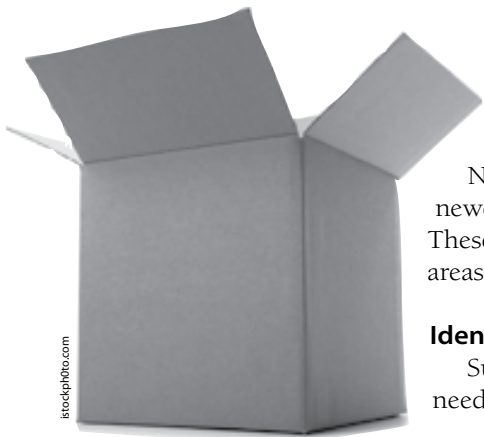


FEATURE

Coordinating Rural Transit Requires Thinking Outside the Box

By John Elias

People rarely limit their destinations to political boundaries. Kansas pilot programs ask: Why should rural transit services be that way?



Regional transit coordination pilots under the direction of Lisa Koch at KDOT and facilitated by Joel Wright and Kathleen Harnish-Doucet of TeamTech, Inc., have yielded significant results in little more than a year. In our last issue we detailed how the Flint Hills and North Central pilots will begin coordinated dispatch this summer while the newest pilot in Southwest Kansas is seeking to emulate those two success stories. These Kansas pilots have developed a road map for coordinating transit in rural areas. What process should other communities follow?

Identifying the region

Successful regional coordination requires an understanding of the travel needs in an area. People are rarely limited to city or county boundaries in the

Continued on page 2

FEATURE

Kansas City Develops Framework for Senior Mobility

By Matthew Barnett

Two foundations, the Jewish Heritage Foundation and the Mr. Goodcents

Foundation, investigated the question: "What would be needed to allow our grandparents, parents, and in time, us to age in place?" In 2008, the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership at the University of Missouri – Kansas City joined these two foundations to take the question a big step further to develop a framework for senior mobility in metropolitan Kansas City. The goal for the Kansas City

Framework for Senior Mobility initiative is to prepare a research-based, integrated regional framework that will engage a wide variety of community agencies and service providers in an integrated approach to address the long-term mobility needs of seniors throughout the Kansas City metro region.

The 65 and older population is growing
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Kansas pilots for transit coordination *Continued from page 1*

places they need to go. The Kansas process begins by determining the transit region through a broad market analysis of employment, education, human service and medical trip generators and destinations. A wide view of a transit market maps the relationships between:

- Journey-to-work patterns.
- Major employers.
- Population density.
- Regional medical centers and other medical care services (or their absence).
- Colleges, trade schools and educational centers.

The process establishes a transit “catchment area” of communities in a region with similar travel patterns and identifies the communities that may benefit from coordinated transit in the pilot areas. The KU Transportation Center has provided the data collection and analysis to support this step in the process. Armed with an idea of regional travel patterns, organizers can reach out to stakeholders to try to bring together parties interested in better serving the region through coordinated transit.

Who should be included?

The Kansas process depends on local leaders for its success. Market analysis can show the optimal service area but regional coordination cannot succeed without local leadership. The process seeks to involve interested parties in the catchment area early-on through personal visits and meetings. Interested parties include:

- Area transit agencies.
- Other agencies with transportation (e.g., centers for aging or developmental disabilities).
- County/city commissioners.

Stakeholders in a region may see the need for coordinated transit, simply want to make a difference for the mobility needs of the community or wonder how coordination can better serve local residents.

One Year Timeline

Build the Case

- Work on understanding a regional transit concept
- Develop an appreciation for central dispatch benefits
- Identify transit needs in the region

Ask: What do we have?

- Current inventory of vehicles
- Case studies – best practices
- Current cost of operations

Develop Elements of a New Vision

- Future budget for regional plan
- Fare plan
- Coordinated route plan
- Plan for contracted services
- Governance plan
- Communication plan
- Evaluation plan

The involvement of local transit providers is critical to the success of regional coordination. KDOT and Team Tech identified interested parties and made face-to-face connections with as many of those as possible to define the goals of regional coordination before early regional meetings were held.

In regional meetings all stakeholders were invited to discuss the goals of regional coordination and work through concerns. Early efforts should be made to combat the fear of change and develop a different concept of what rural transit could look like. In many communities transit is delivered by scheduled dial-a-ride vans, functioning like a taxi for many users. The coordination planning process encourages stakeholders to see the benefits of regionally marketed transit providing

service to current mobility-limited populations as well as expanding service to the general public.

Establish realistic timelines

After establishing the need and area for coordination and inviting stakeholders to envision a regional approach, KDOT and Team Tech established timelines for inventory and exploration. Each transit provider was tasked with sharing vehicle and route inventories. The process realizes that effective coordination builds on the successes of the present. Transit providers and agencies with transportation functions are encouraged to bring their governing rules and regulations to discussions so that the collaboration can take what works best in the region and incorporate it a new coordinated plan. Each person needs to know his or her assignments, with follow-up to meet the timeline.

Committees can do it!

When stakeholders have an inventory and

Sources

- Interviews: Joel Wright and Kathleen Harnish-Doucet, Team Tech/KS Collaborative; Lisa Koch, KS DOT.
- Peer Exchange Report: “Effective Practices in Human Services Transportation Coordination,” http://planning.dot.gov/Peer/Washington/seattle-providence_2009.asp.

understanding of the current transit network, the real work can begin. Committees are then established to get people closer to the critical transit issues in their region and divide up the work. Periodic committee presentations to the group as a whole can help build a regional consensus about how to move forward.

Stakeholders are chosen for committees based on interest and experience with an understanding that each committee member has limited time and may have a large distance to cover to attend meetings.

Committees must determine regional policies for:

- Fare collection.
- Coordinating funding streams.
- Creating budgets fair to all parties.

Some services may collect fares, a nominal fee or nothing at all. Fare committees must investigate regional fare policies make recommendations for a combined approach that works. Each agency and community will have its own funding streams and method for allocating transit funding.

Committees must determine the fairest method to receive and allocate transit funding through a new regional budget. After committees investigate the current practice in the region and review case studies from successful efforts across the nation, they make recommendations to the larger group.

In the end, the regional group may need to begin with a phased roll-out. Some transit agencies may be equipped to switch to a regional model more quickly than others while some may wish to see the success of a smaller scale first phase before opting to join in. A phased approach allows coordinated efforts to start small with the most enthusiastic agencies, providing a solid foundation to build regional coordination.

Lessons learned

The Kansas process provides a model for rural transit coordination on a regional scale. Initial success in the North Central and Flint Hills pilot programs depended on stakeholder support and initial groundwork of the coordinating team. Transit providers who see the value of coordination are the key to success, according to Wright.

Other key lessons include:

- Transit provider buy-in.
- Efficient, customer friendly centralized dispatch.
- Coordinated advertising.
- Maintain personal touch.
- City/county commissioner support.

Regional coordination can use centralized dispatch as a tool to gain the support of transit providers, encourage city and county commissioners to see the value of coordination and use those early supporters as enthusiastic phase-one adopters of regional coordination. Their success will encourage others to join in the collaboration and build a strong regional transit system that gets people where they need to go.

Human Service Transit Coordination: A Recap

In 2005 under SAFETEA-LU, transit agencies that received Section 5310, 5316 or 5317 funds were required to develop Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plans. These plans sought to minimize duplication of service, encourage coordination and enhance transportation across regions. Regional coordination efforts can use the data and connections made during coordination planning to inform and strengthen collaborative efforts.

The Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration hosted two roundtables in 2009 to share the lessons learned from coordination planning across the nation. Just as participants in the Kansas regional pilots learned, coordination planning groups across the US found their greatest challenges were coordinating providers with different missions. Some serve elderly individuals while others provide job access. Developing a coordinated mission involves sharing information and establishing a dialogue, as the Kansas process shows.

Public transit-human service transportation coordination also allows human service transportation providers who may lack the staff or expertise for long-range transportation planning to pool their efforts and develop a regional vision. Regional coordination efforts should use coordination plans to establish areas of overlap and areas of strength.

For more information on coordination planning contact Lisa Koch, Kansas DOT Public Transportation Manager, at Lisak@ksdot.org or call (785) 296-4907.

Market analyses can show the optimal service area but regional coordination cannot succeed without local leadership. Transit providers who see the value of coordination are the key to success.

KC senior mobility *Continued from page 1*

and will continue to grow in cities nationwide, including Kansas City. Over the next two decades, the 65 and older population in Kansas City is projected to grow from 10 percent to 20 percent of the total population. Seniors may have challenges that keep them from having the mobility they once had; the desired outcome of the framework is for all seniors in the region to have the degree of mobility that ensures access to a reasonable quality of life.

Framework goals

Four over-arching framework goals were developed after consultation with a variety of stakeholders plus research done with the Community Advisory Council (CAC), set up by the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership.

1. Regional leadership and governance capacity. The long-term goal (10 years) is to have a credible and effective regional leadership system that exists to ensure progress toward accomplishing the region's vision for senior mobility. Intermediate goals (3-5 years) are to have an established regional system that works together across political and geographic boundaries to share resources and engage in planning and development, have an established leadership structure, and have a standard process for implementing new policies and plans for seniors and senior mobility for all local and regional governments in the KC metro region.

2. Build public and political will across the KC metro region to effectively address senior mobility needs. The long-term goal for this measure is to have 80 percent of all voters in the KC metro region aware of and in support of the need to address the mobility of the region's seniors. Intermediate goals for this measure are to have 40 percent of all voters aware of the need to address the issue of senior



The desired outcome of the framework is for all seniors in the region to have the degree of mobility that ensures access to a reasonable quality of life.

mobility and have 70 percent of all local elected officials aware of the issue of senior mobility and recognize the need to prepare to meet the mobility needs of those seniors.

3. Grow and develop system capacity to assess and address evolving senior mobility needs. The long-term goal for this measure is to have a developed, sustainable infrastructure and system by which to monitor and respond to the changing needs and interests of all who are part of the senior mobility "system."

There are five intermediate goals for this measure:

a) The first is to use the framework research and recommendations to inform Mid-America Regional Council's (MARC's) Transportation Outlook 2040 plan about issues facing the mobility and transportation of seniors.

b) The second is to have private philanthropic and public sources of funds available to support the ongoing community research and database development that will serve as a resource for senior service providers and policy makers.

c) The third is to have a high quality Web-based senior mobility resource and

referral system in place and operating effectively to assist system stakeholders to gather information and meet their mobility-related needs.

4) The fourth is to have an existing information utility and infrastructure that enables effective ongoing planning, evaluation and communication.

5) The final intermediate goal for this measure is to have senior mobility leaders complete a policy paper that fully examines and presents for policy makers' consideration a set of high-potential options for effectively funding and financing a system to ensure senior mobility throughout the region.

4. Develop and institutionalize community-level policy evaluation,

planning and development. The long-term goal for this measure is 70 percent of the metropolitan communities in the Kansas City metro region to have developed and adopted a 2030 senior mobility policy and plan to ensure their community will address the basic mobility needs of their seniors. The intermediate goals are to have 70 percent of municipal and county planning officials aware of the issue of senior mobility and recognize that there is a need to prepare to meet the mobility needs of those seniors, 50 percent of all KC communities to have taken at least initial steps to begin to address the mobility needs of seniors living in their jurisdiction, and 30 percent of the metropolitan communities in the KC metro region to have initiated the planning and policy development process necessary to address senior mobility in their communities.

Outreach was key to effectiveness

Jim Courtney, Executive Director of the Mr. Goodcents Foundation, said that the Framework's uniqueness is found in the approach of the project. "We're engaging

communities and seniors in the process and building solutions that work for each community, instead of providing an answer that doesn't fit," he said. A surprise and big help to the project was the feedback provided by seniors in the Senior Focus Groups. "Seniors often travel great distances to receive medical treatments and to be with friends and family. Seniors taught us that the 'ride' is only part of the battle to be mobile—carrying packages, identifying products on shelves, narrow aisles, even the layout of public rest rooms can limit mobility," Courtney said.

The goals of the Framework focus on five counties in the Kansas City Region that include rural, suburban and urban populations of seniors. After seeing the results from the Framework thus far, Courtney believes that the Framework has a great transferable template for other cities.

"Because the Framework is designed to support existing processes and efforts

at the local level and was done with rural, suburban and urban components, it is our belief the Framework is highly transferable to other communities, especially smaller communities," Courtney said. All the Framework needs is local demographics, service options and focus group input.

"The reasons smaller communities are excellent locations for [developing a senior mobility] framework include: more easily known demographics of seniors, places seniors commonly go are more easily defined, and solution size is often easier to implement and sustain in terms of resources needed," Courtney said.

What's next?

The Greater Kansas City Framework for Senior Mobility identifies partnerships and research done to start developing a metropolitan wide system for senior mobility. The Framework is being incorporated into the Kansas City region's

Long-Range Transportation Plan (Outlook 2040), the region's Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Plan, and local plans. Part of the research done shows the travel patterns of seniors in the region's different cities and towns. As the research continues for this project, recommendations may change and adapt to newer findings.

Kansas City's Framework could be used as a template for your community in addressing senior mobility. If you are interested in downloading the Framework PDF, it can be found on the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership's Web site at the link below.

Source

- "Greater Kansas City Framework for Senior Mobility." PDF. Accessed April 26, 2010. <http://bloch.umkc.edu/mwcnl/SeniorMobility/Framework%20for%20Senior%20Mobility%20-%202010-3-10.pdf>

SAFETY

Group Decision Making: High Ground, Measuring to Manage, Deciding How to Decide

By Erik Berg

Running a transit system requires good group decision making. No system, whether large urban, small urban, or rural makes choices about service, revenue, and purchasing in a vacuum. Transit boards must be consulted, public input

gathered, and financial resources accounted for. Therefore, transit managers must be equipped with tools that will foster good group decisions.

As a speaker and author on good group decision making, Craig Freshly has published a series of group decision tips that can be a resource for transit system managers. The following tips from *Good Group Decisions—the High Ground, Measuring to Manage, and Deciding How to Decide* have been republished with permission and are the first in a series of tips we will be providing for transit managers.

Stay on high ground

Decision-making groups often get bogged down in details (who should do what by

when and how) and fail to stay on the high ground (strategic direction and guiding policies). The group as a whole has the unique perspective of seeing all that the organization is doing, all the opportunities, and all the threats. It is a view from the hilltop. An individual group member has the unique perspective of seeing the details on the ground and has the best sense of how to actually implement policies in the field.

Practical Tip: As a group responsible for establishing plans and policies, consider the big picture and make high-level decisions that guide implementation. Resist the temptation to dictate details. Encourage the group as a whole to stay on the high ground and trust individuals to handle the trenches.

Measure to manage

In principle, to manage any activity—to know what to do more of, less of, and what to do differently—you need to be able to measure it. Ask: "How is it going?" And to measure any activity you need a measuring stick; something against which to compare.

Some call it "benchmarking," where progress is compared to:

- A reference group of similar activities or organizations (like an average or median),

- One's own past performance (like how you did last year, or over the past several years), or,

- A quantifiable goal (like a fund-raising thermometer/sign posted in front of the building). Without anything to compare

continued on next page

Groups often get bogged down in details (who should do what by when) and fail to stay on the high ground.

Group decision making *Continued from page 4*

against, you cannot actually say anything about the success of an activity or how to manage it for greater success.

Practical Tip: When your group decides on a new activity or policy, decide how you will know if it is successful. Set a goal. Be specific. Write it in such a way that you will be able to know if you achieved it. If possible, state the goal relative to the performance of other similar groups or activities, or relative to your own group's past performance.

Measuring progress not only helps you manage future activities, it encourages better performance.

Decide how to decide

In principle, when parties cannot agree on an issue, the next peaceful step is for them to decide how they are

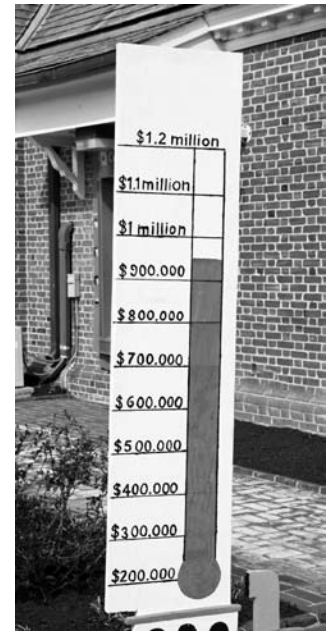
going to decide the issue. For instance, "We can't agree on the floor plan for the new building, so we're going to spend time on this at our next meeting, hear both sides, and vote. Is that okay with everyone?" If everyone can agree on how the thorny issue will be decided, that's progress toward agreement. When we send something to a committee or say something like, "Let's ask Louise and let her decide," we are making a decision about how to decide.

When diplomats or politicians spend time on meeting arrangements, seating plans, and the details of meeting agendas—the conditions under which the parties agree to meet—they are really deciding how they will decide. They are building agreement.

Practical Tip: When it seems like you are stuck and cannot decide something, at least decide how you will decide. Name a next step that moves you in the direction of eventual agreement. Make a plan for a future discussion and vote, send it to a small group or committee with a specific charge, or name a third-party decider.

To learn more about good group decision making, see the following sources for this article:

- Freshley, Craig. "The Wisdom of Group Decisions". Good Group Decisions: Brunswick, Maine. 2010.
- <http://www.goodgroupdecisions.com>.



Groups make good decisions when they have clearly-articulated and tracked goals, much like you see in fund-raising campaigns.

MANAGEMENT

It is Rare... "State of Good Repair"

By John Elias



After 10 years Metro has seen its maintenance and replacement part costs become more predictable and ... buses last longer and cost less to maintain.

Maintaining transit vehicles in a State of Good Repair (SGR) has become a major initiative for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). High-publicity rail accidents and increases in maintenance expense brought the state of our nation's transit vehicles into the news in the past year. While FTA efforts for SGR in the rail sector get most of the publicity, the agency is also pursuing SGR initiatives in small urban and rural transit. Research into SGR and the experience of some forward-thinking transit agencies has shown that preventative maintenance can improve fleet SGR, level maintenance costs over time, and improve efficiency while lengthening the service life of vehicles.

In response to concerns about safety and efficiency, the Federal Transit Administration emphasizes State of Good Repair in its 2010 formula and discretionary grant funding programs. FTA recently announced an additional \$775 million in unallocated discretionary 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities grants to support State of Good Repair.

Learning from success

FTA Formula Funds can have a dramatic effect on SGR efforts. Replacing old buses and vans that have exceeded

useful life with new rolling stock brings antiquated fleets to the state of the art in efficiency and safety. New rolling stock can serve five times as many miles between breakdowns as older buses. But which agencies deserve the limited funds?

The State of Iowa developed a comprehensive vehicle scoring system to allocate statewide funds for bus replacement as part of its Public Transit Management System (PTMS). A task force ranked each of the more than 1,600 transit vehicles across the state. The task force rejected bus condition as a standard in favor of vehicle miles and age to establish a “useful life” for each vehicle; for example, seven years and 200,000 miles for body-on-chassis buses. Each vehicle is then assigned one point for every 3,500 miles above its useful life mileage and another point for each

month over its useful life age. Through its scoring, Iowa DOT gains a better understanding of the state of vehicles and can make informed decisions about where to allocate Transportation Improvement Funds for bus replacement.

In 2000, St. Louis’s Metro Transit recognized that its response to maintenance costs and worker/customer satisfaction needed a new approach. At that time fleet maintenance focused on responding to problems and vehicles were operated until they failed. Maintenance times were long and costs were high. To address these inefficiencies, Metro Maintenance examined

its policies and also the suggested maintenance for each vehicle’s manufacturer. Metro decided to focus on a Life Cycle approach with mandatory maintenance at scheduled intervals for all its paratransit vans, buses and light rail cars. After 10 years Metro has seen its maintenance and

By focusing on scheduled parts replacement, parts inventory staff developed a predictable budget and maintenance staff no longer had to wait for parts to be delivered.

Steps toward a State of Good Repair

Transit managers who wish to pursue Life Cycle Maintenance should:

- Identify vehicle manufacturer service requirements.
- Create an schedule matrix for tune-ups, drive train and all maintenance.
- Establish quality check points in between scheduled maintenance.
- Establish mechanic buy-in.
- Perform maintenance regardless of need.

replacement part costs become more predictable, and has increased the length of vehicle useful life and improved maintenance productivity. Buses last longer and cost less to maintain through Life Cycle preventative maintenance.

Steps for transit managers

Life Cycle preventative maintenance requires constant attention and monitoring. St. Louis Metro realized early that preventative maintenance can save money by reducing vehicle down time while increasing technician efficiency versus reactive maintenance. The Metro’s Life Cycle approach includes pre-programmed tune-ups and minor scheduled maintenance at 50,000 mile intervals and comprehensive body and minor drive train scheduled repairs at 100,000 mile intervals whether the parts require replacement or not. By focusing on scheduled part replacement, parts inventory staff developed a predictable budget and maintenance staff no longer had to wait for parts to be delivered, speeding repair times. The parts were already waiting when the bus arrived for its scheduled maintenance.

One crucial element of the Metro maintenance plan was mechanic buy-in. Maintenance staff worked hard to ensure mechanics understood preventative maintenance goals and were on board with the new policies.

Metro found that by focusing on State of Good Repair it was able to increase the service life of its vehicles while maintaining safe and efficient service at lower, more predictable costs. FTA funding may provide an incentive to replace transit vehicles with new, safer buses. A vigilant Life Cycle approach to bus maintenance can ensure buses, both new and old, maintain a State of Good Repair.

Sources

- Presentation: Carl Thiessen, St. Louis Metro. FTA Region VII training session March, 2010.
- Brad Miller Testimony: <http://www.apta.com/gap/testimony/2010/Pages/testimony100326.aspx?Site=MyAPTA>.
- Grisselle Centeno, Rajesh Chaudhary, and Paula Lopez. Developing Standard Times for Repair Activities for Transit Vehicles: A Systematic Approach. Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board, No. 1927, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies, Washington, D.C., 2005, pp. 112–122.
- State of Good Repair Roundtable: http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/about_FTA_10440.html.

Marketing Transit on a Dime

By Erik Berg

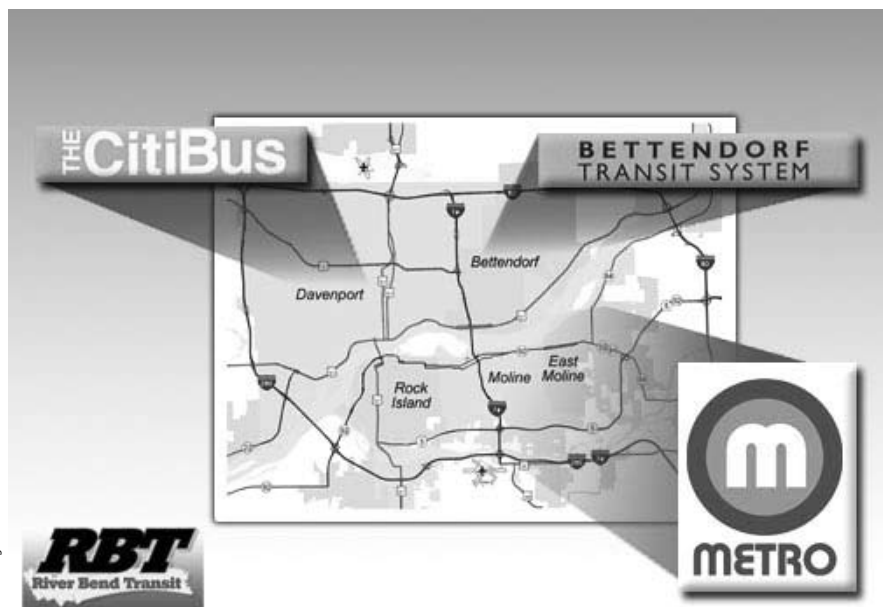
An MPO works with four agencies in Iowa's Quad Cities to market their programs.

Creativity, not dollars, drives marketing efforts in the Quad Cities of Iowa and Illinois. The metro's three Iowa systems, and a fourth in Illinois, are enjoying a thriving Bike & Bus program, new advertising revenue, strong college student ridership, a popular monthly pass good on three transit providers, and an inter-system Web site that serves as a one-stop shop for transit information. All of these programs have been created using little to no funding except for staff time, serving as an example of how small and rural transit systems can market themselves with few resources.

Multiple cities, multiple transit agencies

Becky Passman is the point-person for marketing these systems. As transit projects manager for the Bi-State Regional Commission, which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Quad Cities, Passman is the sole full-time shared staff person to coordinate and support the three transit systems operating on the Iowa side of the metro.

The Quad Cities, straddling the banks of the Mississippi River, actually includes five cities: Davenport and Bettendorf in Iowa, and Moline, Rock Island, and East Moline in Illinois. In Iowa, CitiBus Transit serves Davenport, Bettendorf operates Bettendorf Transit, and River Bend Transit serves the surrounding Iowa counties.



Bi-State Regional Commission

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in the Quad Cities has been helping the four transit agencies shown above increase their marketing and coordinate some of their services.

“We had no money for marketing,” Passman said of when she started her position. “We didn’t place ads because we had no budget. So we began forming partnerships with organizations like the Quad Cities Transit Advocacy Group (QCTAG),” she said. As part of her position, Passman sits on the steering committee of QCTAG. It is through this position that she began to make connections and reach out to community organizations to market transit services.

Strengthening the bicycling-bus connection

One of the first groups of current and potential customers Passman connected with was the Quad Cities’ cyclists. The fruit of that effort is a robust Bike & Bus program that is growing primarily by word-of-mouth.

“Local cycling clubs had been promoting a bike-to-work week,” Passman said, “We wanted them to see all the alternatives to driving a car, and spoke to a 300-member cycling group, the Sierra Club, and at cycling events.”

Sources

- TCRP Synthesis 51: Transit Advertising Sales Agreements, 2004, Transportation Research Board: Washington, DC.
- Bi-State Regional Commission, Quad Cities, Iowa/Illinois, QC Transit Web site: <http://www.bistateonline.org/qctransit/index.shtml>.



The Quad Cities Passport links service provided by three systems on the Iowa side of the Quad Cities, and a new service called "The Loop" targeted toward those traveling to clubs, restaurants and other entertainment destinations in the metro area. The passport provides unlimited rides for \$30 per month.

We showed how cycling and transit can be paired. They understood and spread information about our bike & bus program." The program continues to grow throughout the metro area.

Shared funding for discount student bus passes

College students are another part of the Quad Cities community that is responding favorably to community transit coordination and marketing efforts. In September 2006, Bettendorf Transit and Davenport CitiBus set up a joint college-student discount fare.

"Bettendorf's Scott Community College started selling the student bus passes at their bookstore," Passman said, "The college decided that public transportation was a legitimate use of a student's Pell Grant money, and authorized students to purchase their passes at the bookstore with some of the funds." Ridership among the area's three colleges has taken off, and Passman said bookstore managers are now relieved to see her when she drops off passes, as they often sell out.

Creating revenue by selling advertising on bus exteriors

To generate advertising revenue, Passman spoke to community businesses about advertising on the sides of Bettendorf Transit buses.

"This was a chance for the system to generate extra revenue," Passman said. "We only sell the exterior [bus] signage, and we do the in-house 12-month contracts because Bettendorf only has

5-6 buses in their fleet," she said, Bettendorf buses are equipped with queen size displays, common for many rural and smaller urban systems, and saw a 54 percent increase in marketing revenue between FY 06 and FY 08. Advertising revenue has continued to

increase, with strong growth predicted through the summer of 2010. In FY07, advertising generated revenue of over \$23,000 on 12-month contracts with a 95 percent profit margin. Local Jimmy John's sandwich franchises have been loyal advertising customers for Bettendorf Transit.

Davenport has a larger fleet, but they have a contract with a local ad agency and do bus wraps.

The QC Passport

The QC Passport is designed to make service on the three Iowa-side transit systems in the Quad Cities (Davenport CitiBus Transit, Bettendorf Transit, and River Bend Transit) more cohesive. Monthly passes are sold for \$30 and allow rides on any of the three systems' fixed routes and on the Loop, a new service targeted toward individuals traveling to clubs, restaurants, and other entertainment destinations in the metro area.

"The QC Passport is a big sell, especially if you are going to use any of the systems multiple times," Passman said. "Ever since The Loop started, we've seen a significant increase in sales [of the Passport]."

QCTransit.com – the "One Stop Transit Shop"

To better coordinate marketing for the three Iowa systems and the Rock Island County MetroLink on the Illinois side, the Bi-State Regional Commission created <http://www.qctransit.com>, a Web page hosted at no

cost on the MPO's Web site that serves as a single stop for Quad Cities transit information. The site markets services like the bike & bus program, The Loop service, special passes, and bus-advertising opportunities; and provides maps of the transit systems.

QCTransit.com is becoming more popular with area residents and Passman and Web managers at the Bi-State Regional Commission are discussing the site's future. They hope one day to be able to make it a stand-alone Web site, but funding will determine when and how that may happen.

The marketing efforts of Becky Passman and the Bi-State Regional Commission prove that the community itself can be a powerful resource for implementing transit marketing efforts. Passman seems pleased: "The fun part of these efforts is seeing how creative you can get."

For more information on creating transit advertising sales agreements, or to find out more about transit in the Quad Cities, consult the sources for this article shown on page 8.



The MPO's Becky Passman helped Bettendorf Transit develop a bus advertising program to generate extra revenue.

How to Work With an Agitated Passenger

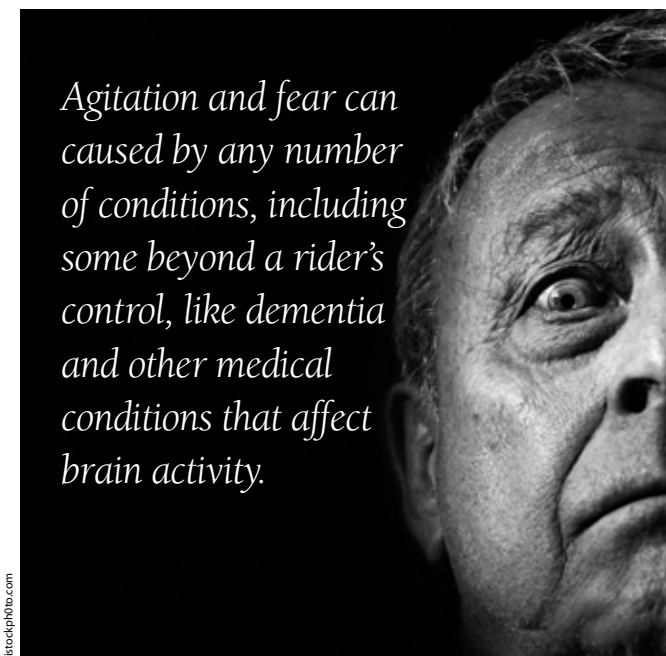
By Anne Lowder

Practical tips for drivers in handling specific types of situations.

Whether you are assisting a passenger into a transit vehicle or driving down the road to a scheduled destination, a passenger may become agitated. There may be just one factor contributing to this agitation, such as a passenger with dementia imagining he or she missed an appointment or obligation. Or there could be other reasons (or a combination of them) for the agitation such as the inability to communicate basic needs, strange surroundings, medical conditions that affect brain activity, or just wanting to be somewhere else.

Passengers who are agitated may refuse to board the vehicle, perform distracting behaviors during the ride such as moving from seat to seat, attempt to leave the vehicle while in motion, and be or become argumentative. As a driver, keep in mind that there are ways to deal effectively with the behavior of an agitated passenger, but the same method may not work each time. Be ready to try different approaches.

Agitation and fear can be caused by any number of conditions, including some beyond a rider's control, like dementia and other medical conditions that affect brain activity.



Transporting an agitated passenger

Customer management on the vehicle you drive is important. The majority of your passengers are most likely quiet, courteous, and easy to serve. Occasionally someone will present you with a problem, but the common denominator for transporting all your passengers is effective communication, which starts with remaining professional

and keeping calm, cool and focused. As a transportation operator, you are the leader establishing a level of communication that provides a quality ride for every passenger, including those who may be challenging.

A major barrier to effective communication can be our own tendencies to judge and then approve or disapprove of someone based on their actions or appearances alone.

A second barrier is allowing emotion to take over. No matter how badly your passenger behaves, as a professional driver it is your responsibility to remain calm. You must match what you say with how you say it.

What are strategies for good communication?

There are several strategies that can help you get your message across in almost any situation, and these are particularly effective with working with someone with a cognitive impairment:

- Be calm, or at least attempt to appear calm.
- Try to put yourself in the person's situation. Imagine how he or she might be feeling or is trying to express.
- Use positive and helpful body language.
- Offer as much reassurance as you can.
- Give extra time for the passenger to respond.
- Speak directly and clearly. Use short sentences and simple, easy-to-understand words.
- Keep directions clear by explaining one step at a time.
- Provide accurate, honest

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information.

• Empathize. Try to put yourself in their place, and tell them that you can see their point of view.

• Use pictures and objects to illustrate your words. Point to your ID picture as you say who you are, point to any safety equipment as you speak about it. Anticipate what you need the passenger to do, and connect those tasks to other common events. For example, "By lunch time..." "By the time the sun goes down..."

Heading off agitation

So what do you do if your passenger repeats the same gesture, asks the same question over and over, switches from seat to seat, tries to blame you for something you didn't do, or becomes paranoid that you are plotting against him or her? How about when someone sees objects or people that aren't there, or says things that simply don't make any sense? Is your reaction to try and bring the person back to reality? No, that strategy generally does not work.

Passengers who are agitated often have a cognitive disability such as dementia and are living in a different time than you or I. When they talk about people or places from the past, go along with

them instead of correcting them. This will help create a calming connection between you and your customer. Simply repeat back what they say and then ask them to tell you more about that person or place.

For example if your passenger becomes argumentative because he believes that he lives at a different house than where you are headed, it is often helpful to agree and act as if you are going along with his plan—even use it as a discussion topic—while you are proceeding to the original destination. This will help him use the parts of his brain that are still working and alleviate anxiety by allowing him to re-experience his memories. This is usually more effective than arguing with someone with dementia, as he may not have the ability to understand the reality of the situation even after many attempts on your part to explain things.

Validate your passenger's beliefs, which will result in more cooperation. Validation is empathy; however, empathy is not sympathy, confrontation or being patronizing. The chart below outlines some role-playing ideas using validation that handle some of the more difficult situations you may face as a driver.

An agitated passenger will react more to nonverbal cues, such as tone of voice and your body language, than to the words you are saying. So when approaching an agitated passenger it is important to keep in mind personal space, body language and voice.

Personal Space: Invading a person's personal space can be thought of as a threat, especially if a person is already agitated. Look for clues from your passenger that you are invading this space, such as clenching of the fist or tightening of the facial muscles.

Body Language: Agitated people can feel threatened with a face-to-face confrontation. A better position is at a slight angle with 2 or 3 ft of distance between you and the passenger. Other parts of your body can deliver a mixed message such as clenching your own fist or frowning or scowling as you are delivering a calming message.

Voice: The meaning of a message can change with the tone and volume of the voice. It is true that some situations call for the need for you to raise your voice to get attention and response to your authority. Remember, though, that your voice and tone should never match the intensity of someone who is agitated or out of control. The better solution is to lower your voice; this distracts the person from their behavior and makes them listen.

Summary

As a driver you have an important job to not only provide your customers with a safe and comfortable ride but also to provide positive customer service. Skill in working with agitated passengers is not as much a natural skill as one developed by practicing responding to potential situations, evaluating how a given situation evolved, and making changes to the

situation based on a desired outcome. The process must start with training in passenger assistance. Remember that working with agitated passengers is within your control; apply the various training tips to situations on your vehicle to find the tips that works best with each customer.

Tips for Handling Specific Behaviors of Agitated Passengers

Passenger Behavior *Why the Behavior is Occurring* *Strategies to Work with the Behavior*

• Attempts to leave the vehicle, or being argumentative because of a belief that they should be going somewhere else.	Desire to meet obligations that don't (or no longer) exist.	Often helpful to agree and even use it as a discussion topic while you are proceeding to the planned destination. In other words validate the passenger's beliefs as opposed to re-orienting those beliefs.
• Agitated or resists entering the vehicle.	The agitation might have occurred before your arrival.	Allow the passenger to calm down; often a short walk will help in this process. Also a person may have forgotten how to enter the vehicle; patience and simple directions will help.
• Agitated behavior while riding.	The inability to communicate the need to use the rest room, or the environment of the vehicle, such as noise or temperature, is discomforting.	Be prepared with relaxing music, sunglasses, a piece of candy or a magazine to decrease the agitation through distraction. Another distraction is to start a conversation about your passenger's grandchildren or a hobby.

Camera Tech for Small Transit System Safety

By Erik Berg

Major events happen in the blink of an eye, but when that eye is a digital camera, events become more than mere memories; they become records and evidence. Camera systems have long provided added safety and security on school buses and on vehicles of major urban transit providers. These are benefits that a growing number of rural and small urban transit operators now enjoy thanks to lower costs for cameras and improved technology. Public and private transit providers are outfitting their vehicles with multiple interior and exterior cameras to improve safety, organizational performance and customer service, and to serve as a definitive record when the unforeseen happens.

Digital cameras record critical bus safety data

In its document, *Safety, Security, and Emergency Preparedness Excellence – a Roadmap for Small, Rural and Community Transit*, the Federal Transit Administration's Transit Bus Safety and Security Program include comprehensive record-keeping as a key component of safety data acquisition and analysis. Accident investigation data, reports of "near-misses," and passenger complaint records are all vital parts of safety data analysis. While not specifically recommended by the voluntary Safety and Security Program, video recordings can provide much of this vital data needed to study safety trends.

Digital camera systems used in modern transit systems can be equipped with accelerometers to record vehicle speed, lateral G-forces, whether and when vehicle brakes and emergency systems were engaged, audio records, and views inside and outside the vehicle.

Cameras improve driver's visibility

The Transit Cooperative Review Program (TCRP) ranked "driver vision

or mirrors" as the second most effective bus accident prevention practice in their TCRP Report 66, published in 2001. Exterior and interior cameras can improve driver vision and enhance safety. In discussing on-board interior cameras, the TCRP found that although no formal studies had been undertaken of camera effectiveness in improving safety, transit systems anecdotally indicated "that the total dollar amount of claims can be reduced by 10-20 percent by having video cameras and recorders on-board the vehicle."

Digital systems have replaced old videotape recorders as the systems of choice for transit buses, with more hours of storage capacity and the ability to handle multiple interior and exterior-mounted cameras and streams of data.

Mark Barkley, client consultant with Roscoe Vision Systems, explained that multiple exterior cameras help drivers be more aware of their surroundings.

Rear-mounted cameras. "A rear-mounted camera is triggered to come on when [the vehicle is] in reverse, where vehicles have a huge blind spot," Barkley said. "The camera view extends approximately 30 ft behind the vehicle, and gives a 120 degree view. This is proven to eliminate about 95 percent of back-up accidents."

Side-mounted cameras. Barkley said side-mounted cameras often focus on the door and the area just to the rear of it, giving the driver a view of those boarding, and of passengers and other pedestrians immediately surrounding the vehicle. This extra visibility is especially helpful in preventing accidents where pedestrians drop something or get caught on part of the vehicle.

Two-way cameras watch the inside as well as the outside

Two-way digital recording cameras are gaining popularity for their ability to record activity in the interior and driver's seat, and also out the windshield.



This dual-view digital camera shows views inside and outside the windshield.



Cameras mounted on the rear outside of the vehicle typically have a dust/water guard.



This seven-inch LCD color monitor backup camera system with 30 ft night vision and audio helps increase visibility and awareness.

All photos in this article courtesy of Roscoe Inc.

“There are three big benefits with the two-way windshield cameras,” said Barkley, “First, the sight and sound they record gives fleet managers an idea of driver behavior. Ninety-five percent of accidents are related to driver behavior. Second, they capture and save video and data of driver behavior. Third, if there is an accident, the sensor’s video footage captures the accident, minimizing liability to the transit provider if the driver is not at fault for the accident.” These sensors also record audio and vehicle data, and can be triggered to mark events by either emergency signals from the vehicle computer or by a special driver’s recording button. Newer versions have GPS capabilities for noting vehicle position and for tracking.

Who monitors the footage?

Digital camera systems can be monitored either by in-house transit staff or by managed system providers, although for rural and smaller transit systems in-house monitoring may be more feasible in terms of cost. While in-house systems require initial installation fees and training on how to use the software and equipment, there are no monthly maintenance fees. Digital systems record events on Secure Digital (SD) Cards that can be changed out with fresh cards so events can be reviewed, or files can be downloaded directly from the camera onto portable laptops by fleet managers once buses return to the maintenance yard.

Camera systems are becoming more affordable

Although cameras are still rare in rural systems, Barkley said they are becoming more affordable.

“The good news is that live-feed cameras with exterior views that extend



The image on this monitor installed at an industry shows the quality of the picture generated by a digital camera.

30 feet, provide audio, and infrared vision can now be purchased for between \$300 and \$500,” he said.

Pilot projects and realized benefits

With improved technology and better affordability, smaller transit systems that have never had cameras before are piloting them, while those that have had cameras are realizing the benefits and looking toward the future of camera technology. Sunflower Diversified Services of Great Bend, Kansas is experimenting with camera systems for the first time, as they try to determine what type of system is best for them. Valley Transit of Appleton, Wisconsin is a smaller urban system that has used two generations of camera systems and has seen significant results. The experiences of these two systems, shared below, provide good examples of cameras and bus transit safety.

Great Bend, Kansas. In November 2008, Sarah Krom and the managers of Sunflower Diversified Services General Public Transit in Great Bend experienced a nightmare incident:

a bad crash involving one of their vehicles, two different accounts of the crash, and no definitive record of what really happened. That sparked their interest in camera systems, and Sunflower is now piloting a two-way digital camera system with GPS to see if it is the best fit for them.

Krom said Sunflower is already learning interesting things with the cameras.

“The downside to cameras is they are time-intensive to review, and the digital card overwrites [itself], so we have to know what video to keep. But we think the installation and use of cameras is going to be validated. We’ve already seen video of driver inattentiveness and passengers who don’t follow system policies. We think it will be good if we can use it to improve our performance,” Krom said.

The camera-tests Krom and Sunflower Diversified Services are conducting may have a wider regional impact. Krom is chairperson for the Kansas Department of Transportation’s Cooperative Transit District 14: the West Central Kansas Coordinated Transit District, Inc. She will report back to her CTD on Sunflower’s camera-related results; results that other rural transit providers in central Kansas may find useful as they weigh their own camera needs.

Appleton, Wisconsin. Tom Luehring, operations supervisor for Valley Transit in Wisconsin, has witnessed the difference cameras have made in 18 years of use. Valley Transit, a small urban transit provider featured in the 2001 TCRP 66 Report, used to have live analog video cameras and 32 dummy units. Dummy units provided the safety benefits of video cameras without actually installing bulky and

continued on next page

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- Barkley, Mark. Mitigating Accident & Liability Risk with Camera Technology. Federal Transit Administration Region VII conference, March 2010. <http://www2.ku.edu/~kutc/cgi-bin/FTA7Meeting10/index.php>.

Web Sites and Downloads of Interest

New Senior Transportation Online Forum

Moderated by Jane Hardin, CTAA.

<http://www.ctapnet.org/ctap/bestforum.php?fm=sen>.

This forum was created as a space where people working in the field of community transportation, whether as providers, advocates, researchers, or transit users, could come together and talk virtually. Anyone can ask or answer a discussion question on the topic of senior transportation, and CTAA encourages discussions with many points of view. The forum is moderated so all posts are subject to editing or removal by CTAA.

Report on Paid Drivers: Their Roles, Responsibilities and Contributions in Community Transportation Services

The Beverly Foundation and CTAA. January 2009.

http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/Paid_Driver_Report_Revised_02-02-09.pdf.

This report provides information about the roles, responsibilities, challenges, and contributions of paid drivers; examples of what they do to meet the transportation needs of older adults; and data on transportation services and programs that employ drivers. The report is based on the responses of 76 community transportation services that pay drivers to provide transportation.

Transportation to Work: A Toolkit for the Business Community

Published by CTAA.

<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=1442&z=75>.

This toolkit gives businesses the information they need now to assist their employees in achieving a timely, cost-efficient commute that promotes productivity and job satisfaction. This downloadable toolkit includes flyers, fact sheets, resources and examples of transportation initiatives undertaken by employers nationwide.

Transportation Services Coordination Plan

United We Ride Fact Sheet. 2007.

<http://www.unitedweride.gov/TSCP.pdf>.

This fact sheet addresses the development of a coordination plan including three major components: (1) an inventory and assessment of available transportation, resources and community and customer needs; (2) goals and strategies for meeting those needs, including better coordination of existing services, development of a "family of transportation services," a mechanism to measure progress; and (3) means to share and coordinate resources.

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The *Kansas TransReporter* is an educational and technology transfer newsletter published quarterly by the Kansas University Transportation Center (KUTC), under the umbrella of KU's Transportation Research Institute. The newsletter is free to rural and specialized transit providers and others with an interest in rural and specialized service.

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The purposes of the RTAP program are to: 1) educate transit operators about the latest technologies in rural and specialized transit; 2) encourage their translation into practical application; and 3) to share information among operators.

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Calendar

Rural Transit Training and Conferences

2010 KS RTAP Driver Training:

Defensive Driving and Emergency Procedures

July 15 in Concordia
July 22 in Oakley
July 29 in Hays
August 12 in Olathe
August 19 in Atchison
September 2 in Manhattan
September 30 in Salina
October 7 in Garden City
Contact Kansas RTAP**

Defensive Driving and Passenger Assistance Skills

August 5 in Topeka
August 26 in Ottawa
October 14 in Pittsburg
October 21 in Newton
Contact Kansas RTAP**

Additional Training:

Planning for Agency Safety, Security and Emergency Preparedness

June 22, 2010
Salina, KS
Contact Kansas RTAP**

Kansas Public Transit Association

August 30 – September 1, 2010
Hutchinson, KS
Contact: Tuck Duncan, KPTA, <http://www.kstransit.org>

Advanced Mobility Device Securement Skills Development Workshop

September 21-22, 2010
Lawrence, KS
Contact Kansas RTAP**

19th National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation

October 24-27, 2010
Burlington, VT
<http://www.trbruralconference.org>

***To register for a Kansas RTAP workshop, go to <http://www.ksrtap.org>. Click on "Register to attend." Questions? Contact Kristin Kelly at (785) 864-2594 or kbkelly@ku.edu.*