Describe the End Result

This step clearly defines the goal or objective of the working group. It answers the question, “What are we trying to do?” For example, to develop a project that “rationalizes performance and service standards,” multiple outcomes can result such as:

- Develop common standard for on-vehicle ride times
- Create service on time performance criteria and standards
- Establish common driver qualifications
- Establish common insurance requirements
- Determine vehicle maintenance requirements.

A project might address one or a combination of these outcomes. The working group would decide which of these would be best to tackle first.

### 5.1.3 Define Steps to be taken

In developing common action, it typically requires a series of small steps to achieve a given result. For example, “establish common driver qualifications” would likely not be a question of agreeing to a set of standards. Each affected agency likely has a stake in its way of doing things. As such, addressing each unique circumstance will take methodological consideration. These steps become the project’s “work program.”

Using “driver qualifications” as an example, the following steps might be considered:

1. Define driver qualifications in use at each participating agency.
2. Determine the rationale for each qualification. For example, is a given qualification due to some special circumstance related to the type of riders carried?
3. Determine qualifications common to each agency. Which qualification areas are at odds? Does one agency require drivers to be 25 years of age while another 21 years?
4. Focus on areas of disagreement. For example, perhaps each agency has different age requirements, driver training regimens or drivers have ancillary duties besides driving.
5. Of the areas of disagreement, select the areas that are easiest to address.
6. Take each area in turn.

### 5.1.4 Identify and Take First Steps

Taking the first step may seem easy, but it might be the hardest one. Sometimes embarking on a difficult assignment causes procrastination. Setting deadlines, meeting dates, and making initial assignments can be helpful in avoiding first step delays.

## 5.2 Considerations for Prioritizing Projects

There may be several projects that address a specific action, or the region may want to tackle several actions at once. Either way, a region may be faced with a number of projects it wishes to pursue. As resources tend to be limited, only so much can be done. This section provides some ideas in how competing projects may be prioritized.

Developing project criteria is one way competing projects can be ranked in order of desired undertaking. Examples of criteria are:

- *Degree of project contention* - is this a project that is divisive and could be both time consuming and complicated to pursue? Depending on the importance of the project, it may be pursued alone or postponed in favor of easier pursuits.
- *Core versus peripheral issue* - is the project addressing a keystone issue or one that is relatively minor and has limited overall value? The scope of the project could dictate whether it is an action worth taking sooner or later. Generally projects with far-reaching results can have great pay-offs in advancing coordination or, if not successfully pursued, they can discourage future action.
- *Time* - is the project addressing an immediate and pressing issue or one that is more long term? Issues with immediate and significant impact may be more desirable than those that are long term in nature. For example, address the impact of rising fuel prices could be immediate, while addressing federal vehicle safety standards may have a longer time horizon with less tangible benefits.
- *Scope of Impact* - does the project impact a small inconsequential aspect of human service transportation or is more significant? The more significant the issue, the more challenging and the greater the potential rewards.
- *Scope of effort* - does the project tax the technical and time skills of the people involved? Would it require outside help in the form of a consultant or other outside expert? Far-reaching projects requiring significant effort may be challenging to pull off, though a successful outcome could be enormously beneficial.

### **5.3 Carrying Out Projects**

This section provides some information that may be useful as the region undertakes coordination projects. Some points to consider are:

- Look for analogous situations to the project being undertaken. It is possible some other agency has tackled the same or similar problem being addressed by the project. Some sources of information are:
  - Literature from the Transportation Research Board (TRB), the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), Easter Seals (through Project Action).
  - Presentations given at conferences of the above organizations as well as at State transit associations.
  - United We Ride website – [www.unitedweride.gov](http://www.unitedweride.gov)
- Peer agencies in other regions can be a good source of information and advice. Peer agency staff could either be invited to attend a meeting in the region, or the working group might take a field trip to the peer's place of work.
- Be willing to fail and learn.
- Find people who champion finding a solution to the issue at hand.
- Consider other outside resources such a state DOT or a consultant.

## **5.4 Project Evaluation Guidelines**

A major goal of the Coordination Plan is to establish a methodology to evaluate potential projects at the regional level so that limited resources are optimized. Based on the plan development process in the Waccamaw region, the following criteria should be considered when selecting projects.

1. Capital versus Operational Assistance – a central theme among the gaps and strategies for coordinated transportation in the Waccamaw region was to simply increase service. Both capital projects and operating assistance can serve as a method for accomplishing this objective whether the project proponent is increasing the fleet size or designing a project that enhances service hours or area. Capital projects tend to be less difficult to accommodate for an annual competitive funding process because they are one-time expenditures and create capacity for the funding program in the subsequent year. However, the region should consider projects involving operating assistance in cases where the proponent has established a sustainable local source of funding and/or combined a local source with matching dollars from another federal source. These projects should compare favorably with capital requests as long as they have a defined term of no more than three years of funding.
2. Projects that enhance reliability and schedule adherence of demand response services should receive a high rating. A cost allocation formula must be defined, but trip coordination efforts (real-time or otherwise) among the providers in the region could address this issue without major increases in fleet size. There is some level of unused capacity with the vehicles that are parked during the day in Myrtle Beach.
3. Projects that target new rural service and, more specifically, service in Georgetown County should receive favorable ratings in the evaluation process.
4. Projects that specifically target access to jobs. There are a number of routes in the region currently operated to connect individuals to jobs in Myrtle Beach especially seasonal jobs. However, the continued enhancement of these type of service is recommended to support tourism and the local economy.
5. Projects that relax eligibility requirements or increase the number of individuals eligible for service should be considered.
6. Many coordination efforts involve a perceived risk on the part of one or more agencies. For instance, the simple act of contracting out for transportation service requires an agency to relinquish control of customer service to a certain extent. Projects that essentially provide seed money for the first year of a new relationship between two agencies should be favorably considered. This type of arrangement at least removes the issue of using agency funds for what may be perceived as a risky endeavor. The project would give the contractor one year to exhibit its service capabilities and warrant use of agency funds for the arrangement in subsequent years.

## Appendix A: 2006 SCDOT Survey

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### *Waccamaw Regional Responses*

**South Carolina DOT Regional Coordination Plan  
Transportation Provider Survey**

SCDOT, in cooperation with your area Council of Governments (COG), is developing a regional transportation coordination plan. The purpose of the plan is to identify strategies for various providers of health and human service transportation to work together to create more efficient and effective services. This survey will aid in the development of this regional coordination plan.

Name of Agency/Service Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Person Completing Survey: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (for follow-up): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address (for follow-up): \_\_\_\_\_

Date Survey Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your organization's service area?  
To/from or within the following counties:

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the top four destinations served? (please be specific such XYZ Hospital or ABC Shopping Center)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What types of transportation services does your organization provide (either as an operator or a purchaser)? (check all that apply)

- On-demand/demand responsive  
 Fixed route, fixed schedule  
 Deviated (flexible) fixed route  
 User-side subsidy  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (specify)

4. Either measured in total service hours or miles, approximately how much service is provided by your organization for each service type?

On-demand/demand responsive \_\_\_\_\_ annual hours/miles (*circle one*)

Fixed route, fixed schedule \_\_\_\_\_ annual hours/miles (*circle one*)

Deviated (flexible) fixed route \_\_\_\_\_ annual hours/miles (*circle one*)

User-side subsidy \_\_\_\_\_ annual hours/miles (*circle one*)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (*specify*) \_\_\_\_\_ annual hours/miles (*circle one*)

5. What days and times is service provided? What are times are peak services operated during these days?

<u>Day of Week</u>	<u>Times of Service</u>	<u>Peak Service Times</u>
Monday to Friday	_____	_____
Saturday	_____	_____
Sunday	_____	_____

6. Please tell us about who uses your service.

Number of annual riders \_\_\_\_\_

Number of eligible clients  
(*may include people who don't ride often or regularly*) \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate number of daily trip denials \_\_\_\_\_

7. Please tell us about the type and number of passenger vehicles used to operate for service.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>
Large vehicles ( <i>30 or more seats</i> )	_____
Medium vehicles ( <i>16 to 29 seats</i> )	_____
Small vehicles ( <i>8 to 15 seats</i> )	_____
Automobiles/Minivans	_____
Other: _____ ( <i>specify</i> )	_____

Total passenger vehicles \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if my organization does not operate vehicles.

8. Which of these funding source related restrictions apply to the use of the vehicles used in your service (*check one*):

There are no restrictions; vehicles can serve general public

Vehicles can only serve elderly and/or disabled

Vehicles can only serve clients of a specific human service program

- Vehicles have a mix of restrictions depending on the funding source of that vehicle.
  - Vehicles can only serve \_\_\_\_\_ (*specify*)
9. Please tell us about the driver labor force. Please tell us whether they have other duties for your organization besides driving by indicating the percentage of time driving.

<u>Type of Driver</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent time driving</u>
Paid, full time	_____	_____
Paid, part time	_____	_____
Volunteer, full time	_____	_____
Volunteer, part time	_____	_____

- Check here if my organization does not have drivers.
10. Who schedule trips? Does that person(s) have other job duties (if yes, approximately what percent of time is done schedule versus the other duties)?
11. Tell us about the use of advanced technology to manage your operation. Which of these functions are supported through the use of computer and similar electronic systems? (*check all that apply*)

- Office (e.g., word processing, electronic spreadsheet)
- Scheduling
- Reservations
- Dispatching
- Mapping/Planning
- Specialty Accounting (bookkeeping, invoicing, etc.)
- Specialty Human Resource
- Vehicle maintenance and inventory
- Internet/ web based applications

12. How do you communicate with your drivers while they are on the road? (check all that apply)
- Cell Phones
  - Two-way radios
  - Combination of phones and radios
  - Do not communicate with drivers on the road

13. What is the annual human service transportation budget for your organization?

14. What methods are used to collect fares from riders?

- No fares are collected
- Fares are placed in money bags or money box
- Fares are deposited in a fare box
- Fares are billed to the rider via invoice
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (*specify*)

15. Do you currently coordinate efforts with other providers in area? If so, which areas:

- Grant admin
- Maintenance
- Training
- Marketing/Public information
- Operations
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (*specify*)

16. Which of these areas (from question 15) benefit your organization most? Least? Why?

Benefit Most:

Why?

Benefit Least (or not at all):

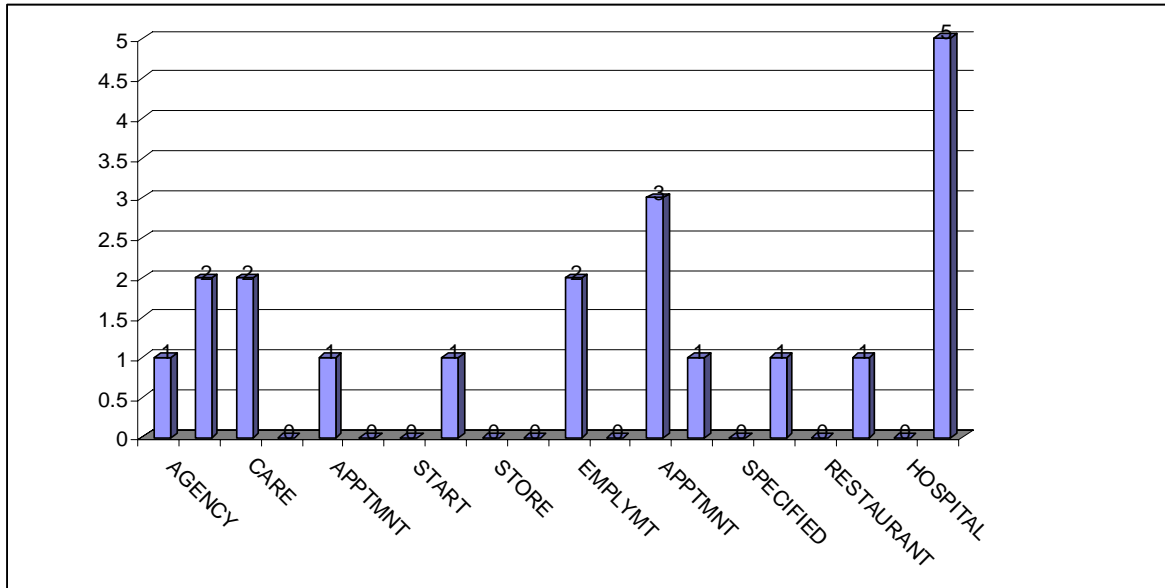
Why?

The pages that follow present responses to selected questions.

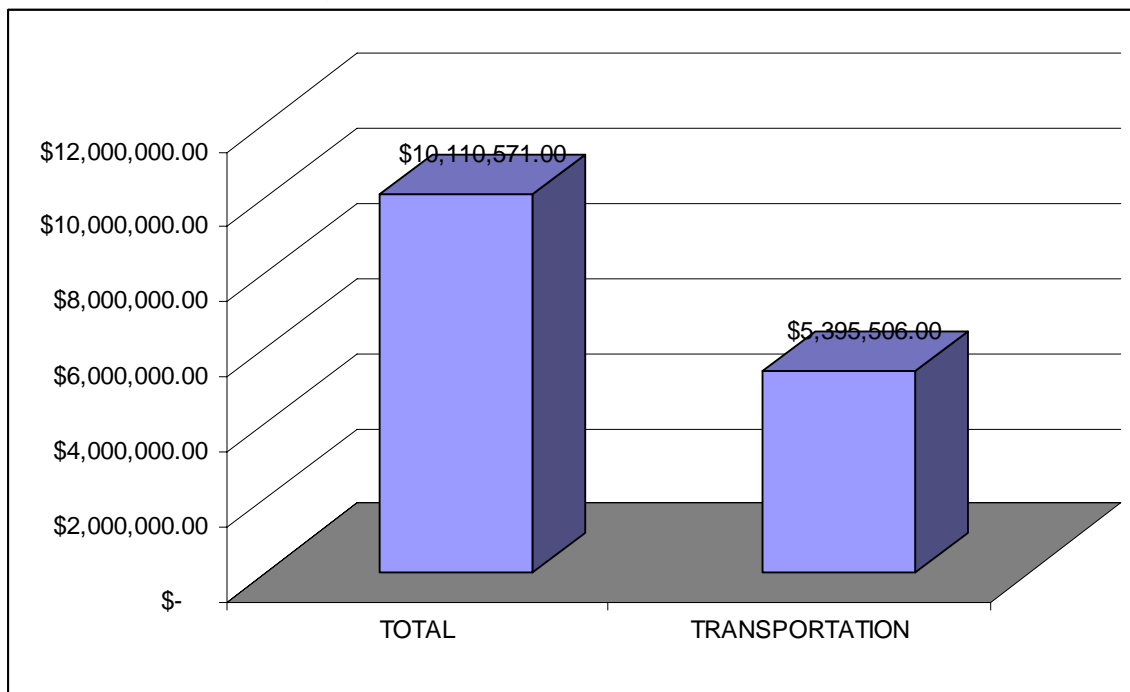
Q1.: Counties Served

Williamsburg, Horry and Georgetown

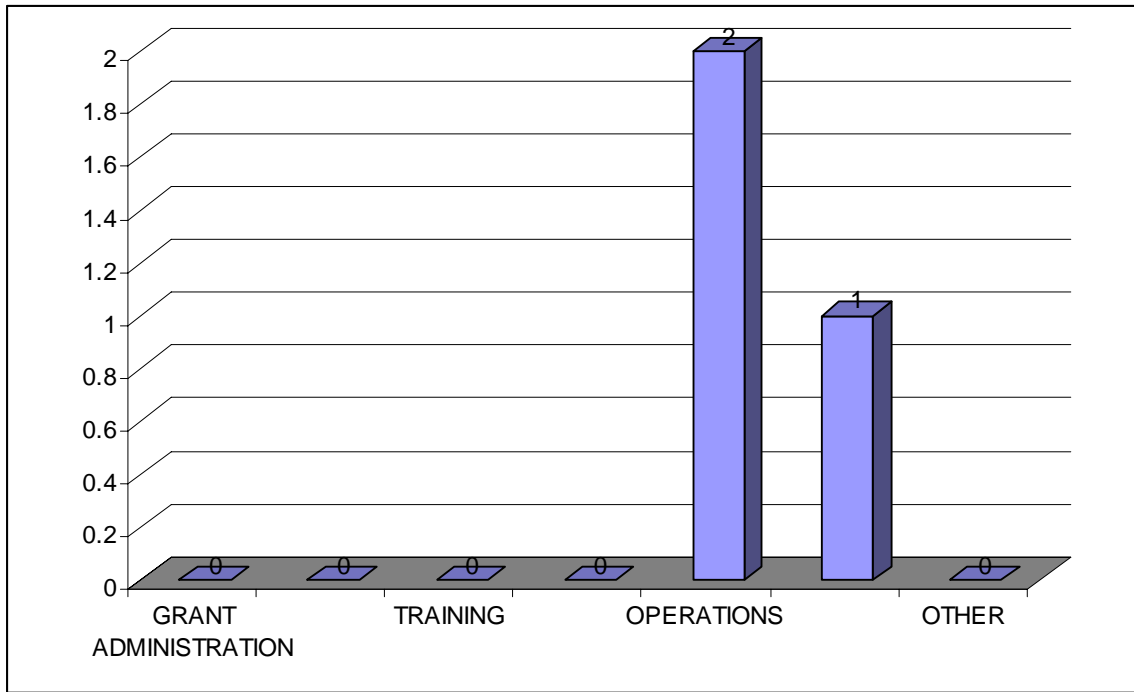
Q2.: Top Four Destinations Served



Q13.: Transportation Budget



Q16.: Areas of Coordination Interest



## Appendix B: Regional Meeting Summaries

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REGIONAL TRANSIT COORDINATION PLAN - WRCOG REGIONAL MEETING  
MEETING: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2006  
10:00 AM TO 11:30 AM at the WACCAMAW REGIONAL COUNCIL OF  
GOVERNMENTS

Staff Present: Brian Piascik, URS Corporation  
Amanda Rutherford, WRCOG  
Brenda J. Perryman, SCDOT Mass Transit  
David Burgess, SCDOT Planning Office  
Doug Frate, SCDOT Planning

Participants: Suzanne Jayroe, Baskervill Outreach  
Myers Rollins, Jr., Coast RTA  
Arthur Tisdale, Jr., WCDSNB  
Michael Burgess, Williamsburg Transit

Doug Frate (SCDOT) opened the meeting with a summary of the purpose of the coordination plans and some background on the related FTA Funding Programs. The two primary points were: that recipients of federal transportation funding from a number of US DOT and other Federal agencies are now allowed to use these funds to match other federal transportation funds for projects outlined in a conforming coordination plans; and, that SCDOT was now providing the framework with which each region in South Carolina will tailor a coordination plan for its region. Each plan would include the identification of transportation needs in the region, barriers to coordination and coordination strategies to meet the needs. Each Council of Government would serve as the lead agency in each region and become the recipient for Section 5310 (E&D Capital Funds), 5316 Job Access-Reverse Commute Program and 5317 New Freedoms Program.

From that point Brian Piascik (URS) facilitated a discussion about the agencies represented at the meeting. Highlights include:

- Georgetown Department of Disabilities – Elizabeth Krauss
- 250 families
- DSS funding

- Vocation Center – Georgetown
- Work Enclaves
- County Government Jobs – Recycling Center
  - Individual job placements
  - Group Homes – 1-2 vehicles
  - Horry/Williamsburg/Charleston
  - McClellanville – to open a group home

- WIA – funding – Workforce Investment Act – Capital Cost predominately

Run 1-2 vehicles to transport to individual  
Do it up to year  
Vehicle maintenance is an issue  
Fleet fueling  
Transportation  
Would like to contract for services?  
Can't expand services? – Need attendance to get funding

Michael Burgess – Williamsburg County Transit – 5311

Fixed route/demand response (book trips themselves)  
Adult Day Care – 4 daycare centers –COA – Meals on Wheels  
Medicaid – Department of Social Services  
Work site – Myrtle Beach & Williamsburg  
Disabilities – DSS training sites  
50 vehicles – fixed route – Logisticare  
Service area GPDR - \$20 round trip – vehicle varies  
Charleston on Thursday  
Columbia on Wednesday  
Insurance issues?  
Fuel purchased via State contract  
Maintenance performed in house

Arthur Tisdale – Williamsburg Department of Disabilities

Use WCTA for transportation to primary programs  
87 vehicles– all in use mostly at individual homes  
18 vehicles at center – maintenance (aged fleet)  
Provide daytime trips for medical, job site, home visits  
State/Medicaid for transportation  
Use local service centers to maintain vehicles  
Demand for individuals to outside employment and other purposes

Susie Jayroe – HUD/Adult Day Care Center

1 vehicle – Baskerville Outreach  
60 individuals – 9-3 only  
50 in apartment complex  
Horry County for doctors  
At capacity  
Use transit supervisor  
Provide trips to medical appointments  
Would like to get out of transportation  
Pawley's Island – Waccamaw  
Formed by Holy Cross  
Medical Clinic and Food Pantry  
In Georgetown County  
SS Block Grant fund daycare – 10 years  
Reimbursement

Bundle Foundation

Myers Rollins – Waccamaw RTA

22 hours/7 days/week

95 employees - \$4.3 million - \$3.4 operation cost

Fleet reduction – 85 vehicles down to 45 vehicles

Buses to vans

Fixed route/paratransit / I19

15 fixed route

Four daycares (adult) Waccamaw MH others

Medicaid – DHHS

Coordination

Growth of the region – 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest in State

A lot of needs

20-25 requests for new services

Developers/municipalities/school systems

Carolina Forest (Charter)

10,000 units

Shuttle service – CCU – students - \$300,000 from university

Farebox recovers – 26%

Run service from the university to the beach

Police identified crashes on US 501

Senior groups

Fleet not sufficient – local share not enough

Horry County Council – general funds only available through annual task force  
to ID a local funding- hopefully consider better company

Route serves between Georgetown/Horry County

Provide service to employees to Georgetown Medical Center and Waccamaw  
facility

Pay rates increasing

Non-traditional peak service

Myrtle Beach – Conway

Coordination with PDRTA – 11,700 miles/month - \$268,000

Economies of scale

Summertime – PDRTA seven routes to Myrtle Beach

Set up transfer point

Park-N-Ride – needs

Human Service

ADA/Paratransit – ¾ eligibility

Medicaid for Horry – PDRTA – Georgetown

5311 – program – vehicles – rural fixed

Senior centers

Paratransit – primarily inland

Geographic barriers – Loris, SC – T19 Survey

Barriers – funds are distributed differently

Disabilities money and slug to provide all services

REGIONAL TRANSIT COORDINATION PLAN - WRCOG REGIONAL MEETING  
 MEETING: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2007  
 10:00 AM TO 11:30 AM at the WACCAMAW REGIONAL COUNCIL OF  
 GOVERNMENTS

Staff Present: Doug Frate, SCDOT  
 Amy Lowe, WRCOG  
 Julie Hostak, WRCOG  
 David Burgess, SCDOT Planning  
 Brenda Perryman, SCDOT Mass Transit  
 Amanda Rutherford, WRCOG  
 Brian Piascik, URS Corporation

Participants: Ellen Leftwick, Horry County DSN  
 Debbie Council, Horry County DSN  
 Arthur Tisdale, Jr., Williamsburg County DSN  
 Suzanne Jayroe, Baskerville Outreach, Inc.  
 Margaret Marshall, Bureau of Aging Services  
 Elizabeth Krauss, Georgetown DSN  
 Perry Bethea, SC Vocational Rehab

Brian Piascik facilitated a group discussion to identify transportation gaps in the Waccamaw Region. The following table outlines the gaps based on type.

<i>Temporal</i>	<i>Geographic</i>	<i>Funding</i>
Wait times an issue for people with health issues-no "seasonal constraints other than traffic congestion	leave program b/c can't get to work (Conway & Georgetown =1,500 people 40 people per day served by Georgetown transit.	Waiting list (others need service)
reliability (or perceptions thereof)	Georgetown Public Transportation nor available.	overcrowding in vehicles
programs have flexible hours on a daily basis (end times fluctuate)	Rural areas of Horry County need service (RTA).	Georgetown Public transportation is not available
Shift issues employment (retail, fast food, service oriented)	Green Sea Floyd's w/ trip purpose of (medical, workshop, jobs. Fare is too high, \$5, quota 5 people per week	More info. About other agency contracts (detail about payments, reservations, etc..)
Dash operate until 5 pm	Inter-regional trips	Contracting services were not possible through existing RTA system
	Williamsburg County DSN- contracts wi Williamsburg County Transit, \$5k per for daily service.	RTA's different pricing

Appendix B: Regional Meeting Summaries

<i>Temporal</i>	<i>Geographic</i>	<i>Funding</i>
	Senior trips to grocery store , but general lack of mobility; pockets of isolation in rural areas.	Curb-curb vs higher level of service (DASH) (also CAT ADA complimentary service to fixed route).
		Individual pays for fare on Dash
		Seniors above Medicaid threshold-need service
		Vehicle replacement
		insurance on issue when X

**Miscellaneous Notes:**

Potential Strategy

5317 Could be used to fund more DAS Service in Horry or Other Counties.  
 Lease vs. own (other benefits of lease program is tem replacement vehicles and reasonable and reliable maintenance service.  
 Facilities replacement of old vehicles

To help with geographic issues, often can help overcome

- More funding
- Coordination scheduling
- Utilizing available capacity
- Utilizing similar program
- Pooling insurance and maintenance costs
- Coordinated scheduling

Pooling insurance at consolidated location

-Centralized provider

- Reliability
- Customers service
- Client privileged
- Centralized mobility manager
- Coordination of training
- Coordination of 1<sup>st</sup> Aid training and confidential training etc..

Vocational Rehab – fleet of vehicles

Need flexibility but would love to contract services  
 Clients need transporation after they leave program  
 Conway  
     1500 people  
     40 training centers

Georgetown DSN - \$30,000 grant – COAST RTA

W.-DSN Contract – WCRTA - \$45,000 – 7 days – 7-8 vehicles

Horry County

Facility in Loris and Conway

Drivers start from home

Similar to vanpool

Georgetown County Bureau of Aging

6 congregate site

12 vehicles

6 leased – 15 passenger

6 owned by the county

Budget Control Board – Fuel

SC Fleet Services – temporary replacement

7 vehicle for day vehicles

3 - CTH

10 vehicle

REGIONAL TRANSIT COORDINATION PLAN - WRCOG REGIONAL MEETING  
MEETING: WEDNESDAY, March 28, 2007  
10:00 AM TO 11:30 AM at the WACCAMAW REGIONAL COUNCIL OF  
GOVERNMENTS

Staff Present: Amy Lowe, WRCOG  
Julie Hostak, WRCOG  
Doug Frate, SCDOT  
Brian Piascik, URS Corporation

Participants: Joyce Kraus, Horry County Disabilities & Special Needs  
Grace Gifford, USITN  
Margaret Marshall, Bureau of Aging  
Charles Spain, Waccamaw RTA  
Arthur Tisdale, Jr., Williamsburg DSN  
Michael Burgess, Williamsburg Transit

The primary focus of this meeting was to develop strategies for coordination that address gaps identified in the previous meeting. The result of the discussion facilitated by Brian Piascik appears in Table 8 on page 24.

## Appendix C: Technology Resources for Transportation Coordination

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### Technology Resources for Transportation Service Coordination

Technological resources that could be used to aid in transportation service coordination fall into the following categories:

- Communications
- Dispatching/Scheduling
- Fare Collection
- Vehicle/Component Monitoring
- Traveler Information
- Technology Standardization

Coordination considerations and benefits for each of the resource categories are presented, along with a description of specific technologies. Technologies were identified that appear to have greater application for small or rural transportation providers, as these are the bulk of transportation providers in South Carolina.

Consideration was also given to recent recommendations from the Federal Transit Administration Office of Mobility Innovation and the Intelligent Transportation System America (ITSA)/American Public Transportation Association (APTA) ITS Public Transportation Forum regarding ITS application and deployment for transportation operators. In a joint research effort, a set of core transit technologies has been identified for different transit modes. For human service providers, the following six technologies are proposed for ITS deployment:

- Automatic Vehicle Location
- Communications
- Traveler Information
- Data Management/GIS
- Computer-Aided Dispatch and Scheduling
- Maintenance Management

Two additional secondary technologies are suggested for implementation once the core technologies have been deployed: electronic fare payment and automated service request systems.<sup>6</sup>

#### Communications

Providing a means of communication among vehicle operators and central office staff for a transportation service provider is an essential function. Wireless communications technologies have been advancing quickly, with greater levels of

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<sup>6</sup> *Transit Core Suite of Technologies*, T3 Presentation, May 22, 2007.

data transmission occurring through wireless communications devices such as cellular telephones, personal digital assistants and portable, laptop computer systems. For a transportation provider, a uniform platform for communications is necessary. Sharing a common platform between different systems can aid service coordination by providing a means to communicate dispatching and service needs between different systems. It can also be an indispensable asset in responding to emergency situations. A traditional communication device used by transportation providers is a two-way radio; however, the advances in wireless communications technology now provide the transmission of both voice and digital data.

*Advanced Communications Systems* - Advance communications systems combine digital technology with trunked radio systems. The trunked radio system allows a system to use the best available frequency for transmission instead of using a preset frequency.

*Mobile Data Terminals (MDT)* - MDTs are on-board computer systems. Data is transmitted between the operators and the central office. MDTs provide real-time information to operators such as traffic conditions, weather, routing, and client information. The terminals can also provide electronic data collection. A strength of MDTs is that operators can access data when it safe to do so and it reduces frequent and distracting verbal communications.

*Cellular Digital Packet Data (CDPD)* - CDPD sends digital information via wireless communications to provide real-time information to travelers and operators. CDPD technology works in concert with Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), Geographic Positioning System (GPS), and MDTs.

#### Dispatching/Scheduling

For rural, paratransit, and other on-demand transportation services, increased service productivity is achieved through efficient scheduling and dispatching of the service to patrons. The benefits of more efficient service delivery through use of reservations, scheduling, and dispatching software become evident when more patrons can be served resulting in better performance measures such as more trips per hour, more trips per mile, and lower costs per trip. Automated dispatching and scheduling, combined with automatic vehicle location, CDPD, and MDTs, is a powerful tool to facilitate service coordination within and between service providers.

*Computer Aided Dispatching (CAD)* - CAD is software used to coordinate and automate on-demand transit services. The software can aid in providing shorter response times and providing more efficient service operations. CAD software can be utilized by itself or in combination with other wireless communications technologies such as MDTs and automatic vehicle location. Costs for CAD range from \$75,000 to \$245,000 for smaller systems.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> TCRP Report 84, page 14.

*Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL)* - AVL is used to track transit vehicles using geographic positioning devices such as Geographic Positioning Systems (GPS). AVL can benefit coordination of services by supporting more efficient trip planning. AVL indicates vehicle locations, which can be essential for responding to security and safety problems. AVL can also provide a means for passengers to identify wait times via web-based, online tool. Costs for AVL range from \$400 to \$2,000 per system on a vehicle plus \$10,000 for central operating system.<sup>8</sup>

### Fare Collection

For large urban transit systems, fare collection is most often administered through non-cash media (tokens, fare cards, or smart cards), which are purchased from the provider or through vending machines. The greatest benefit of using non-cash media is that it streamlines accounting and reduces the problems inherent with a cash-based system. Within travel regions, using a single fare collection system can facilitate service coordination between systems.

*Automatic Fare Collection (AFC) and Reconciliation Systems* - AFC systems count fares as they are collected, which allows automated reconciliation. AFC reduces errors in collection, reconciliation, and accounting. An AFC system is essential for areas with interoperable agreements to distribute funds, using common fare media.

*Electronic Fare Collection* - Electronic fare collection is facilitated by use of magnetic or smart cards for fare media. Electronic fare collection eliminates the need for cash in system and provides a means to collect data on ridership electronically. Electronic fare collection requires significant capital investment. An electronic fare box may cost \$10,000 per vehicle. A smart-card reader can add an additional \$2,000 to \$3,000 per fare box. A centralized management system ranges in cost from \$100,000 to \$200,000, and ticket vending machine may cost \$30,000 per unit.<sup>9</sup>

### Vehicle/Component Monitoring

Automated vehicle/component monitoring includes remote sensing of operating vehicles. By identifying potential problems real-time, component monitoring assists in maintaining vehicles and keeping more vehicles operating.

### Patron/Traveler Information

Disseminating information for transportation service patrons or travelers can be automated in many ways. Increasingly, transit systems have interactive websites, where transit information may be exchanged and patrons may access customer service centers to plan trips or purchase fare media. A uniform platform for information across service providers can increase efficiencies from the user's perspective, so that a user may coordinate trips between providers or across jurisdictions in the most expedient manner.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> TCRP Report 84, page 16.

*Automated Traveler Information System (ATIS)* - ATIS includes the entire range of electronically transmitted transit information. An inherent strength is that ATIS permits information to be accessible at any time. The means to distribute information through ATIS are broad, via cellular telephones, internet, variable message signs, personal digital assistants and others.

Technology Standardization

Using the same infrastructure across various systems—such as among transportation service providers, local government agencies, and departments of transportation—is called ITS integration. The power of ITS integration is that it establishes a common control which can be used for coordinating service operations, communicating between agencies and organizations, and implementing programs like transit signal priority or preemption. When all organizations are using the same technology platform within a geographic area, the exchange of information and data can be accomplished more readily. Technology training and ongoing operations and maintenance of the technology can be shared among the organizations, thereby reducing costs.

## Resources

Transportation Research Board, *Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 84, E-Transit: Electronic Business Strategies for Public Transportation, Volume 6, Strategies to Expand and Improve Deployment of ITS in Rural Transit Systems*, Washington, D.C., 2005

Dan Boyle & Associates, *Technology/Software Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan for Antelope Valley Transit Authority*, February 18, 2004.

*Transit Core Suite of Technologies*, T3 Presentation, May 22, 2007.

U.S. Department of Transportation ITS Website: [www.its.dot.gov/index.htm](http://www.its.dot.gov/index.htm).