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FEATURE

The Business Case for Mobility Management

By Pat Weaver

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In recent years mobility management has been a centerpiece of discussion associated with developing regional and coordinated services—in Kansas and across the country. Kansas RTAP has published several articles and fact sheets defining it, providing examples of what a mobility manager does, and citing cases around the country where mobility managers are being utilized. We've learned about successes in improving access to transportation service and increased mobility. But can a case be made for benefits from a business perspective? Does mobility management help transit systems reduce costs, while at the same time provide more access? A paper written by Jon Burkhardt, transit consultant with Westat, Inc., and Jim McLary, who was at the time United We Ride Ambassador with

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FEATURE

TO OUR READERS: Kansas TransReporter Going Electronic

Starting with our October issue, we will be phasing out hard copies to most of our readers. You can link to the newsletter online and still get all the great content, but ***you need to sign up online*** for notification. See page 6 for details and be sure to sign up before September 1.

One-Call: Planning a "No Wrong Door" System for Transit Service

By Clifton Hall

Sometimes it is unclear to members of the public how they can seek information about transportation options available to them. One solution is a central information call center, known as a One-Call or One-Click system. This article provides basic information and resources regarding the implementation and planning of a One-Call system.

One-Call systems are not unique to transit. The flagship example is the 9-1-1

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Business case for mobility management *Continued from page 1*

the Community Transportation Association of America, examines some of the economic benefits of mobility management. This article will look at some examples of mobility management as a good business decision and describe whether that case can be made for rural transit.

What is mobility management again?

While there are many definitions of mobility management, the basic premise is that it's a customer-focused service. It considers services more systemically, looking across the community for the resources necessary to improve mobility of one or many. Burkhardt and McLary define it as "a strategic approach to managing a coordinated community-wide transportation network with multiple operating partners."

Mobility management functions include providing information, helping make trip connections, and planning transportation services. The activities are usually divided between either service activities such as development of "one-stop" travel information, travel training, coordination or brokerages; or system management such as working with employers to implement travel pass programs, promoting land use policies to complement transit services, or making sure that infrastructure improvements, such as a new or upgraded road, can accommodate transit services.

Individual services or programs such as a van pool program, a taxi subsidy program, transit passes or computerized centralized dispatch, when considered as part of a system, can be figure into mobility management. It is this systematic approach that distinguishes mobility management from business as usual. As Bruce Able, Assistant General Manager of Bus Operations at RTD said, it is "focusing on moving people instead of operating vehicles, creating partnerships that focus on cost effective ways to move people instead of focusing on the vehicles, and managing community mobility assets instead of just the transit agency's physical assets."

Measuring economic benefits of mobility management

The authors presented three examples in support of their business case: Denver RTD, Detroit SMART, and Portland's Ride Connection.

Denver RTD. Denver's regional system implemented several programs within mobility management: a van pool program, a taxi subsidy program which provides discounted taxi fares, Call-n-Ride, Bike-n-Ride, and Guaranteed Ride Home. In addition, employers distributed bus passes and a number of other programs were under implementation at the time of the compilation of case studies by Burkhardt and McLary—all with a focus on creating services that are "closer to the customer." These services were also more cost-effective than typical services.

In the reporting period of 2005, the authors estimate that the van pool program saved $700,000 over traditional services, providing more than 343,000 rides. Likewise, the user-side taxi subsidy program saved approximately $1.5 million for approximately 50,000 rides that normally would have been taken on RTD's paratransit service. In 2007, RTD reports that two of RTD's mobility management programs (the van pool program and the Access-A-Taxi program) continue to save RTD over $2 million per year while still increasing service (Dalton and Hosen, 2007).

Examples of current services put in place as part of mobility management, according to Abel, include Section 5311 match funding for partnering with private non-profits, Access-a-Cab, and several shuttle services with partners (Boulder HOP, Englewood ART Shuttle, Brighton Call-n-Ride, Arvada A-Line Shuttle, as well as a coordination pilot in Longmont.

Detroit's SMART Community Partnership Program. Detroit's Suburban Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) totally redesigned its services in the 1990s in response to a significant financial deficit. Through its Community Partnership Program, it decentralized services that could be provided more effectively by the individual communities, while centralizing functions that best served the communities: coordinated dispatching, preventative maintenance, joint capital purchases and travel training. This "cafeteria plan" allowed each community in the region to take part in the centralized functions that made sense for them. At the time of the report (2002), the program was estimated to have reduced costs by nearly 30 percent. By 2008, SMART was experiencing the highest ridership in their history, and even more savings. The program partners with local communities to "share the responsibility of operating their own transit systems while conserving resources and reducing costs."

Examples of services developed in recent years have include the Dearborn Bilingual Program, the Auburn Hills Emergency Evacuation Plan which utilizes vehicles in emergency evacuations, and a joint agreement with Blue Water Area Transit Authority and Detroit Department of Transportation to create a regional fare pass allowing passengers to easily transfer. These services, along with many others, led SMART from operating at a deficit to moving to a balanced budget by 2009. They have been able to by continue to cut costs but still expand services. In their 2009 annual report, SMART reported that administrative expenses were at nine percent of total annual costs—nearly 35 percent less than the national average for transit organizations.

Kansas RTAP Resources on Mobility Mangement

Improving Rural Transportation with Regional Cooperation. Kansas RTAP Fact Sheet, August 2009, http://www2.ku.edu/~kutc/pdffiles/FS-RegCoord.pdf.

What Does a Mobility Manager Do All Day? Kansas TransReporter, April 2012, page 1. http://www.kutc.ku.edu/pdffiles/KTR2012-April.pdf

What is Mobility Management. Kansas TransReporter, July 2009, page 3. http://www.kutc.ku.edu/pdffiles/KTR2009-Jul.pdf

Oregon's Ride Connection. Ride Connection, located in Portland, provides area-wide mobility management operating under contract to Tri-Met, the transit authority serving the Portland area. Ride Connection serves 3,000 square miles in three counties in Oregon and one county in Washington. Their services have reduced the costs of ADA paratransit services.

One cost-saving strategy has been to consolidate administrative functions such as driver training, compliance and maintenance. Ride Connection then brokers trips to their partners. Ride Connection makes extensive use of volunteers to provide trips that would be difficult for a public transportation agency. Other services include: Washington County U-Ride (service in rural areas of the county), Washington County Bus Service for commuter residents, Job Access, and many more.

Ride Connection provided paratransit trips at just under $10, while the Tri-Met LIFT program trip costs were approximately $20 per trip. The estimated cost savings of making use of Ride Connection as the mobility manager was estimated at about $2 million for approximately 100,000 rides (in 2000-2001). As the program has grown, so has the quantity of service and the potential savings. Ride Connection reports that they now provide more than 400,000 rides, along with an additional 1,000 customers through their travel training program (Ride Connection, 2013).

Salina's CityGo Taxi Subsidy Program. We've reported many times on some of the innovative programs operated by the CityGo program operated by OCCK, Inc. in Salina, Kansas. Their service includes fixed route, complementary paratransit, non-emergency medical transportation, and a mobility management strategy of taxi subsidy. The taxi subsidy program was initiated as a way of providing transit services beyond the regular hours of their fixed route services provided from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Saturday. Some passengers needed transit outside of those hours for employment transportation, but regular fixed route service or even regular demand-response service for those hours was too expensive. The solution they developed was to make use of taxi service in the community to respond to those needs.

Option	*# Passengers served*	*Cost per year to CityGo*
Taxi Subsidy Service	5,900	$12,000
Demand-response service provided by agency (est.)	5,900	$318,500
Savings		$306,500

Salina's taxi subsidy program saves the agency over $300,000 per year.

Is there a business case for mobility management in rural transit?

While cost savings for mobility management strategies in rural areas are not well-documented, mobility management strategies are being used more and more in rural communities, and quantifying cost savings while improving service is not far behind. Salina's CityGo provides a good example of just how much money mobility management strategies can save. Or from another perspective, mobility management strategies can provide expanded services to meet community needs at a much lower cost than would otherwise be possible. Let's see how they did it.

Here's how the cost comparison works. To provide demand response service between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. Monday through Friday and 5 p.m. Saturday to 6:a.m. Monday morning, OCCK estimates that 2.5 vehicles would be needed to meet demand at an annual cost of $318,500. The taxi subsidy program costs approximately $12,000 per year providing 5,900 trips. While passengers pay a higher fare for this premium after-hours service ($5 per trip) than for shared-ride demand-response service during the day, it is still a lower cost to the passenger for an unsubsidized taxi trip.

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Business case for mobility management *Continued from page 3*

Conclusion

Mobility management can stretch limited funding to provide the maximum benefit to customers, and hopefully reduce program costs while providing good service. As you move forward to implement a new program as part of your customer-centered service design, consider making the business case. What does delivery of traditional services cost per trip? Are you able to compare the cost per trip and number of trips to be provided to the cost of providing the service in an alternative way, possibly involving other partners to meet some of those needs? Can you make a business case for adding that service?

Some of the examples given here are from urban areas, but often include services provided to nearby rural or suburban areas. In addition, many of the types of mobility management approaches described may be relevant to rural and small urban areas. What may be lacking is the business case quantifying these services, showing the financial benefit to rural communities.

Making the business case for your agency's mobility management services helps your funding sources, local stakeholders and customers understand that your creative approaches are saving money while bringing needed services to your community. Documenting these savings with more rural examples helps us take a big step forward in increasing mobility options in rural communities.

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FEATURE

One-Call *Continued from page 1*

emergency call center, where people are encouraged to call during emergencies to receive fire, police, and emergency medical services. For transit purposes, a One-Call system can be defined as one that gathers information on services and programs of local transportation providers, and then connects the caller directly with those providers. This saves the customer from over-complicated research and running into barriers that prevent him or her from receiving needed services.

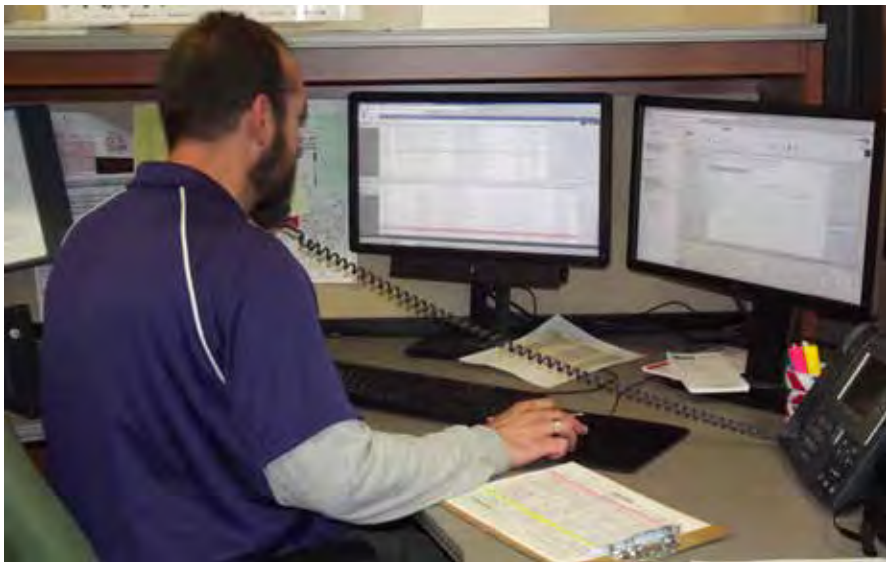
Connecting with riders

The main objective of a One-Call system is to provide access to regular, everyday transportation service to citizens, or the occasional services they might need otherwise. With this in mind, the One-Call center typically follows a three step customer service process of 1) inform, 2) assist, and 3) access. The center informs the customer, giving an idea of what is available and how their needs can be met. Next, the center can provide individual assistance, such as route and schedule planning, eligibility determination, and coordinating and advocacy services. Last, the center can connect the customer to transportation resources through centralized dispatch or calls to the appropriate agencies, giving them access to rideshare, paratransit, ticketing, and other transit resources.

Call center mission: Increase access to services

Usually, a call center acts as a transportation brokerage. The call center provides a clearinghouse for available transportation services in the area. Although multiple services may exist, the best and most available access can be given to the customer by the call center, reducing the possibility of the customer sifting through missing or conflicting information.

Customer service and the participation aspect of call centers make them an effective tool in mobility management. Positive benefits of call center implementation may include increased ridership, reduction in duplicated services,



A. Smith

Computerized dispatch and scheduling in the newly-opened Flint Hills Regional Transit Facility allows ATA Dispatcher John Evans to respond to passengers' travel needs while checking the schedule. Flint Hills ATA provides services in Riley, Geary and Pottowatomie Counties, and is working with Marshall County to expand regional dispatching services.

and better public image. One-Call centers may enhance your current mobility management strategies.

How to develop a One-Call system

At the core of any effective One-Call center is a strong partnership among a community's transportation providers. If cooperation is low in your service area, it will be difficult for a resource pool such as a One-call Center to form.

The resources each organization provides—as well as how they are provided, how each conducts business—is important in moving forward with partnerships.

If your area has a mobility manager, he or she will be the key point in connecting and visioning a call center plan. As a team, you can determine what need gaps are the most important to fill in your community. Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plans can serve as a guidepost to the needs of the community.

One of the first things your group can do is decide if one of the members would make a good host for the new call center. If not, what shared software or other solutions best meet the needs of each organization? For smaller transit providers, often the best solution is to partner with a larger provider with more technology and staff. This negates the needs for start-up costs of new systems and hiring. For a larger agency, it is often beneficial to add service to the existing system; contracting fees help pay for the systems costs and additional employees.

Think regionally

Since One-Call centers are inherently about partnerships, in rural areas it may be necessary to think of call centers as serving a region. In recent T-works legislation, funding was nearly doubled to enhance coordination between rural 5311 transit providers. The type of coordination possible generally falls on a scale between a regional call center, headed by a single organization, to a less centralized scheme where providers in the same region use synchronized electronic scheduling and dispatch to coordinate long trips efficiently and in a customer-centered manner. There is also a "service contracting" model where providers purchase certain services from each other in a coordinated effort.

Examples of One-Call centers in action

Hubbard County Heartland Express, an on-demand bus service located in Park Rapids, Minnesota, began contracting with Paul Bunyan Transit, located in nearby Beltrami County, to handle all calls, routing and dispatching. Previously, Hubbard County relied on a cell phone carried by their sole bus driver, but this driver-dispatcher system would be unwieldy when they expanded to a second bus. Now, they have been able to use dispatch software, automated vehicle locators, and mobile data terminals for more efficient operation. Ridership for Hubbard County increased by 18 percent in the first three months, and saved an estimated $23,000 in staffing, used for adding a dispatch employee.

A Kansas example of a One-Call center in action is in Finney County. The County has been acting as the central scheduler and dispatcher for both its jurisdiction and Dodge City in neighboring Ford County. Dodge City has seen an increase in ridership because of the centralized call center.

Anne Smith, Director of Flint Hills Transit in Manhattan, was a part of Flint Hills' adoption of a Regional One-Call Center Model. She says after implementing the system, "One of the best things to come out of this process has been that our ability to coordinate trips with other providers that, in the past, could never have happened." She noted word got out quickly about the ability to help transit users who need to travel across the region.

Smith says one of the biggest challenges to implementing the new system was resistance to changing policy and procedures, from employees, stakeholders, and even riders. People were satisfied with the status quo, and it was difficult to show that "just because it 'ain't broke' doesn't necessarily mean it's actually working." Customers were also resistant initially. "Initially some riders were very skeptical and resistant to the changes. Most riders now understand the process, and that we can, thanks to the changes we have implemented, provide more service options and do it more efficiently. Educating riders about public transportation, what it is—and just as important, what it is not—is a critical part of the process."

Even though the transit system has fully implemented One-Call system, they are looking to expand its capabilities. They would like to connect vehicles to the dispatching center with real-time data, which will improve on-time performance and operational efficiency.

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One-call *Continued from page 5*

Even customers will "be able to access real-time data on-line, [which] we believe will help reduce call traffic and create an overall better experience for the customer," Smith said.

Your next move

One-Call centers provide a valuable tool to small transit providers. Limited resources in large geographical areas make it difficult for one operator to fulfill the intra-regional transit needs of their customers. By forming or strengthening partnerships among other providers in your area, it is possible to coordinate and share resources to make customer service a function of your collective operation and mission.

If you're interested in such a partnership, contact providers in your area to start a conversation about the possible benefits of a One-Call center or centralized dispatching. KDOT is committed to helping you and your fellow providers increase the level of service in your region in the way you think will best accomplish your goals. KDOT is developing a business model to help agencies more easily coordinate and share technology within their region.

For more information contact Josh Powers at KDOT at joshuap@ksdot.org or call (785) 296-4907. More information on regional transit in Kansas can be found at the Kansas RTAP website at http://www.ksrtap.org

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SPECIAL NOTICE

Kansas TransReporter Bids Good-bye to Paper

By Pat Weaver

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Beginning with the October issue of the *Kansas Trans Reporter,* we will be migrating the distribution of your newsletter to electronic editions for most recipients. As the cost of printing and mailing continues to increase, it has become more and more difficult to continue with hard copy distribution.

The full version of the newsletter will still be available on our website, and an electronic alert with article highlights will be sent to your email inbox to inform you about the availability of the latest edition—and link you directly to it.

It's easy to get signed up for this alert for each newsletter. Visit our website and click on "Kansas RTAP Email List" at our home page at http://www.ksrtap.org. There is a short form to fill out. It should take just a minute or two.

We recognize that for some of our readers electronic access may pose a hardship (slow internet connection, limited access to a computer, etc.) If this is the case, please email me at weaver@ku.edu or call (785) 864-2595 and we'll be glad to work something out.

Good-bye paper, hello e-version! Same look, same great content, just in a different form. Sign up by September 1 to ensure you receive notice of the next issue (and future ones).

What to Do When the Lift Won't Work

A refresher on manual operation of the lift.

By Anne Lowder

When a lift won't work, it is often because of operator error or lack of preventive maintenance. But sometimes the lift just does not work no matter what precautions you have taken. In those instances, it is important that you already know how to properly operate the lift manually. Learning how to operate the lift manually when someone is on the lift is not safe—nor is it good customer service!

Avoid these common operator errors

One cause of lift malfunction is operator error. An operator who is hurrying to board or de-board passengers might try to skip steps and not operate the lift in a situation for which it is designed. For instance, sometimes a lift won't work because the vehicle is parked on sloped ground. The lift needs to be level to operate. Another common reason a lift won't work is not having the parking brake on before using the lift. The parking brake must be on for the lift to operate; this is a safety feature built into the equipment.

A damaged lift can also stop working. What can damage a lift is not always easily observable by operators. For instance when putting the lift into its stowed position, some operators tend to release the fold switch on the power operator's switch box before the lift is completely stowed because the lift makes a loud grinding noise (like metal rubbing against metal) when stowing. That noise, while unpleasant, is good because it means that the lift is locking–in (stowing properly). This keeps the lift from rattling while driving down the road. Properly locking the lift into its stowed position keeps components of the lift from moving and wearing out prematurely.

Another example that can cause damage to the lift involves the roll stop component of the lift. The roll stop (or kick plate) component (see above) is the shield at the front end of the lift that locks up into place to help prevent a wheelchair from rolling off the platform during lift operation. The roll stop is placed back in the "down" position when the passenger in the wheelchair is ready to de-board. Sometimes the operator does not check to see that the roll stop is completely down before putting weight on the lift to enter or exit the lift. This causes stress to the roll stop component and eventually the sensors will not detect when the plate is locked in the "up" position, which will cause the lift not to work. The roll stop needs to be lowered completely before entering or exiting the platform.

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A roll stop must be completely down on the ground before putting weight on the lift or the lift will eventually stop working. This one has a few inches to go.

If all else fails: Run the lift manually

There will be that time when the lift just does not work, despite all your precautions. That will not be the time to learn how to operate the manual pump on the lift. My experience during the KS RTAP Advance Mobility Securement class, where each driver is required to operate the lift manually, has been that most drivers, even if experienced, do not know how to manually run the lift. If I were a passenger stuck halfway up or down on the lift in inclement weather, and I was watching the driver try to read the instructions on how to operate the lift manually, I would not be happy.

Manual operation is simple with the right equipment in the vehicle. There is a notched rod to be used as a pump handle that comes with each lift. I have been in vehicles where the rod is missing. You will not be able to operate the lift manually without the rod to insert into the pump. Be sure that the rod is listed on the daily pre-inspection form and is actually in place in the vehicle.

How to manually deploy the platform to de-board a passenger

[Note: These instructions are general. Refer to your lift's operator's manual and the manufacturer's online videos for how to operate your particular lift.]

Insert the notched end of the pump handle into the hole in the hydraulic pump cover and turn the handle ¼ turn counter-clockwise to lower the platform until the rear kick pad is level with the vehicle floor. Turn the handle clockwise ¼ turn to stop the lift from lowering further. Note: do not turn the handle more than ¼ turn, as it may cause the valve to disengage from the pump body, which will disable the pump.

Roll the wheelchair with passenger onto the platform, check that the roll

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When the lift won't work *Continued from page 7*

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Proper operation and maintenance of a lift help keep lift malfunctions to a minimum.

stop is in the "up" position for safety, and turn the valve ¼ turn counterclockwise to continue lowering the platform. The lowering of the platform is done by gravity and no pumping is necessary.

How to manually raise the lift

To return the lift to its stowing position after the passenger de-boards, turn the handle ¼ turn clockwise and begin manually pumping as you would a tire jack until the lift is completely folded inside the vehicle and locked into place. The roll stop will hinge automatically. Stow the pump handle and close the vehicle doors.

If you have a passenger on the lift ready to board the vehicle, turn the handle ¼ turn clockwise and begin manually pumping until a few inches off the ground and then check the roll stop to make sure it is locked into place. Continue pumping the lift manually until the lift is at floor level and the bridge plate is flattened. Stop pumping and assist the passenger off the lift and into the vehicle. Then resume pumping until the lift is folded inside the vehicle and locked into place.

Preventative Maintenance Tips for Lifts

Regular maintenance is your key to lifts that operate well. Here are tips from lift manufacturers Braun and Ricon. Every lift built after 2005 has a cycle counter on it that will tell you the number of times the lift has cycled. The lift should be serviced every six months or 1750 cycles.

Six Month Maintenance:

- Inspect lift mounting brackets and hardware beneath vehicle to verify that they are not loose or damaged.
- Inspect electrical wiring for chafed wire insulation, loose connectors, etc.
- Verify that all lift decals are affixed properly, clearly visible, and legible.
- Verify that all handrail fasteners are properly tightened.
- Verify that all lifting frame pins are installed properly, free from damage and locked in position.
- Verify that platform motions occur smoothly and without obstruction.
- Verify that bridge plate deploys fully when platform stops at vehicle floor level and that it rests evenly across rear edge of platform.
- Be certain that roll stop opens or closes properly when it contacts ground or leaves the ground.
- Add fluid only when platform is at ground level. Adding fluid while platform is raised will cause reservoir to overflow when platform is lowered.
- Hydraulic power unit: Check for visible hydraulic fluid leakage. Inspect hydraulic hoses for damage. Verify that all fittings are tightly secured. Verify that backup pump manual release valve is lightly closed.

Sources: Bruan and Ricon service manuals. See Sources below for complete citations.

Practice is important

Manually operating a lift is a fairly simple process, but it's easy to forget the steps if you don't practice them regularly. And while the steps are easy, the act of pumping can be quite strenuous if you are trying to raise the lift with a passenger on the lift. Drivers should practice this at least quarterly.

In sum

A lift is a mechanical piece of equipment with hydraulic and electrical systems that requires regular preventive maintenance. Operator errors can cause damage and create unsafe conditions for both the driver and the passenger. Drivers need to be fully trained to inspect and operate the lift. Finally, even with good maintenance, the lift still has the potential to fail. Therefore, new drivers should be trained in manual lift operation and experienced drivers should operate the lift manually—with AND without a passenger on the lift—periodically (at least quarterly), as a refresher, during a pre-trip inspection. Remember, if you don't know how to use your equipment, it won't be of any use when you need it.

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Essential Components of a Transit Board

By Ann Lowder and Pat Weaver

Have you given much thought to your working relationship with your board or your commissioners? How much impact do you think this relationship—good or bad—has on the success of your services? A handbook developed by National RTAP, *Boards That Perform*, provides some good pointers on what to look for in a successful board. Essential to a successful board is a clear definition of responsibilities. This article explores some of key responsibilities of a board of directors and how the board interacts with the agency manager or executive director, and agency staff.

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Why it matters

As a transit agency manager, no matter what type of agency you lead, you have a governing body of some form. The structure of that governing body differs depending on what type of agency you are: public agency, private non-profit, or transit authority. However, the bottom line is the same: your governing body establishes the policy and overall direction for your transit agency. A good working relationship between the executive director or general manager with the governing body must be based on a good understanding of the board's role, distinguished from the roles of the manager and staff. That understanding reduces conflicts and creates a more positive environment towards achieving the big-picture goals of your agency which ultimately is to oversee a safe, cost-effective, and customer-friendly public transportation system.

Types of transit boards

The governing body of a public transit agency that is a department of a local government in Kansas is the city or county council or commission. The council or commission makes final decisions about overall scope of the program, the budget and other overall policy decisions. The director of the transit agency may also have one or more supervisors above her or him (for example, a city manager or county administrator) making administrative decisions.

For private not-profit organizations, the legal status of your agency is determined by your corporate charter and by-laws filed with the Secretary of State. These documents specify the organizational structure and overall responsibilities of the board. The by-laws generally determine the method for member selection, terms of office, board size and composition, compensation, and general responsibilities of the members. Due to the diversity in transit agency size, type and geographic location, the specific make-up of transit boards vary from system to system.

There are other possible organizational structures for transit agencies (e.g. a transit authority); however, the rural public transit agencies in Kansas are either departments of city or county, or are private non-profit organizations. Often in Kansas, transit services operate as a department or unit under a multi-service service agency. The transit manager may be one or more steps removed from the direct line to the board of directors.

Regardless of corporate authority, the way in which the board members come to membership (elected or appointed), or the overall operational structure of the agency, the fundamental responsibilities of the board remain basically the same and include four primary roles: safety, legal, stewardship and advocacy.

Policy vs. management

According to the National RTAP Handbook, boards are charged with the role of policy makers of a transit system—the "big picture." While many transit board members have a general understanding of their roles and responsibilities, some may confuse their role in policy-making with management's role in day-to-day operations.

Transit board members are sometimes criticized for trying to function as part-time administrators. Having clearly-defined procedures and a good board training program to orient new board members to their responsibilities can help avoid some of these problems. Upon entering board service,

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Essential components of a transit board *Continued from page 9*

Roles of the Executive Director, Board, and Committees, by Topic Area

Executive

Executive Director.....	• Runs all day-to-day operations, informs board to help shape policy and mission, makes staff hiring/firing decisions.
Board.....	• Makes governance decisions with input from Executive Director.
Committee.....	• Makes recommendations to the full board for hiring, firing, and evaluating the Executive Director, makes governance and policy decisions in crises, coordinates and monitors work of all committees, when requested, offers input to assist the executive director in day-to-day decisions.

Finance/ Audit

Executive Director.....	• Manages day-to-day finances, proposes budget, and reports spending against budget.
Board.....	• Discusses and approves budget, and reviews figures quarterly (at each meeting).
Committee.....	• Reviews budget in detail, aids the Executive Director in ensuring appropriate financial controls are in effect, and oversees audit.

Public Relations

Executive Director.....	• Manages day-to-day public relations activities, with the PR board committee, builds an annual plan for public relations, requests assistance on specific PR tasks from the Board and oversees completion of those tasks.
Board.....	• Approves annual public relations plan.
Committee.....	• Ensures that an annual public relations plan is submitted and approved, helps the executive staff plan for public relations needs, Carries out specific requests for assistance from the Executive Director.

Personnel/Human Resources

Executive Director.....	• Manages everyday personnel activities, suggests personnel policies and procedures.
Board.....	• Votes on personnel policies when necessary.
Committee.....	• Assures personnel policies and procedures are in place, approves personnel policies and procedures, adjudicates in cases of formal grievance.

Source: Public Transit Board Governance Guidebook, TCRP Report 85, Chapter, 6, pg. 13. See Sources for complete citation.

all members should be provided a written job description that clearly delineates their roles and responsibilities.

Boards That Perform outlines 10 areas of responsibility for nonprofit boards:

- Determine the organization's mission.
- Select the executive director.
- Support the executive director and review his or her performance.
- Ensure effective organizational planning.
- Ensure adequate resources.
- Oversee/monitor effective use of resources.
- Determine and monitor the organization's programs and services.
- Enhance the organization's programs and services through advocacy.
- Serve as a court of appeal where appropriate.
- Assess its own leadership and performance.

Legal and fiduciary accountability

Regardless of what board members are called, they are in essence the agency's trustees in the literal and legal sense of the term. No matter how the agency is structured or the degree of authority delegated to staff, committees, or affiliates, the board and therefore the individual board members are ultimately accountable.

The board has the principal responsibility for fulfillment of the organization's mission and the legal/fiduciary accountability for its operations. There have been several court cases where board members were held legally accountable, largely because they had failed to exercise reasonable oversight and objectivity. The board of a nonprofit that has been incorporated generally is not liable for the debts of the nonprofit, according to the Nonprofit Risk Management Center. However, according to the Center, each board member still has the responsibility to exercise due care

continued on next page

in carrying out fiduciary responsibilities. Be sure to review all insurance coverage of the organization and consult with an attorney to ensure that your board members and the agency are adequately protected.

A note on conflict of interest: A key principle applicable to anyone in a fiduciary position is that a board member must avoid actual or possible conflicts of interests or duties. For example, a board member owns a construction company and is awarded the bid to build and expand the agency's maintenance building. The organization should have a clear conflict-of-interest policy in place that addresses actual conflicts of interest, the appearance of conflict of interest, and "duality of interests." A number of conflict-of-interest resources are available at the National Council of Nonprofits (see the first resource in the sidebar at right).

The Chair

The leadership of the board chair is very important. A board chair is usually the primary spokesperson and liaison with the Executive Director and appointed bodies. The specific roles and responsibilities a board chair will depend on the structure of the organization; however, some general duties will apply to most boards. Responsibilities for the board chair generally include providing leadership to the board to ensure effective action, and working in partnership with the executive director. Specific responsibilities include developing meeting agendas with the executive director, convening board meetings, establishing committees, appointing committee chairs, and serving on committees.

Board member responsibilities

A board member has a responsibility to understand and support the mission of the organization, be familiar with the organization's by-laws and policies and understand and operate within the roles and responsibilities of the board. Some of the specific tasks for board members include preparing for all meetings, reading minutes and reports, and attending meetings (board meetings and other important related meetings such as committee meetings). Board members should be willing to participate in committee work, and vote on major policies and major actions such as budget, changes in programs and/or services, and the annual public relations plan.

A few more thoughts

The essential components of a transit board are defined by the corporate charter and by-laws established by either the board of directors or other similar governing body of the transit agency. The by-laws provide the power for the board to establish agency polices and evaluate the executive director (or CEO or general manager).

Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the executive director (day-to-day operations) and of the board members (policy and fiduciary responsibility) to avoid a situation in which the board strays into directing the day-to-day transit operations of the agency. Board members are responsible for setting policy and they hold legal and fiduciary responsibility through reasonable oversight. Day-to-day management is the responsibility of the executive director.

Finally, your board should conduct an annual board assessment to determine progress towards that year's goals and objectives and what might need improvement.

For more information on transit board development, read both the National RTAP's publication *Boards That Perform,* and the TCRP Report 85, *Public Transit Board Governance Guidebook,* at the links provided in the Sources below.

Useful Resources on Board Development

Conflict of Interest. National Council of Nonprofits. http://www.councilofnonprofits.org/conflict-of-interest.

Boards and Governance. Nonprofit Risk Management Center. http://nonprofitrisk.org/advice/faqs/boards-governance2.shtml.

McNamara, Carter MBA, PhD., *Checklist to Evaluate a Nonprofit Board of Directors.* (2010). http://managementhelp.org/organizationalperformance/nonprofits/boards.htm.

A board member has a responsibility to understand and support the mission of the organization, be familiar with the organization's by-laws and policies, and understand and operate within the roles and responsibilities of the board.

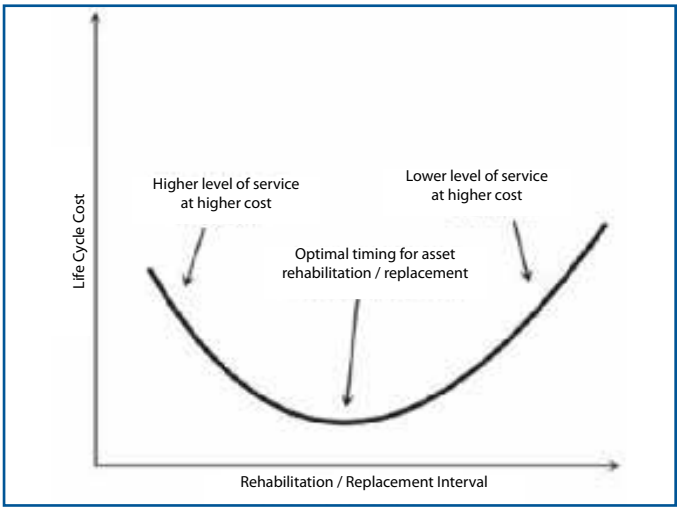
Sources

- Boards that Perform. (2002). National Rural Transit Assistance Program (NRTAP) resource: Retrieved July 30, 2013. http://portal.nationalrtap.org/iframe/resourcedetail.aspx?id=172
- Public Transit Board Governance Guidebook. (2002) Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 85. Retrieved July 30, 2013. http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_85.pdf

Make a Plan to Keep Your Vehicles Rolling: Deciding When to Replace and When to Repair

By Clifton Hall

As a transit manager, you know the value your assets have in your operation, especially your vehicles. Repair and replacement is definitely one of the primary concerns in maintaining your vehicle fleet, but new best practices are emerging to help transit agencies determine when it makes the most economic sense to replace a vehicle, allowing for better planning for securing funds for repair and replacement. This article will explain investment prioritization, an important part of transit asset management that helps even small agencies decide which vehicles should be replaced, and in what order. It will introduce basic principles of investment prioritization, how it applies to small transit providers, and some analytical tools to perform calculations to assist with informed decision-making.



Relationship between life cycle cost and intervention interval. TCRP Report 157.

Investment prioritization: What is it?

Investment prioritization is the process of deciding the best schedule for replacement and/or rehabilitation of your assets; for rural transit agencies these assets are primarily vehicles. The primary goal of investment prioritization is to reduce backlog, which is the cost of bringing all assets to an ideal state-of-good-repair. More information on transit asset management and state-of-good-repair can be found in the April 2014 *Kansas TransReporter* article, "Transit Asset Management Plans: What Are They and How Do They Apply to Rural Transit?"

From an economic perspective, the ideal time to replace an asset is when its life cycle costs reach a minimum. An asset's life cycle cost is the price paid for that asset plus the cost of maintaining it in operation.

Typically, a vehicle's performance follows this pattern over time: 1) The vehicle performs efficiently, with low maintenance cost, and begins to pay for itself; 2) The vehicle's life cycle costs hit a low point as the initial investment is paid for, but maintenance costs slowly start to rise; 3) The vehicle's life cycle costs begin to increase because of increased maintenance costs due to age or wear-and-tear.

Replacing a vehicle cannot always be done at will because of financial limitations, and that is important to consider when deciding to replace rather than repair or refurbish a vehicle. The ideal time to replace an asset is not when the operating costs of the vehicle exceed the net benefit it provides. Replacing a vehicle does have high initial costs, but replacing a vehicle with rising life cycle costs will help your agency the most in the long run.

Determine your assets' life spans

The service life of a vehicle is the time or mileage the vehicle is designed to operate at a certain service level. The remaining service life (RSL) of a vehicle is the time between the end of the vehicle's service life and the present. In Kansas, KDOT policy requires a minimum of 100,000 miles on a vehicle (or excessive maintenance costs) when application for funding is submitted for its replacement under the Section 5311 or 5310 programs.

When planning to rehabilitate or replace an asset, it is important to keep in mind how likely the asset is to fail before it reaches the projected end of its service life. Also, it is helpful to think of the components of an asset as having their own service lives. The vehicle itself may be an "ongoing concern," with smaller, replaceable components that have easily-predictable life spans. The prospect of replacing a major part, such as a transmission in an older vehicle, for example, may trigger the replacement of the entire asset as opposed to rehabilitating the vehicle by replacing the expensive component.

Balance performance and costs

When you consider replacing your assets, it is often because the cost of repair exceeds the cost of replacing the vehicle. By tracking the ongoing costs of each of your vehicles, you will be able to compare them to the monetary benefits the asset produces.

Performance measures quantify the service level and

capabilities of a given asset. They help determine the benefit an asset is giving during its lifecycle, as opposed to its cost, helping you understand the value the asset brings to your operation.

Performance measures include on-time performance, vehicle reliability, and customer satisfaction. Whatever strategies your agency uses to record the outputs and benefits your system produces for customers can be seen as performance measures.

Optimal replacement time

In general, the best time to replace a vehicle is when the benefits minus costs of a new vehicle outweigh the benefits minus costs of the current vehicle. Understanding and planning for the replacement of a vehicle based on its remaining service life, even if the need for replacement isn't immediate, is the backbone of a vehicle prioritization system.

For example, if one of your vehicles begins to need more repairs and is also experiencing decreasing fuel economy and low on-time performance, it may be a good idea to look ahead at replacing the vehicle. Repair prices will likely continue to rise as the vehicle continues to age, and a new vehicle will perform better than the current one in the future.

Tools available for prioritizing assets

With transit asset management growing across the country, TCRP has released analytical tools to help managers understand the monetary benefits their assets produce, and which assets require more immediate attention.

TCRP provides Excel spreadsheets, described below, to help calculate when assets should be replaced and in what order. Using these spreadsheets also gives transit managers an idea of what types of data can be collected for vehicles and other assets.

TCRP's Vehicle Modeling Tool. This tool serves two functions: first, it helps estimate the cost-minimizing point where rehabilitation or replacement is ideal; second, it helps predict the priority the vehicle will rank in the fleet. The model considers cost of rehabilitation or replacement, fuel and maintenance costs, delay costs, and potential savings yielded by replacing the vehicle. It then generates a PI (prioritization index) value that allows asset priorities to be compared to one another. This is a very comprehensive tool, and may only apply to Kansas agencies with larger vehicle fleets, but can apply to any agency depending on the detail of data collected.

TCRP's Prioritization Modeling Tool. This tool helps generate a set of rehabilitation and replacement scenarios by entering a budget and list of funding projects. It requires PI calculations from the vehicle modeling tool that help quantify the cost and economic benefits of each project.

These two tools are available online from the Transportation Research Board at http://www.trb.org/TCRP/Blurbs/167637.aspx. Alongside blank spreadsheets are examples populated with sample data to give you an idea of how the spreadsheets work.

Lay the groundwork for transit asset management

Prioritizing your investments is not only a good business practice for your agency, it will be helpful in your preparation for taking on new responsibilities in transit asset management (TAM). Asset prioritization is a key concept in TAM. While firm regulations have not been released by the Federal Transit Administration on transit asset management, thinking about his practice will help you be prepared, and meanwhile, help you keep your buses and other vehicles on the road.

Sources

- TCRP Report 157. State of Good Repair: Prioritizing the Rehabilitation and Replacement of Existing Capital Assets and Evaluating the Implications for Transit. 2012.
- KDOT, Instructions for Application for Public Transportation Assistance. FY 2013-2014.
- Iowa DOT, Policies developed to guide Office of Public Transit procedures, requirements and funding distribution, Accessed May 1, 2012. http://www.iowadot.gov/transit/policies.html

Emergency evacuation workshop *Continued from page 14*

In sum

Conducting emergency exercises is essential to increasing skill and instilling confidence in your drivers' ability to cope in an emergency. It has been shown that paratransit agencies that conduct emergency exercises are better prepared to respond to emergencies. Emergency exercises also enhance external and internal communication by developing best practices for your agency with other community emergency response agencies. Emergency exercises are an activity that should be integrated into your drivers' training. Evacuation exercises need to be routinely created, practiced, evaluated and revised.

While we won't drive your bus into running water to teach you safe evacuation, this new training course will include the use of transit vehicles, equipment and people to get you more comfortable with the evacuation process.

To schedule a training, or to just get more information, contact Anne Lowder at Kansas RTAP, alowder@ku.edu or call (785) 864-1469.

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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Kansas RTAP Staff

Assistance can be obtained by contacting a *Kansas TransReporter* staff person at the numbers or address above.

Project Director ..... Pat Weaver
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Contributors ..... Anne Lowder, Clifton Hall, Pat Weaver

Other Services

In addition to publishing the *Kansas TransReporter,* Kansas RTAP 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
- Website
- Email discussion group

Emergency Evacuation Training Added to RTAP Lineup for 2014

Bring "Evacuation Techniques for Rural Transit Passengers" to your community.

By Anne Lowder

We at Kansas RTAP are always looking for ways to provide more hands-on training to Kansas rural transit agencies. Another hands-on course was launched late last year to improve vehicle evacuation procedures. The course includes some classroom time, some tabletop exercises and, finally, evacuation drills with a 15-20 passenger lift-equipped vehicle and a minivan with a ramp. Learn more about this class here, and consider hosting this training for your agency and others in your area.

What's included in the training?

The training is approximately 20 percent classroom discussion and exercises and 80 percent hands-on exercises that occur in real time, in the field, involving movement of people that the driver would be called upon to do in an actual event.

The hands-on evacuation exercises assess the drivers' capability on specific emergency response functions, such as:

- **Mobilization** (ability of the driver to make decisions about whether the vehicle should be evacuated and, if so, to be able to lead the evacuation),
- **External communication** (with first responders and passengers), and
- **Internal communication** (with dispatch and supervisors).

The class includes participation of other emergency personnel in the area. Your agency benefits through greater communication and coordination with your local emergency personnel. The local emergency agency attendees benefit as well: they increase their knowledge of your system, the interior configuration of your vehicle(s), typical passengers and passenger loads, and equipment that might be needed in responding to an emergency involving one of your vehicles.

The pilot class

Kansas RTAP piloted the new class last September at the Potawatomi Tribal Transit Agency. The training was held for CTD 3 area transit agencies, and included three hours of class time in the morning discussing evacuation steps, emergency equipment on the vehicle, and table-top exercises. The afternoon session included multiple full-scale operational evacuation exercises using real vehicles.

The Potawatomi Tribal Transit Agency, as the host, arranged for the training location, the vehicles, and involvement from local emergency personnel. Doug Schreiner, Chief Paramedic of the Potawatomi Tribal Fire Department and Anne Lowder, trainer for Kansas RTAP, met in advance to plan the day's activities, and they coordinated the training activities for the day.

How can you get this class in your community?

Emergency exercises should be integrated into your drivers' training. The evacuation exercises should be routinely created, practiced, evaluated and revised.

The RTAP course is ideal as a CTD-wide training offered in a central location. The goal is to include not only the transit agencies, but also local police, fire, or other EMS personnel.

As host agency, you provide a meeting room and help to secure the use of two vehicles (a 15-20 passenger lift vehicle and a minivan with ramp). In addition, we ask that you help identify the appropriate emergency personnel in your community to work with us on the training. If you don't have an existing relationship with those individuals, we'll work with you to get them involved.

continued on page 13

Transit Resources

PUBLICATIONS

TCRP Report 163: Strategy Guide to Enable and Promote the Use of Fixed-Route Transit by People with Disabilities: 2014. provides useful strategies on implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act with a focus on fixed-route bus and rail systems. The guide provides examples of strategies that not only make a transit system accessible but strategies that make it usable by people with disabilities. http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/170626.aspx

National RTAP How to Find Almost Anything: A Toolkit Connecting Rural and Tribal Transit Stakeholders to Information: 2014. This toolkit is designed to showcase the numerous free and low-cost resources available to rural and tribal transit providers and state DOT officials. http://webbuilder.nationalrtap.org/findanything/welcome.aspx

Community Transportation Association Charting Medical Transportation: 2014. From the effect of managing chronic health care conditions to dialysis to CDL medical certification requirements, the articles that make up this publication offer readers a broader context for understanding transit's role in successful health care outcomes. http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=3874&z=60

❑ **Easter Seals Project Action Paratransit Customer Rights and Responsibilities Bookmark: 2014.** This laminated bookmark details the rights guaranteed to paratransit customers under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the responsibilities passengers have when using ADA paratransit. Check the box here and fill out the order form to receive one.

❑ **Easter Seals Project Action Transit Customer Rights and Responsibilities Bookmark: 2014.** This laminated bookmark details the rights guaranteed to transit customers under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the responsibilities passengers have when using community transportation. Check the box here and fill out the order form to receive one.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

August 11 -13, 2014
Kansas Public Transportation Association
2014 KPTA Conference
Wichita, KS 67209
http://kstransit.org/

August 18 -20, 2014
SWTA Community Mobility PLUS NCMM Performance Measures Workshop
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001
https://www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=1558276&lbrd=1&rtypeid=839216

August 24 - 27, 2014
National Rural ITS Conference
Branson, MO
http://www.nritsconference.org/index.html

October 26 – 29, 2014
21st Rural Public and Intercity Bus Conference
Monterey, CA
www.ribtc.org

ORDER FORM

A few of our above resources are available in hard copy for readers who do not have internet access. These resources have a checkbox at the end of the listing. Check the item(s) you would like to receive and fill out the form below. Fax to (785) 864-3199.

Name_____ Title _____

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University of Kansas
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Kansas TransReporter
1536 W. 15th Street, M2SEC Building, Room G520
Lawrence, KS 66045-7609

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SAVE A TREE!
If you would rather link to our newsletter electronically instead of receiving a hard copy, send your email address to LHarris@ku.edu and we'll send a notice to you when each issue is published.

Is your mailing information correct? Send any changes to (785) 864-3199 (fax).

Kansas TransReporter

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.

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

KANSAS RTAP TRAINING:

Responding to Emergencies: Response Procedures and Crisis Communication
July 17 in Hays
September 4 in Independence
September 10 in Garden City
October 16 in Salina
October 23 in Topeka
November 20 in Emporia

NSC Coaching the Van Driver III: Driving Defensively and Curbing Transit Operator Distracted Driving
July 9 in Emporia
July 10 in Topeka
July 16 in Oakley
August 28 in Salina
October 9 in Bonner Springs
October 22 in Ottawa

Passenger Assistance and Infectious Disease Awareness and Prevention
August 27 in Winfield
September 3 in Pittsburg
September 11 in Dodge
October 15 in Russell
November 19 in Moundridge

Advanced Mobility Securement Devices
September 18 in Leavenworth

You can request to host two hands-on training opportunities:
- **Advanced Mobility Securement**
- **Evacuation Techniques for Rural Transit Passengers**

Contact Anne Lowder at 785-864-1469 or alowder@ku.edu to host and schedule these training sessions in your area.

OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Easter Seals Project Action "Excellence in Service for Paratransit Managers Part 1"
Online training July 21–August 22, 2014. This virtual training course is designed for ADA complementary paratransit managers who are new to the field. Content highlights the history of the disability movement and how to engage the disability community in your service area, while gaining a greater understanding of the ADA and sensitivity toward people who have disabilities. http://www.projectaction.org/Training/OnlineCourses/ESPM.aspx

National Transit Institute Advance Mobility Device Securement Train-the-Trainer Workshop
October 28 -29, 2014
Location in Kansas TBD

***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.*