

Engage Stakeholders & Develop Effective Partnerships

PLAN to Work It!

Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning Workshop 2015

March 4 & 5, 2015

Last week in Texas!



What Rural Transit Operators Do

- **Meet Service Demands**
 - Rural Demand Response
 - Elderly & Persons with Disabilities
 - Workforce
 - Medical (VA Clinics, Dialysis, Regional Specialists)
- **Safety & Efficiency**
- **Secure Funding**

Doing More with Less!

- Demand is growing in every category
- Funding is constrained
 - More agencies applying for same dollars
 - Restrictions on 5310 use (preventive maintenance historically)
- Grants eliminated
 - JARC
 - New Freedom
 - Greyhound



There is only ONE way to do this...

- **Through Coordination & Partnerships**

- Health & Human Service Agencies
- Educational Facilities
 - Public & Private Higher Education
 - Training Facilities
- Government Agencies
 - Cities
 - Counties
 - Regional Planning Organizations
- Chamber of Commerce
 - Employers
 - Medical Providers
 - Senior Living Facilities



How We Built Partnerships?

- Reaching out and building awareness
 - Awareness of who we are
 - Awareness of what we do
 - Awareness of the need for transportation
- Everyone is busy with their own work already. It is up to US to show them how working together will benefit their clients and increase efficiencies
- We meet people all of the time that do not know what TRAX is or the extent of what we do
- Many think it is only medical transportation
- In the end it is all about building relationships and TRUST



Partnering with Health & Human Service Agencies

Many have “Transportation Dollars”

- **Area Agency on Aging (MOU to transport elderly throughout the 9 County Service Area)**
 - To Meal Centers
 - To Medical Appointments
 - To Shopping
- **Opportunities (MOU for transport to Day Programs - provide broad range of developmental & support services in Texarkana)**
 - Provide to senior day programs
- **Center for the Blind**
- **DARS**
 - Buy passes for Transit Services



JARC – a great example



- **Coordinated with Workforce Solutions of Northeast Texas**
 - **What WE did:**
 - Negotiated 24 hour/day service with local taxi company & entered into MOU
 - MOU secured transportation for $\frac{1}{2}$ of the normal rate for the taxi and waived the additional per mile charge within urban areas
 - Negotiated greatly reduced rates in rural areas
 - Reduced fares became part of the match for the Grant
 - Transported participants to
 - Take their children to child care
 - Job interviews
 - Their actual job
 - Monitored that participants actually were searching/working when they reached the destination
 - Ensured that funds were actually used for transportation (previously Workforce Solutions simply provided \$ directly to participants)
 - **What Workforce Solutions of Northeast Texas did:**
 - Screened and referred participants
 - Provided monthly report of the staff time that provided “in-kind” match for the Grant



New Freedom-another great example

Coordinated with Taxi to provide ADA “Above & Beyond” Currently Provided Transportation

– What WE did:

- Negotiated MOU to provide extended service beyond normal demand response hours (evening and weekend) with local taxi company
 - MOU secured transportation for ½ of the normal rate for the taxi and waived the additional per mile charge
 - Reduced rates became part of the match for the Grant



Partnering with Educational Facilities

- We provided transportation for Northeast Texas Community College students thru an MOU with college
- We are partnering with Paris Junior College for referrals of Students with Disabilities & elderly students to the new fixed-route in Paris



Partnering with Government Agencies

- **Coordinate paratransit for Texarkana Urban Transit District (TUTD)**
 - TUTD operates the fixed route service in Texarkana Urban Area
 - TRAX provides the paratransit service thru an MOU with TUTD
 - Provides approximately 900 trips/month
 - To medical appointments
 - Work
 - Shopping



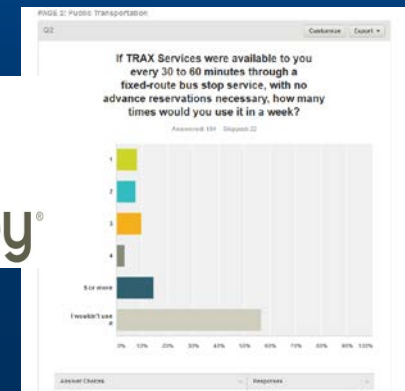
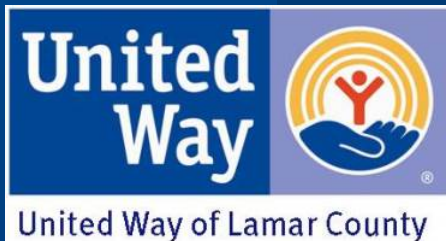
Creating a Win-Win Paris, TX

- **The Ultimate Partnership**
 - **Health & Human Service Agencies**
 - United Way of Lamar County
 - Lamar County Human Resources
 - Salvation Army
 - Paris-Lamar County Health District
 - The Children's Advocacy Center of Paris
 - New Hope Center of Paris (women's shelter)
 - Lamar County Veterans Service Office
 - **Government - City of Paris**
 - **Educational Facility - Paris Junior College**
 - **(Private Business)** Texas Oncology, Primary Care Associates of Paris & Atmos Energy

Creating a Win-Win Paris, TX

How to transition from demand response to a fixed-route with paratransit?

- Planning completed with many stakeholders involved
 - Health & Human Service Agencies, Paris Junior College and Private Businesses really stepped up
 - Executed Letters of Commitment to screen & refer clients (“in-kind” match)
 - Committed to Purchase tokens/passes each month
 - Got on-line surveys completed
 - Circulated Petitions of Support
 - Used Social Media
- Applying for 5310 Grant funds to make fixed-route ADA accessible



Creating a Win-Win

Paris, TX –Partnership Makes it Work!

- **Approached the City of Paris**
 - They are providing:
 - Engineering & Planning staff time (survey, design, TxDOT coordination)
 - Use of their Sign Shop
 - Public Works staff time to install curb-cuts, concrete walks, pads & shelters
 - Provide concrete and sign materials at cost (\$25,000 savings)
 - This equates to \$68,000 in staff time for “in-kind” match



Questions?

Owetta Walton-Bost
Transportation Manager
Ark-Tex Council of Governments

owalton@atcog.org
(903) 255-3529