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FEATURE

Learning More About Travel to Dialysis

By David Murray and Pat Weaver

Patients, clinical social workers, and transit providers answer questions about access to treatment in Kansas.

Over the course of the past year, the Kansas University Transportation Center (KUTC) conducted a study designed to gain a better understanding of the transportation needs and barriers of the 2,300 Kansans seeking dialysis treatment in Kansas, 89 percent of whom regularly receive treatment at one of 47 dialysis centers throughout the state. Through surveys with dialysis patients, as well as follow-up surveys with clinic social workers and public transit providers serving those areas, researchers learned more about travel to dialysis clinics in Kansas.

Seventy-six percent of the dialysis patients reported they have access to treatment via personal vehicles driven by themselves, family members, or friends—but that transportation gets less reliable in the winter.

Results of the surveys and interviews have helped quantify perceptions of how available transportation services are to dialysis patients and whether lack of available service prevents access to treatment.

The study design

We hypothesized that dialysis patients throughout the state, particularly in rural communities, might have inadequate access to treatment. We have heard anecdotal reports from transit providers that requests for ongoing dialysis treatment at

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FEATURE

New Look for the KUTC and KS RTAP

By Lisa Harris

This issue of the Kansas Trans Reporter debuts a new look for the Kansas Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) and the KU Transportation Center. The KUTC, which hosts two technology transfer programs (RTAP, and the road & bridge-related LTAP) is in the process of updating its look. This includes a change in logo and fresh newsletter designs for both of these programs.

The new logo, at top left on this page, features a design that is reminiscent of the letters K or T and also of a road intersection. It replaces the transit bus logo that we have been using for many years.

We have heard from some of our customers that the newsletter's type on the former off-white speckled paper was difficult to read. So in the newsletter redesign, we changed to bright white paper to help with readability and for better quality photographs. All programs of the KU Transportation Center will have a blue and white color scheme and the new logo for better consistency.

The new look is starting to appear on other printed pieces. Our conference booth panels have been revamped and we are currently developing RTAP fact sheets with the new format. Next will be our Web site.

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INSIDE

Dialysis transportation *Continued from page 1*

clinics outside of the home county are difficult and sometimes impossible to fulfill, given available resources.

A total of 645 surveys were sent to 13 of the 47 dialysis facilities distributed throughout the state in both urban and rural communities. The surveys were sent to the clinic social workers who either handed them out to patients or left them on a counter for patients to pick up, depending on clinic policy. Eleven of the participating facilities returned a total of 246 completed surveys resulting in a response rate of 38 percent. The respondents represent 12 percent of the total hemodialysis population in Kansas.

What Kansas dialysis patients told us

Of those responding to the survey, 76 percent of the dialysis patients reported they have access to treatment via personal vehicles driven by themselves, family members, or friends. The average roundtrip distance was 42 miles. However, in some parts of the state, the travel distance is much greater; in Hays, the average roundtrip to dialysis treatment was reported at 114 miles and for those seeking treatment in Liberal, the average roundtrip was 122 miles. For some, that distance is even greater.

Most of those responding indicated that they have been able to find transportation to treatments, although 18 percent reported being late occasionally (one to three times per month) due to transportation. Those traveling to urban clinics were more likely to report being occasionally late for appointments. Approximately nine percent of respondents reported missing appointments occasionally due to transportation about between four and five percent signing off early from treatment occasionally due to difficulties with transportation.

Digging deeper

Approximately 94 percent of dialysis patients responded that "they have adequate access to dialysis treatment currently." However, their comments, along with interviews with clinic social workers and collaborative discussions at the Sedgwick County Dialysis Transportation Forum painted a different story. Most of those responding to the survey drive themselves to treatment or ride with family or friends, and 24 percent of those responding to the question stated that winter weather was the greatest barrier to getting to dialysis treatment.

Ten percent identified cost as the greatest barrier, echoed by the clinic social workers in interviews, while four percent noted that vehicle condition was a barrier to getting to their clinic appointments. The clinic social workers indicated that costs for patients who do not qualify for Medicaid and who must travel long distance were the most difficult.

When asked if they knew of cases of patients who moved closer to treatment, one social worker knew of several, while another stated that most of her patients with access difficulties did not have the financial resources to move.

This study found that many patients (37 percent) drive themselves to treatment. However, social workers (and some patients) expressed concern for patients driving after treatment since they may feel weakened and less aware subsequent to treatment. While some patients reported feeling well enough to drive home following treatment, others stated that they are forced to drive because no other options are available.

While not addressed in the scope of this study, when patients need their dialysis access sites cleaned, they must visit a nephrology physician. The only nephrologists in Kansas are located in Wichita, Topeka and Kansas City. One social worker mentioned that this medical procedure often needs to occur more frequently than the patients are willing to go because of the distance; another suggested that a nephrologist traveling to a region once per quarter would be more efficient as a strategy to reduce transportation and overnight accommodation costs for the patients who must make these longer trips.

Complete findings from the study will be available in late Summer 2009 at http://www.ksrtap.org. If you have specific questions about the study's findings, please contact Pat Weaver at (785) 864-2595 or weaver@ku.edu.

For more information about the Sedgwick County Dialysis Transportation Forum, contact Kandace Bonneson at (316) 660-5157 or kbonnese@sedgwick.gov.

Additional information and resources are available from Bruce Burnett of the Kansas Dialysis Association at cbb3651@aol.com and the American Kidney Fund at http://www.kidneyfund.org/.

Finding Solutions: The Sedgwick County Forum

Social workers, transportation providers, government officials, and representatives from nonprofit kidney disease organizations came together at the Sedgwick County Kansas Dialysis Transportation Forum at the end of 2008 and early 2009. They discussed solutions that may alleviate the deficiencies affecting this small yet important group. For example, members of the forum are working with the Kansas Dialysis Association to develop a transportation fund to provide emergency "gap" assistance earmarked for transportation-related costs. The funds will supply short-term assistance to help meet patients' needs in times of emergencies, such as unanticipated trips to a nephrologist or for personal car maintenance.

FEATURE

Regional Breakthrough Teams Get Under Way

By Pat Weaver

Kansas communities study regional transit service in four pilot projects.

Kansas TLINK—the Governor's Task Force on Transportation that was convened last year to make recommendations for the next Comprehensive Transportation Program—recommended an increase from the current $6 million in state funding for transit to $16 million to support and expand mobility in Kansas. The increased funding comes with a recommendation for a new business models for regional transit to expand and improve rural transit service.

To develop a regional approach that is effective in increasing mobility to Kansans, the recommendation included support for four pilot projects that would consider a variety of alternatives and test one or more models. Pilot projects have been kicked off in two of the regions and two more will begin this fall. This article provides an update on what has been learned so far.

Pilot sites are selected

Four regions have been selected; two regional teams have been developed and two are in the process of being developed. The Salina area team was the first to meet and is making great progress. The Manhattan/Ft. Riley/ Junction City team held their first meeting in late June and has a second meeting scheduled for August. Both teams have great representation of different stakeholders in the region and are making great progress. The Garden City and Hays area teams will kick off in the early Fall.

The teams are organized as Kansas Collaborative Breakthrough Teams under leadership of Lisa Koch, Transit Manager of the Kansas DOT Office of Public Transportation, and are being facilitated by Joel Wright and Kathleen Harnish-Doucet of TeamTech, Inc., founders and project managers of the Kansas Collaborative. Members of the Breakthrough Teams include transit providers, local elected officials, human service agency representatives, workforce and economic development representatives, employers, planning agencies and others identified as impor-

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What is Mobility Management?

Mobility management solutions re-imagine and reform traditional transit service into a more dynamic and integrated process. Mobility managers can be an individual or a staff operating within a mobility management agency. Mobility managers (or mobility management agencies) focus on coordinating existing traditional transit agencies and can use nontraditional services to ensure the transportation needs of a community or region are met. Mobility managers may use creativity and professional judgment to assess the needs of a service area.

Mobility management can use operational and/or technological processes to coordinate existing services and augment those services with non-transit solutions like van-pools, rideshare matching or taxi vouchers to cover off hours and fill in any gaps in service. A mobility manager functions as a one-stop shop for transportation information in the community.

As scheduler and coordinator, mobility managers publicize a one phone number call center solution where trained travel coordinators focus on moving people from their origin to their destination rather than the mode of transportation they are using. Coordinators educate callers on all the transit options in the community. No longer must citizens call each agency in the area for service.

(Excerpted from "Improving Rural Transportation With Mobility Management: What is Mobility Management and How is it Being Applied in Other Communities?," *RTAP Fact Sheet,* June 2009.)

Regional Breakthrough Teams *Continued from page 1*

tant to the particular needs of the region. Technical support to the Breakthrough Teams is provided by a team at the KU Transportation Center and Kansas Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP).

Purpose of the teams

One purpose of each of the four Breakthrough Teams is to develop a broad understanding of the regional transit approach based on the draft recommendations of the T-LINK Taskforce. The teams also will be thinking through details of how a regional transit approach can work in their region, driven by market-based demand/needs and resulting in improved coordination, effectiveness and efficiency. Each team will be creating awareness that will reach out to consumers, providers, counties and cities in their region, defined by travel markets. The anticipated outcome is to maximize and target the resources of the current transit system to effectively and efficiently serve the transit needs of Kansans.

Where to start?

Data collection and analysis has been the focus of the early work of the two teams that have work under way. The data collection is organized around three basic tasks:

• ***Understand the market-based region***. The KU Transportation Center has been assisting with data collection to help define the market-based region, providing demographics and mapping key trip generators in the region related to transit. These generators include medical, educational, human service and employment sites. These maps are layered with information about commuter patterns. A complete inventory of available transportation services and equipment also is necessary, and that data is being provided by KDOT and by the providers in the target region.

• ***Understand a regional transit approach using Mobility Management.*** "Mobility Management" is a term used by the TLINK Task Force and others for a tool to create greater coordination and improved customer service. This phase of the work includes providing feedback on the criteria for a Mobility Manager and the benefits/roles of such, defining the benefits of having a regional transit system based on mobility management principles; and, most importantly, creating a vision of what a regional transit system might look like, including identifying how innovative technologies, services, and other methods could be used to improve customer service and coordination. This process includes identifying current barriers to a regional transit system and developing strategies to meet customer needs in every part of a market-based region through a coordinated transportation system. The teams will have access to additional expertise on mobility management from national experts on mobility management, organized by the Regional VII "Ambassador" from the federal United We Ride effort.

• ***Open up conversations with decision makers.*** Developing regional systems requires good dialogue with stakeholders, including local elected officials. It will be important for them to understand the intent of the regional systems and to provide guidance on policies associated with governance, funding, and implementation plans for these systems. Data collected for this purpose will: 1) better identify the amounts and sources of local funding, 2) include data on models in other parts of the country for coordinating local funding for regional service, and 3) quantify efficiencies and service improvements anticipated from regionalization.

Target date

For more information about the regional pilots, contact Lisa Koch at KDOT Office of Public Transit at lisak@ksdot.org or (785) 296-4907. Koch said that the team meetings so far have been extremely productive, and she plans to keep Kansas transit agencies updated on the teams' progress by email.

The target for completion of the work by the Breakthrough Teams is by the end of December 2009.

New look *Continued from page 1*

Look for enhancements over the coming months, both in design and functionality.

We hope you like the redesigned newsletter and find it to be more readable. If you have any questions or comments, contact Lisa Harris, KUTC's communications and outreach manager, at (785) 864-2590 or LHarris@ku.edu.

Old design

New design

MANAGEMENT

Tips on Improving Dispatching

By Nicholas Pappas

Now more than ever, efficiency in operations is being equated with cost savings. Efforts to improve operations can also help retain your agency's loyal customer base and attract additional riders. Efficiency can be improved by training the dispatcher to provide quality customer service to the passenger and by establishing an organized system of communication between the dispatcher and driver. This will ultimately contribute to accuracy in scheduling as well as prompt pick-ups and deliveries.

Quality customer service

Although the term "customer service" is a popular buzz word in the business community, what exactly does it mean to provide quality customer service? Ultimately, it means that the service scheduler/dispatcher communicates with customers directly to better understand their needs. This can be accomplished through active listening, employing effective telephone techniques, and knowing how to work through difficult customer situations. Taken together, quality customer service can become multiple daily actions as opposed to a mere idea.

S.M.I.L.E. before answering a customer's call

An effective communication technique is to have the dispatcher S.M.I.L.E. before he/she answers the telephone. This acronym entails **adjusting** the sound of voice, **managing** behavior, **ignoring** interruptions, using appropriate **language**, and approaching the discussion with a high level of **enthusiasm.**

Additional considerations include answering the telephone promptly and allowing the customer to be the first to hang up, learning the customer's name and using it, avoiding use of the "hold" button as much as possible, and having a friendly and professional attitude at all times.

Prepare for difficult situations

Another consideration to improving customer service skills is to identify key phrases that can be used in difficult situations. Although there are times when company policy, technical difficulties, or logistical problems make it difficult or even impossible to effectively help a customer, appropriate communication of those issues is essential in retaining that customer for future service. Later in this article you will see some examples of appropriate statements that can be used in difficult situations.

Another important to improving customer service skills is to train the dispatcher on how to better communicate with passengers through active

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MANAGEMENT

So You Want to be a Rural Transit Manager: What You Should Know

By Nicholas Pappas

In today's job market, what can you anticipate when hiring a manager for your agency? What skills and qualifications can you expect to find?

Paratransit Manager's Skills, Qualifications, and Needs—A Synthesis of Transit Practice, produced by the Transit Cooperative Research Program and sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration, addresses these questions. The study identifies qualifications that agencies have been seeking in managers and also surveys current managers about their actual levels of education, expertise, and on-the-job training. Sometimes they mesh, sometimes not. We put together a summary of the survey's findings.

Characteristics of paratransit starting positions

The agencies surveyed reported about a few aspects of paratransit manager starting positions:

- More than 50 percent of rural and small agencies required applicants to have a college degree or higher. Larger agencies, or agencies in larger areas, were somewhat more likely than others to require a college degree.
- A majority of both small agencies and rural agencies required between three and five years of supervisory experience, whereas the requirement for larger agencies or agencies in larger areas was between four and six years of experience.
- Agencies in both rural and small urban areas reported manager salary ranges. See sidebar later in this article.

What other skills do agencies expect of managers?

Over 50 percent reported:

- working with boards,
- written communications,
- oral communications,
- sensitivity,
- management and supervision,
- ethics,
- customer relations,
- dealing with the media,

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The TCRP uses U.S. Census Bureau definitions for small urban and rural areas: A small urban area is a city with a population greater than 50,000 but less than 200,000; a rural area is generally defined as a territory not classified as urban, although it may be located within metropolitan or non-metropolitan areas.

Improving dispatching *Continued from page 5*

listening. See below for attributes of an "active" listener.

Driver communication

After a dispatcher masters the art of quality customer service, implementation of this service is vital. This is done, for the most part, through effective communication between the dispatcher and the driver. While there are many types of communication devices—two-way radios, mobile data terminals, telephones, and beepers—what is most important for effective communication is transmission respect and airtime usage, for which both the driver and the dispatcher are responsible. Transmission respect refers to etiquette between the dispatcher and driver while "on air."

First, only relevant information should be discussed; personal conversations require too much time and could potentially interfere with an emergency situation of another driver.

Second, dispatchers should not interrupt drivers when they are calling in. Third, when responding, dispatchers should speak into the microphone clearly, confidently, and in a normal tone; dispatchers should take special effort to remain calm during emergency situations.

Finally, driver calls should be prioritized by the dispatcher by order of initial contact, except in emergency situations when the dispatcher should announce that the air be cleared for the vehicle with the problem.

Airtime usage should be kept to a minimum. Only information relevant to the passenger's pick-up, drop-off, or special instructions should be shared. Additional types of information drivers might convey to the dispatcher include changing weather and road conditions and emergency situations.

In conveying popular phrases, the use of codes can reduce the amount of airtime substantially. For example, using "10-4" can be used instead of "Yes, I heard you," "10-20" can be used instead of "What is your location?" and "10-9" can be used instead of "Repeat your last transmission." For more information on "10"-codes and how and when they can be used on-air, go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten-code.

Conclusion

Improving customer service skills as well as dispatcher/driver communication will help your agency attract and retain loyal customers through continued provision of quality service. Customer service skills are not innate; they are learned through understanding appropriate phrases to use in difficult situations and employing active listening techniques. Effective dispatcher/driver communication can be improved through the use of efficient airtime codes and displaying a high level of respect through transmission. Ultimately, the product of these considerations is an agency that is a model of efficiency and service.

Source

• Community Transportation Association of America, *CTAA Training Manual: Professional Dispatching and Scheduling*, 2002. Visit http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=36 for more information.

Active listening… What makes a good listener?

Untrained Listeners…	*Trained Listeners…*
Tune out the other person at the beginning and prejudge without giving the customer a chance.	Defer their judgment, are more controlled, and listen for the customers' feelings.
Are quick to mentally criticize grammar, appearance or speaking style.	Pay most attention to the content rather than unimportant issues.
Spend more time getting ready to talk when they should be listening. This becomes apparent and is felt by the customer.	Listen completely, trying to get every nuance of the meaning of what is being said by the customer.
Tend to consider only the facts, give attention to errors, and attempt to prove the customer wrong.	Are more mature in their listening habits; they listen to the main points and disregard the minor points.
Stop listening after getting the minimum information and disregard the rest of the conversation.	Listen carefully, sort what is being said, ask for confirmation, and give feedback.
Tend to get distracted by emotional words used by the customer and respond similarly.	Might feel honest anger about what is said, but control it; they do not allow their emotions to govern their behavior.
Are not aware of the talking and listening "speed limits."	Maintain patience and concentration while listening and speaking.
Try to take in and reply to everything, especially exaggerations and errors.	Refrain from replying to everything and and avoid sidetracking remarks, especially those that seem sarcastic.

Source: *CTAA Training Manual: Professional Dispatching and Scheduling*, 2002.

Examples of phone etiquette that will assist in providing quality customer service

Don't Say…	*Do Say…*
We can't help you.	We are unable to provide a trip at that time, but let's look at our options.
You are not eligible.	I cannot find your name on our list; have you filled out an eligibility form? If not, let's do that.
You are not in our service area.	Our service does not currently serve that area, but let's take a look at what kind of transportation is available.
We can't take you on that day; we don't go there on that day.	We don't have service to your area on that day, but I may be able to help you reschedule your trip for a day that we do serve your area.
There's nothing I can do about it; it's company policy.	Our company policy will not allow me to do that, but let's see if we can find some alternatives.
The computer is down now; could you call me back in about 15 minutes?	I am unable to put your trip into the computer right now, so I will write down the information and ask that you call back later to confirm your request.

Source: *CTAA Training Manual: Professional Dispatching and Scheduling,* 2002.

Rural transit manager *Continued from page 5*

• computerized scheduling,
• safe driving practices,
• labor relations, and
• affirmative action.

Thirty-eight percent reported expectations for technological skills, and 32 percent reported reported they expected knowledge of ADA and business/management skills.

Survey of current managers

The actual qualifications and experiences of transit managers sometimes differ from the expectations for the job. First, whereas only a little more than half of small and rural transit agencies required a college degree or higher, nearly 70 percent of managers from all agencies were college-educated, half with graduate degrees. The primary areas of study were business/management at 32 percent and public administration at 28 percent, with 32 percent reporting "other" from a list of relevant majors.

Sixty-two percent of managers surveyed had been in their current positions for five years or less and only 15 percent had been in their current position for more than 10 years. The authors attributed these results to the paratransit manager position being a relatively new position at agencies.

Although the requested years of experience ranged from three to five years for small and rural agencies, 42 percent of managers had more than 10 years of passenger experience and 27 percent had between five and 10 years of passenger experience before taking their current positions.

As for compensation, 46 percent of current managers from all agencies reported starting salaries in excess of $75,000, even though only 23 percent of all agencies offered starting salaries in excess of this value. The majority of the agencies reported starting salaries of less than $49,000.

Overall, even though some of the qualifications of transit managers matched the job requirements reported by agencies, most transit managers had more education and experience than required and an over-

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Salary Ranges for Paratransit Managers

Rural Agencies

Less than $30,000	37.5%
$30,000 - $39,999	12.5%
$40,000 - $49,999	37.5%
$60,000 - $74,999	12.5%

Small Agencies

Less than $30,000	26.7%
$30,000 - $39,999	20.0%
$40,000 - $49,999	46.7%
$60,000 – $74,000	6.7%

These requirements and compensation ranges can give your agency an idea of what to expect and offer.

Source: *Paratransit Manager's Skills, Qualifications, and Needs—A Synthesis of Transit Practice,* TRB, 2007.

Rural transit manager *Continued from page 7*

whelming majority earned more than the starting salary stated for their position.

On-the-job training

Besides the required years of experience for the job, many transit managers have also received on-the-job training. The skills most received by managers in the past five years included customer service, management and supervision, preventing sexual harassment, conducting performance evaluations, sensitivity skills, and team building skills.

Fifty-seven percent of managers surveyed had attended or participated in an APTA Bus and Paratransit Conference and 25 had attended an APTA annual meeting. Approximately a third of the managers had attended or participated in workshops and panels on paratransit topics at the CTAA Annual Expo and 14 percent had participated in the Mobility Planning Services Institute provided by ESPA.

However, managers reported little attendance at or participation in TRB-sponsored conferences and only eight percent of managers had enrolled in a transportation degree program at a U.S. DOT-sponsored University Transportation Center.

Conclusion

A review of current requirements and compensation packages can be a good foundation for creating a transit manager position, especially in a competitive job market. This article provides a good starting place. To view the study *Paratransit Manager's Skills, Qualifications, and Needs—A Synthesis of Transit Practice* by the Transit Cooperative Research Program, visit http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_syn_71.pdf.

Source

• *Paratransit Manager's Skills, Qualifications, and Needs—A Synthesis of Transit Practice (Synthesis 71),* Transit Cooperative Research Program, Transportation Research Board, 2007.

A review of current requirements and compensation can be a good foundation for creating a paratransit manager position.

MANAGEMENT

Tips for Successful Transit Boards

By Matthew Barnett

"People who enjoy meetings should not be in charge of anything."
–Thomas Sowell

Effective board meetings are an integral part of maintaining a smooth running transit board. Organizing board meetings requires planning, preparation, and leadership from the executive director, the board chair, and each of the board members. This article will provide some suggestions to improve board productivity through well organized meetings.

Prepare the agenda in advance

The executive director and board chair should collaborate together to prepare the meeting's agenda and supplemental information, which should be made into a "board packet" to be distributed to the board members in advance of the board meeting. This will allow the board members to act on and/or discuss the agenda items, which should

be clearly stated along with the required action (decision, discussion, etc.).

Allow board members to "do their homework"

Any reports placed in the board packets should be limited to executive summaries containing the following:

1. Statement of the problem
2. List of possible solutions
3. Recommendations for action

The idea here is to allow board members to understand what they will be considering, before the board meeting.

Have clear processes for decision making

All procedures for decision-making, what and how issues are assigned to committees, and how committees report back to the board should be agreed upon and clearly understood by all board members and executive staff prior to meetings.

Meetings should be conducted under the assumption that board members have read their background materials. Oral reports at the meetings that focus on background/context could add to board members' understanding of the situation under discussion.

Stay focused

Meetings that follow the agenda closely keep the discussions focused, and they will help end meetings on time. That said, appropriate time should be given for study and discussion of each topic. Each board member who wishes

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Marketing a Bus Service

By Matthew Barnett

The CityGo buses, eight of them, have a professional logo design and paint job that, according to OCCK's Wallerius, "…attracts a lot of attention, and people like it..." "People can recognize them."

OCCK Inc., formerly Occupational Center Central Kansas, in Salina, has a new fixed-route bus system. It's called CityGo, and it started last November.

Many challenges present themselves when putting together a service like this, and one of those challenges is marketing it to the community. This article will describe OCCK's successful approach, one that included citizen input in the design of the service.

Campaign started with a theme and community input

"We had a theme from the get-go," said Patrick Wallerius, OCCK's vice president and chief financial officer —namely, "Go Green." Public transportation promotes going green by cutting down the amount of cars driving in the city.

"[Next] we wanted community buy-in," Wallerius said. The objective was to raise awareness within the community about the fixed-route system, and that it would be a safe, reliable, and cost-effective transportation service available to 65 percent of the city.

Public meetings and concerns

OCCK held four public meetings to gather community input and concerns about the project. Topics in the meetings ranged from designating bus stops to planning the routes themselves.

Many citizens were concerned about designating stops in front of their house. When the city designates a stop, it paints 30-40 feet of curb that restricts parking. Citizens were concerned about not having parking in front of their house.

Citizens were also concerned about liability at bus stops. The citizen maintains the sidewalk on their property, and if someone were to be injured boarding the bus, whose fault would it be? Citizens were also concerned about vandalism of their property and trash that might accumulate in their yards.

The meetings gave OCCK an opportunity to have a dialogue with citizens about these concerns, and allay the fears that were expressed.

Funding

Funding was another important piece of the puzzle in developing the new service. Before Salina agreed with KDOT to open a fixed-route transit service, Wallerius asked for funding from KDOT for a feasibility survey to see if the service could work. The result was a 6-7 person task force that worked with a KU Trans-

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Community Input Helped Make CityGo a Success

OCCK's Patrick Wallerius said that community input played a big part in providing this service.

"The input from the citizens of Salina was really very critical," he said. The feedback was incorporated into the city's decision making process.

Public meetings were advertised through notices in the paper and ads on local radio. The marketing firm hired to promote CityGo also promoted the transit system through a Web site they made, www.salinacitygo.com.

Marketing included development of a logo specific to the new bus service, shown below.

CityGo

Marketing transit service *Continued from page 9*

portation Center team—Pat Weaver, Tom Worker-Braddock and Dan Nelson—to provide information on history, background, projected ridership and preliminary route recommendations.

Bob Bourne of Bourne Transit Consulting then was brought in to create the implementation plan and, with input received from the community, finalized route locations, route timing and other details of the start-up service.

The initial campaign

Once the service was developed, CityGo's initial marketing campaign kicked into gear, lasting about three months. During this time, the agency used several tactics to inform the public: brochures, press releases, maps, a Web site, a logo, and specially-painted buses with the logo and "Go Green" theme.

To launch the start of the service, OCCK held a celebration with food, drinks, bus tours, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The ceremony was held on a cold Thursday in November, but still approximately 50 people attended.

Professional approach

OCCK hired Marketaide Services Inc., a marketing and research firm, to help develop the marketing approach. Wallerius, along with Sarah Meitner, copywriter and PR coordinator for Marketaide, put together a solid marketing plan.

When asked why they hired Marketaide, Wallerius said, "I really wanted that professional touch on it. They put out a professional-quality product for everything they did for us."

Cost for the marketing effort

The marketing effort cost $46,000 overall, with 15 percent of that spent on advertising. The majority was paid advertising, but the local radio station and newspaper ran free public notices about the service, and cut some other deals as well, such as two-for-one ads.

Future plans

To continue promoting the service, OCCK will develop other ideas for marketing, such as offering anyone wearing green a free ride on St. Patrick's Day.

OCCK also plans to formally evaluate the service after 6-9 months of operation. OCCK is determined to please the public and meet their needs. "We've actually changed stops because of public input," Wallerius said.

Citygo has three routes so far, and is looking into adding another route eventually. The extra route would cover part of the city OCCK originally wanted to cover, but could not because of funding constraints. The fourth route was eliminated to accomodate 60 minute intervals during off-peak times.

During peak times (6am – 9am and 3pm – 6pm) the system runs in 30 minute intervals, and so far, it has been a success. "I would like to see every stop served at 30 minute intervals, but right now 60 minutes is working well for us outside of our peak times," said Wallerius.

Working with the public paid off

When asked if the community has been receptive to the new service, Wallerius said, "Yes, yes. I think all of the fears the general public had—about the bus stops and the stereotypical association with them—are gone."

But Wallerius is realistic. "Things will change, though," he said. "It's an ongoing operation." Frequent thought and reflection lead to better service and a better-run agency.

SAFETY

Assisting Your Passengers Onto the Bus

By Anne Lowder

Lift manufacturers share information you should know about your wheelchair lift.

Inboard facing of wheelchair passengers is not prohibited, but outboard facing of passengers is recommended by both Braun and Ricon.

Transit drivers face challenges in assisting passengers every day. One of those challenges is balancing passenger safety with passenger comfort and preferences, all while complying with federal and state laws and regulations. One of the most intense discussions that comes up at driver training sessions is about assisting passengers using wheelchairs onto the vehicle with the lift: should they be inboard-facing or should they be outboard-facing? What does the law say? What do passengers say? And what do the lift manufacturers say?

The purpose of this article is to provide the facts—both what the ADA requires, and how best to serve your passengers safely. We reviewed the Americans' with Disabilities Act which determines many of the requirements associated with passenger assistance. We also reviewed lift manuals of the two most common manufacturers for vehicles used by Kansas transit agencies. And, finally, we interviewed Rick Jacobs of the Braun Corporation for some more explanation on recommendations they make. Here are some questions and

Becoming familiar with the legal requirements of ADA and with the recommendations of lift manufacturers is an important step in developing procedures that consider both safety and rider preference.

answers regarding assisting passengers onto the lift.

What is American with Disabilities directive on inboard and outboard lift usage?

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) states in 49 CFR Subtitle A (10–1–07 Edition) Subpart B—Buses, Vans and Systems § 38.23 Mobility aid accessibility: "(11) Boarding direction. The lift shall permit both inboard and outboard facing of wheelchair and mobility aid users."

What is the recommended direction of boarding by lift manufacturers?

A review of both Braun and Ricon wheelchair lift manuals states that their lifts fully comply with the ADA requirement that the lift accommodate both inboard and outboard facing wheelchair passengers and standees. Inboard facing of wheelchair lift passengers is not prohibited, but outboard facing of passengers is recommended by both Braun and Ricon. Braun's information is available online at http://www.braunlift.com/. Ricon's is available at http://www.riconcorp.com.

Why do the manufacturers' recommend outboard facing of passengers even though the Pre-Lift Operation Notes and Details state that the lift can accommodate both inboard and outboard facing wheelchair passengers and standees?

According to the Kansas sales manager for Braun Corporation, Rick Jacobs, it is Braun's recommendation to load and unload in the outboard facing direction based on the safety and comfort of the wheelchair passenger. Although, according to Jacobs, the lift does not appreciably deflect when raising the maximum capacity, placing the passenger load nearer the vehicle reduces vehicle suspension roll, and lessens the feeling of the lift platform acting as a diving board. Load capacity for a commercial lift is 800 pounds. Braun states that it is up to the lift operator/attendant to determine the safest method of transporting the wheelchair passenger. The Ricon wheelchair lift manual states "Passengers are most safe when they FACE OUTWARD when entering or exiting vehicle because the large rear wheels could roll over the front rollstop."

What about the attendant riding the lift with the passenger?

The Braun Corporation manual states that the lift attendant should not ride on the platform with passenger. Ricon states that "the lift is designed for ONE wheelchair and its occupant," with an additional caution to not overload the lift.

Why does Braun Corporation state that the attendant should not ride on the lift with the passenger?

With today's larger wheelchairs and scooters, a wheelchair lift platform can become an awfully crowded place. The safety of the wheelchair passenger should be preeminent; however the safety of the attendant is no less important. An attendant should focus his/her effort on passenger safety, and proper lift functioning, rather than complicating matters by attempting to maintain balance and situational awareness while riding the moving platform.

What would be the outcome to the lift is it is over the recommended weight limit?

Obviously, it depends on how much "over the recommended weight limit." Generally speaking, a commercial Braun lift is designed to support a load of three times its maximum lifting capacity. In other words, if the lift is rated at 800 pounds maximum lifting capacity, the platform will support a 2,400 pound load. Consult your lift's serial tag to determine the maximum lifting capacity. You should never attempt to exceed the maximum lifting capacity.

If the weight limit exceeded the 800 pound threshold would the lift collapse?

See the previous answer. Naturally, every device has a breaking point. In practice, you should never use the lift to raise a load that exceeds the limits identified on the serial tag.

How should the lift be maintained?

Maintenance and lubrication is necessary to ensure safe and trouble-free lift operation. The Braun Corporation's lift manual recommends lubrication with light penetrating type oil every four weeks or 400 cycles whichever comes first. Service intervals would need to be more frequent in severe conditions (weather, environment, heavy usage etc.). Review your lift's manual for specific recommendations on service intervals and actions to perform.

Are the Ricon Lift recommendations similar to that of the Braun Lift?

In review of the Ricon Lift Operations Manual that can be found at: http://riconcorp.com/pdfs/32dskl01/32dskl01Bcvr.pdf, the recommendations are similar to that of Braun. The Ricon lift meets all ADA requirements, but the company recommends loading in outboard facing. It is best to be sure to review your lift manual to be sure of what is recommended by your lift manufacturer and the specific model you are using.

For more information, review your lift's owner's manual, and visit the lift manufacturer's Web site. When in doubt, call the manufacturer's technical support number.

Using GIS to Predict Regional Travel

By Nicholas Pappas

Imagine being able to combine seemingly countless files of information that could aid in determining transit demand for your city, county or region in an appealing, visual way. Where should future transit routes develop? Where are people traveling within your region for healthcare, entertainment, and work? Although the U.S. Census provides some of the data needed, interpreting tables is not always efficient or intuitive, especially when multiple tables are needed to provide answers to a single question.

There is a tool available that can simplify this analysis process, interpret tables, and provide maps that are visually appealing. A Geographic Information System (GIS) interprets geographic data (data that can be tied to a location), and displays the combined information based on the user's specifications. Typical uses of GIS applications include tracking real-time location data and mapping it, creating transit route maps, and—the topic of this article—analyzing regional travel patterns.

Required data

For a GIS to be useful, appropriate locational data must be used. This data is often obtainable from the U.S. Census Bureau; however, with first-hand knowledge of the community being analyzed or with the aid of a phone book and/or Internet, the user can create locational data with minimal effort.

Information on medical and social services was collected, organized, and joined to the base map files already in the GIS.

The Kansas Regional Transit Pilot Program is a good example of how a variety of data can be used in an analysis. The Program is funded through the Kansas Department of Transportation in an effort to determine travel market boundaries in Kansas using commute data as well as a combination of trip attractions (e.g., schools, hospitals, pharmacies, etc.) that draw transit dependent populations to selected cities.

Base maps set the foundation

In the first stage of this pilot program, many types of data were used. Base map files that contain county, city, and state boundaries are found on Web sites that have been created and maintained by state agencies. The Data Access and Support Center (DASC), Kansas's online database of geographic files, has free downloadable GIS-ready information (information ready for immediate display in a GIS) ranging from administrative boundary files to recreation area files and satellite images. For more information, visit DASC at http://kansasgis.org.

Demographic data

The second type of information, demographic data, was obtained from the U.S. Census. For this analysis, Journey-to-Work traffic flow data as well as basic demographic data were used, both of which were downloaded from the Bureau's online database. Although this information was not GIS-ready, it was formatted and joined to the files obtained from DASC. This was done using the standard join tool in GIS that requires minimal preparation of the data and provides a wizard for step-by-step instruction.

Trip attraction data

The third type of information was trip attraction data obtained from multiple sources. Primarily relying on information from the Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns (http://www.kcdcinfo.com), information on medical and social services was collected, organized, and joined to the base map files already in the GIS. Further Internet searches yielded information pertaining to pharmacy locations and institutions of higher learning. Unlike Census data, this information had to be manually entered in a database (Excel) prior to being joined to the base map in the GIS. Maps can be updated as additional data sources are identified to provide a more accurate and complete picture of essential trip attractions in the region.

Analysis process

In a GIS project, once all data is compiled and joined, the analysis process can begin. Usually this requires overlaying the information so that all "layers" (individual maps showing specific information) can be seen relative to one another.

In the case of the Kansas Regional Transit Pilot Study, however, a few extra steps were necessary due to the regional nature of the analysis and the number of layers being displayed. Since the analysis sought to determine the boundary from which people would travel to the selected destination (e.g., Garden City, Hays, Hutchinson, or

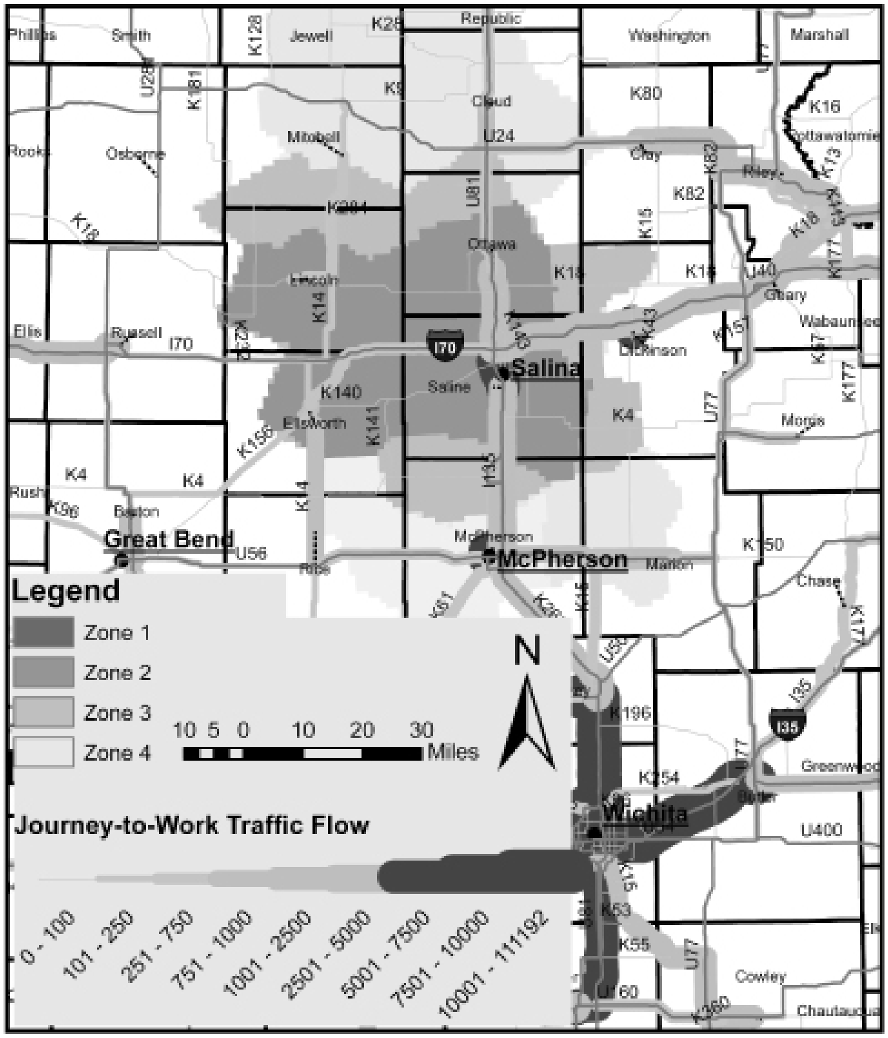

Figure 1. Example of output map.

Salina), a GIS tool known as "Thiessen Polygons" was used to convert points (cities with data) into polygons whose boundaries represented the area from which people would drive. A second tool, "Generate Near Table," was used to identify the closest trip attraction to each polygon, thereby identifying a regional zone from which people would likely commute to obtain that particular service. Sometimes more than one polygon was identified as being in a destination's market area.

Once this step was completed for each "trip attraction," a few other tools were used to prepare the data for input. These tools allowed for easier display of multiple layers of information by adding the layers together based on weights defined by the user.

The final component of this map was the Journey-to-Work traffic flows obtained from the U.S. Census. Although this data was interpreted in another software package (TransCAD), the output map was joined to the GIS map, resulting in a composite map of regional zonal trip intensity depicting traffic flows.

Interpreting the results

A final map displaying zones of travel intensity for each polygon in the analysis area, along with Journey-to-Work traffic flows, is the ultimate output of this analysis (Figure 1). To accurately interpret this composite map, Journey-to-Work traffic flows should be analyzed first to identify significant travel patterns between the destination and other areas. This will show where the majority of people are already making employment-related trips.

The zonal intensity component of the final map shows a market area depicting an area's reliance on services from the target city, regardless of whether Journey-to-Work traffic flows indicate a significant travel pattern from that area to the target city. Zone 1 has the highest intensity of reliance on the target city, whereas Zone 4 has the least intensity of reliance.

How GIS can help your agency

Ultimately, generating a map of areas that rely on the target city for services or that indicate a significant travel pattern to that city, will allow for further, detailed analysis of those areas with the aim of adding public transit service. While the output maps provide significant information on the potential transit market area, they are by no means the ultimate deciding factor in deciding where to route an additional bus. They do, however, provide a solid foundation that can direct further analysis.

Conclusion

GIS is an effective method for analyzing complex files of geographic information. ESRI's ArcGIS as well as Caliper's TransCAD were used in this analysis and can be found at http://www.esri.com and http://www.caliper.com, respectively, for more information. Additionally, most local planning agencies and universities use these software packages and would be great resources to assist your agency's needs. Contact your local government engineering or planning office or a university—such as the University of Kansas Transportation Center or the Kansas State University Geographic Information Science Commons—for more information.

Source

• *Kansas Regional Transit Pilot Study.* Currently in progress. University of Kansas Transportation Center. Contact Pat Weaver for more information: weaver@ku.edu.

How To Reach Us

For a free subscription to the *Kansas TransReporter* or to contact one of our faculty or staff, call toll-free (800) 248-0350 (in Kansas) or (785) 864-2595 (outside Kansas). Send correspondence to:

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Other Services

In addition to publishing the *Kansas TransReporter*, the Kansas RTAP Program offers a variety of other educational services. Following is a partial list of these services:

- Publication dissemination
- Program planning assistance
- Technical assistance
- Video lending library
- Telephone consultation
- Computer database searches
- Training development
- Referral services
- Web site
- E-mail discussion group

Successful transit board *Continued from page 8*

to speak should be encouraged to do so, and each view should be considered before action is taken. Decisions should be clearly recorded in the official minutes and distributed to board members for review and approval.

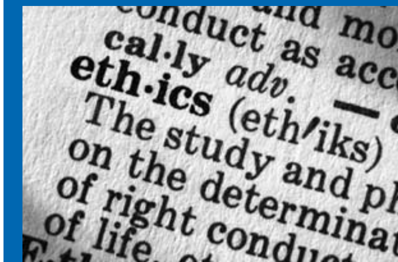
Conclusion

The board is vital to the success of the transit system, which affects the quality of life for many citizens. All transit board members should be mindful of the impact their decisions have on the agency and the community.

Many factors contribute to a successful transit board, but making sure everyone is on the same page is crucial. That's why board meetings should have agenda prepared in advance, a clear process for making decisions, appropriate time allocated for discussion, and well-informed board members. All of these will add up to efficient, thorough, and well-run meetings.

Source

• *Boards that Perform,* National RTAP training DVD and workbook, 2008.



Board Ethics

Every board should have a code of ethics that clearly defines what is and is not appropriate. Clear expectations for every member will help ensure the best interests of the organization are upheld.

The "private inurement" doctrine, which prohibits individuals from using insider information to profit from undue compensation or personal benefit (such as inflated contracts, gifts, nepotism, excessive travel reimbursement, etc.), should be adhered to.

Legal consequences can arise from violating conflict of interest statutes, but even perceived conflicts of interest can damage the credibility of the organization and the board, and demoralize staff.

COMING UP

REGISTER TODAY!

Fundamental Financial Management for Kansas Transit Agencies

Presented by Rich Garrity, RLS Associates
August 31, 2009, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
(Check-in begins at 9:30; pre-registration required)

Pre-conference training to the Kansas Public Transit Association Annual Meeting
Wichita Hyatt Regency, Wichita, Kansas

Sponsored by Kansas Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)
Cost: $35 for those registered for the KPTA Annual Meeting
$100 for Financial Management Training Only

To register, go to http://www.kstransit.org

Transit Resources

The National RTAP Program is in the process of formalizing its distribution library into R-TRAC, the Rural Technical Resource and Communication community. National RTAP training modules, best practice briefs, reports, brochures, primers are being compiled to make it easier for rural transit operators to find these resources.

Following is a list of some of the resources, what they cover and original date of publication. They are in DVD/CD-ROM format and many have workbooks. Eventually all these resources, and more, will be available for download at http://www.nationalrtap.org/Resources/. Some of the workbooks are available now.

Contact Pat Weaver, Kansas RTAP, at (785) 864-2595 if you need assistance or more information.

10 Golden Rules of Preventive Maintenance/ Introduction to Preventive Maintenance. Demonstrates ways to carry out a preventive maintenance program. 2002.

Boards That Perform. Addresses the roles, issues and responsibilities involved in being a transit board member. 2008.

Building Quality Service. Emphasizes the importance of the public's perceptions of the agency and its service; includes a section on marketing. 1995.

Emergency Procedures For Drivers. Offers basic tools to prepare for and confront on-the-road emergencies; for new and experienced drivers. 1989.

Emergency Procedures For Managers. Offers basic tools for managers to confront emergencies. 1989.

Essential Skills for Dispatchers. Designed to improve the skills of dispatchers of small transit agencies without software programs. 1990.

Essential Skills for Trainers. Designed for those who want to be a more effective trainer. 1991.

Problem Passengers; Challenging Situations. Offers strategies to drivers for handling disruptive behavior safely. 2002.

Risk Management for Rural Transit Systems. Explains the basics of risk management, how to analyze risk, and how to select appropriate financing measures. 1993.

Roles & Responsibilities of Transit Board Members. Designed to orient and train new board members of rural transit systems. 1991.

Roles & Responsibilities of Transit Managers. Helps managers achieve more cooperation, stronger teamwork, better attitudes, and effective results. 2004.

Safe Transport under the ADA. Explains how rural drivers implement and understand ADA requirements. 1993.

Scheduling & Dispatching for Rural Transit Systems. Describes the scheduler's and dispatcher's roles and responsibilities, and introduces ITS technologies. 2009.

STARTS Training. Focuses on safety training for rural drivers. 2008.

Tap into RTAP. Introduces the products and services available from the RTAP national program. 2001.

Threat & Vulnerability Toolbox. Guides rural transit managers through the process of setting priorities for safety, security and emergency preparedness. 2007.

Trading Places. Educates drivers and other personnel of the obstacles confronting elderly passengers and passengers with disabilities. 2001.

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Kansas TransReporter

The *Kansas TransReporter* is an educational and technology transfer newsletter published quarterly by the Kansas University Transportation Center. The newsletter is distributed free to rural and specialized transit providers and others with an interest in rural and specialized service.

The *Kansas TransReporter* is co-sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration under its Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) and the Kansas Department of Transportation.

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.

Calendar

Rural Transit Conferences and Training

UPCOMING KANSAS RTAP TRAINING:

2009 Summer Driver Training and Passenger Assistance Skills
August 11, 2009, Salina
August 20, 2009, Winfield

Fall 2009 Driver Training Workshops Defensive Driving and Passenger Assistance Skills
August 26 in Garden City
September 22 in Atchison
September 24 in Topeka
October 6 in Newton
October 14 in Colby
October 15 in Goodland
October 27 in Chanute
November 18 in Emporia

Defensive Driving and Emergency Procedures
August 27 in Dodge City
October 7 in Greenleaf
October 8 in Kansas City
October 28 in Independence
November 3 in Ottawa
November 17 in Wichita

For more information on Kansas RTAP training, call Kristin Kelly at (785) 864-2594.

Kansas Public Transit Association Annual Meeting
August 31 – September 2, 2009
in Wichita, KS. For more information:
http://kstransit.org

Kansas LTAP is offering driver training this summer and fall at multiple locations.