2012

UNITED WE RIDE PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the early 2000's, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has adopted mobility management as a coordination strategy for public transportation. TxDOT's Public Transportation Division provides technical support, financial assistance, and coordination services to the public transit providers within the state (Public Transportation Division 2012). In an effort to support regional transportation coordination, TxDOT hosted a statewide series of forums where both public transportation employees and representatives of state health and human services agencies discussed public transportation. One common finding was that caseworkers were unaware of the services available while public transportation providers were unaware of unmet needs (Dunlap 2009, 10). In an effort to rectify this situation, TxDOT applied for, and received, federal funding to advance mobility management through the United We Ride (UWR) program of the Federal Transit Administration to explore innovative options to improve communication and increase public transportation ridership.

A key goal summarizes the fundamental objective of the Texas UWR program: To simplify access to public transportation for individual customers. To accomplish this, the project seeks to "assure that:

- Case workers and mobility managers from diverse agencies are fully informed of transportation resources and needs in their communities, and
- Diverse agencies integrate practices to assure individual customers' transportation needs are routinely and efficiently met as part of each agency's standard operating procedures" (Dunlap 2009, 6).

After a statewide request for proposals, TxDOT selected pilot sites to implement innovative programs that utilize Transportation Solutions Coordinators (TSCs) to provide training to local social caseworkers on the importance of, and the options for, transportation access. The aim of these trainings is to help case managers link their clients with the public transportation services available in their area. In all, three pilot sites were selected: Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), the Heart of Texas Council of Governments (HOTCOG) and Texoma Area Paratransit System (TAPS).

Dallas Area Rapid Transit
DART serves the Dallas, Texas area and the surrounding communities. One of these communities, Plano, has limited public transportation options. The key goal of the TSC was to improve communication among interested individuals in the area in an effort to foster the creation of new transportation options.

Heart of Texas Council of Governments
HOTCOG provides public transportation in a six county area surrounding Waco, Texas. The TSC wanted to improve overall usage of the HOTCOG services. In particular, she wanted to ensure that social workers were aware of the services provided so that they could link their clients to public transportation.

Texoma Area Para-Transit Services
TAPS serves a six county region in north Texas. One of those counties, Wise County, has dramatically lower ridership than would be expected by its population. Despite containing 25% of the area's population, Wise County residents constitute only 5% of the TAPS riders. The TSC sought to increase ridership levels in Wise County through the implementation of its pilot project.

Transportation Solutions Coordinator Training

In July 2010, the TSCs from the selected sites participated in a Transportation Solutions Coordinator Training provided by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). This two-and-a-half day training provided details on the importance of transportation and highlighted innovative solutions for identifying and dealing with transportation deficits. After completing the training, their pilot projects and other requirements, CTAA would provide certification for the TSCs. Following the training, the TSCs were to modify the training to their local contexts and to provide mobility management training to social caseworkers in their regions.

In addition, TxDOT covered expenses for eighteen representatives from human services agencies in the pilot areas to attend the training as well. The attendance of these individuals allowed the TSCs to receive feedback as to what elements of the TSC training would most useful for caseworkers in the pilot areas.

Findings
The evaluation team conducted a focus group following the CTAAA training to determine its strengths and weaknesses. While the training was targeted more at the TSCs, the social agency representatives indicated that the trainings provided them with tools to help them perform their jobs

more effectively. Further, those who attended the training viewed the ability to network with individuals from other agencies as one of the highlights of the training.

However, miscommunication between TxDOT and its agency advisory committee, last-minute changes in agency representatives, and divergent assumptions about the training created confusion and dissatisfaction among the non-transportation participants. In the absence of a clear road-map, the participants were not clear about why they were participating in the training. In addition, the heavy volume of transportation-related information conveyed during the training, largely unrelated to some participants' local contexts, overwhelmed many participants. As a result, the non-transportation participants were less inclined to support the three local trainings, not being sure of what their role would be and feeling that the projects had little to do with their agency's work.

In addition to the focus group, the evaluation team conducted pre- and post-surveys to determine what lessons were learned by participants. For the vast majority of participants, the training changed their view of the importance transportation access has for their clients and they reported considering their clients' transportation needs more after participating in the training. An additional finding from the survey is that two months following the training, there was a reduction in the difficulty participants faced in providing transportation assistance for their clients. Besides, one-half of the respondents were able to identify their regions' TSC.

Pilot Site Implementation

Each pilot site modified the CTAA training to match their region's needs. In each case, the TSC conducted at least two separate mobility management trainings targeting front-line caseworkers from area social services agencies. Attendance at these trainings varied from four to forty-eight. Each agency had its own goal. DART wanted to foster dialogue that would lead to additional transportation options in the Plano, Texas area. HOTCOG sought to increase public transportation usage in all of its services areas. TAPS wanted to increase usage of its services in one of its six counties. While each had unique objectives, their primary intentions can be summed up in terms of their key goal of improving access to public transportation by all individuals, especially those who are the underserved clients of their regional social service agencies.

In addition to the mobility management trainings, DART created an on-line portal for documenting the unmet transportation needs in the Plano area. Unfortunately, usage of the reporting system has been light. TAPS also created a travel-planning website where individuals or caseworkers can

identify the best mechanisms for how to get to and from a given location. When a reasonable option is not available, the program records the unmet need so that it can be brought to the TSC's attention. TAPS is also adding a training component to its website. Currently, the new feature allows individuals to calculate the savings that would accrue to them if they utilized TAPS services in lieu of using their own automobiles.

Findings

The evaluation team studied the effectiveness of the programs by utilizing four social-scientific tools. First, participants in the HOTCOG and DART mobility management trainings also joined focus groups to offer their opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of the programs. For the participants in the TAPS trainings, however, individual phone interviews were used instead of focus groups because the TAPS trainings took place near the end of the evaluation period thereby making a focus group impractical.

For the TAPS and HOTCOG sites, data for each demand-response ride provided by the sites was used by the evaluation team. In addition, monthly totals for fixed-route and demand response usage for Waco Transit System (WTS) were available from the federal government. WTS, rather than HOTCOG, provides public transportation within the Waco, Texas city limits.

Last, pre-surveys were administered prior to the mobility management trainings. Approximately two months following the trainings, participants were invited to take part in an on-line post-survey too in order to determine what impact the trainings had on knowledge and opinions related to transportation.

Participants in the focus groups and phone interviews varied in their assessment of the trainings' utility. All were unanimous that the trainings were helpful in providing information on availability of transportation options. They were also united in indicating that despite the trainings, difficulty accessing transportation persists. Further, participants in the focus groups indicated that the Individualized Transportation Plans[1] were a good idea, but that they were impractical due to the time constraints placed upon caseworkers.

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[1] Individualized Transportation Plans were a key focus of the mobility management trainings. These plans help identify the transportation needs of clients and set forth an action plan for meeting those needs. The CTAA training provided standard Individualized Transportation Plan forms.

The data analyses for the HOTCOG area are indicative of the mobility management training being effective in increasing usage of public transportation. The months following the training programs were associated with increased numbers of unique riders, number of rides provided and passenger-miles traveled by HOTCOG. In addition, WTS saw increased numbers of demand-response and fixed-route rides. The data for TAPS only allow for a short follow-up, so no firm conclusions can be made. However, the data are somewhat indicative of the mobility management training increasing usage of public transportation in Wise County.

The survey results indicate that the mobility management trainings are successful at changing participant perceptions about the importance of transportation for clients and in prompting them to consider the transportation needs of their clients. After each local training, respondents indicated that they had less difficulty obtaining transportation related information. With caseworkers already indicating increased consideration of their clients' mobility needs, the improved availability of information should result in more awareness of public transportation options by individuals.

In most cases, this improved access increased confidence in providing transportation information to clients. In two out of three pilot sites, respondents felt that they had more confidence providing clients with transportation related advice than they did prior to the training.

This confidence is reflected by trainees being better able to articulate what public transportation choices are available in their regions. Across all trainings, participants were better able to articulate the options that were offered in their area.

Recommendations

Overall, evaluation findings indicate that the Texas UWR project demonstrated critical potential to improve usage of public transportation. Like any pilot project, however, there were areas that could be improved during future iterations. The research team identified five key recommendations discussed below.

Allow Leadership to Matter
Leadership played a key role in the success of the local pilot projects. In order to foster success in future projects, the evaluation team suggests interviewing potential TSCs. Successful candidates should be organized, disciplined, committed and energetic.

Strategize a Meaningful Kick-Off
While the initial CTAA training was helpful for the TSCs, the length of the training discouraged other participants from further participation in the UWR project. Future kick-off trainings that involve caseworkers should provide information targeted to their needs and not take longer than a day. The kick-off event needs to provide all participants with clear goals and expectations. The networking provided by the training should be maintained and enriched through meaningful avenues.

Localize Tools, Solutions and Networking
The local context that TSCs operate in will have a profound impact on their ability to be successful. TSCs must have interested parties and potential solutions in order to link individuals with available transportation services. The projects must consider the needs of the target populations and the services that exist in the areas. Additionally, training in networking could prove valuable along with a digital platform.

Implement Communication and Comparison Vehicles
Participating mobility managers indicated that the ability to communicate more frequently with other mobility managers would help them perform to perform their jobs better. The utilization of internet forums and/or social networking would provide a cost-effective mechanism for fostering state-wide communication among mobility managers and strengthening the comparative lessons across these types of programs.

Continue Effective Local Trainings
Evaluation findings indicate that transportation focused UWR trainings can indeed increase the usage of public transportation in an area. Preference, however, should be given to programs that have measurable goals and real data available to measure the achievement of these goals. The "train the trainer" approach used in the UWR project has the potential to provide a lasting impact as caseworkers from individual agencies can train their own colleagues, using the TSCs for guidance.

PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE & CENTER FOR TRANSPORTATION TRAINING & RESEARCH

The evaluation team for this study centers on a partnership between the **Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University** and the **Center for Transportation Training and Research at Texas Southern University.**

Established by the Texas State Legislature in 1983 at Texas A&M University, the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) serves as a leading interdisciplinary government and social policy research organization. Since inception, PPRI has secured external research contracts totaling $110 million to provide scientific research and evaluative services to more than ninety public and private sponsors engaged in formulating public policy.

Social problems related to the areas of government, education, public health, substance abuse, workforce and employment, aging, and child and family well-being provide the substantive focus of PPRI's work. Through the application of sophisticated research methods, PPRI successfully designs scientific projects that predict and evaluate the effectiveness of local, state, regional, national, and international programs and initiatives.

The Institute possesses the analytical as well as technical capabilities to engage in survey design and administration, policy research, statistical analysis, program evaluation, and electronic information and data systems development and management. Moreover, PPRI maintains the infrastructure and experience for satisfying a broad range of research and survey demands including: automated mailing capabilities, electronic data entry, optical scanners, and a centrally monitored Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) survey laboratory.

The Center for Transportation Training and Research (CTTR) is a research arm of Texas Southern University and a companion to the Masters of Science program in Transportation Planning and Management. Texas Southern University's mission as prescribed by the State Legislature includes its role as a "special purpose institution of higher education for urban programming". This designation

provides a foundation for all programmatic activities at the university and is in keeping with the key aspects of smart growth, public engagement and inclusion of low income and minority persons into the mainstream of transportation planning and decision making. Graduate students pursuing degrees in Transportation are employed by the CTTR and contribute to the Center's research agenda.

The Center for Transportation Training and Research began in 1983 with a grant from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (now Federal Transit Administration). Dr. Naomi W. Lede' served as the Director and Department Chair until her retirement in the late 1990s. Since that time, Dr. Carol Lewis has served as CTTR's Director. In its relatively short history, the Center staff has amassed more than sixty-five years of direct transportation experience. Initially, the Center focused on the elements of public transit, but over the last twenty-nine years, the research domain has been expanded to include highways, land use, public involvement, policy planning and transportation education and training for students, faculty, and in-service professionals. CTTR has access to resource materials and computer capabilities required to conduct research facilitating literature review and on-line searches, perform graphical and schematic support documentation, as well as having statistical software to assist with survey analysis.

The Center has established successful collaborations with other institutions and public and private transportation entities. The Center is a member of the Southwest Region University Transportation Center with Texas A & M University (Texas Transportation Institute) and the University of Texas at Austin (Center for Transportation Research). Other successful liaisons exist with Rice University, the Federal Highway Administration, the Department of Homeland Security, the Texas Department of Transportation, RSM Services, Parsons Brinckerhoff and Barry Goodman Corporation.

Evaluation Study Research Team
The following key study members have been involved with planning and implementing various stages of the UWR pilot study evaluation:

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1   INTRODUCTION

 United We Ride (UWR) is a federal interagency initiative aimed at improving the availability, quality, and efficient delivery of transportation services for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes. This idea of mobility management remains a central strategy of the UWR program. Established in 2004 by President George W. Bush by Executive Order 13330, the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM), a federal interagency council, oversees activities and makes recommendations that advance the goals of the Order. These goals include the following: simplify customer access to transportation, reduce duplication of transportation services, streamline federal rules and regulations that may impede the coordinated delivery of services, and improve the efficiency of services using existing resources.

In FY 2010, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) received UWR federal funding for three pilot project sites for a "train the trainer" program in mobility management. The focus of the project involved educating health and human service and workforce agency case workers with the help of a transportation solutions coordinator to ensure that transportation options available in their respective communities filtered down to the clients of the various agencies. TxDOT's primary goal was to simplify individual customers' access to public transportation by assuring that case workers and mobility managers from diverse agencies are fully informed of transportation resources and needs in their communities. They also wanted to ensure that these agencies integrate innovative practices to assure individual customers' transportation needs are routinely and efficiently met as part of each agency's standing operating procedures.

In January 2010, TxDOT issued a statewide request for proposals to fund innovative options to accomplish this goal. Specifically, funded sites were to use public transportation mobility mangers to "partner with health, human service, education and/or work force case workers to assure individual customer's needs are routinely and efficiently met" (TxDOT 2010, 1) Submitted proposals were reviewed by the Texas Untied We Ride advisory committee who collectively arrived at the decisions of which programs to fund.

Through the process, three pilot projects were selected by TxDOT for funding:

- Heart of Texas Council of Governments (HOTCOG) and the Heart of Texas Rural Transit District (HOTRTD)
- Dallas Rapid Transit (DART)
- Texoma Area Paratransit System, Inc. (TAPS)

The three pilot area mobility managers, named as Transportation Solutions Coordinators (TSCs), trained local and state social service agency (such as, from Workforce Solutions, Department of State Health Services, Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, United Way, AARP, Area Agency on Aging, school districts and Catholic Charities) workers, case managers and other staff members in mobility management. Ideally, the mobility managers and case workers would develop and continue collaboration with each other as each conducted their normal business in their specific region. Through the UWR trainings, TxDOT hoped to simplify customer access to transportation, reduce duplication of transportation services, streamline rules and regulations that may impede the coordinated delivery of services, and improve the efficiency of services by using the existing available resources.

These trainings and their outcomes were evaluated by the PPRI and CTTR evaluation study team following a robust social scientific design. PPRI and CTTR's task has been to evaluate the project from the beginning to end and assess whether it has been effective in achieving the desired goals. The study consisted of several stages along with an analysis of the outcomes and recommendations based on the findings. This chapter outlines the context and objectives of the evaluation study while discussing the overall methodology, technique and tools developed and implemented to satisfy the requirements of a social scientific evaluation design.

1.1   Evaluation Context

Transportation plays a critical role in providing access to employment, health care, education, community services, and activities necessary for daily living. The importance is underscored by the variety of transportation programs that have been created in conjunction with health and human services programs and by the significant federal investment in public transportation systems throughout the Nation. Ironically, for most people who need transportation help, the creation of more programs has resulted in several unintended consequences. Transportation services are often fragmented, underutilized, or difficult to navigate, and can be costly due to inconsistent and often

restrictive federal and state program regulations. In some cases, narrowly focused programs leave service gaps and transportation services are simply not available to meet certain needs.

In this context, the three pilot studies are implementing programs to help broaden access to public transportation. DART provides transportation for the city of Dallas and the twelve surrounding communities. One of the cities, Plano, has limited access to many modes of public transportation and DART designed a program to try and spur the creation of new modes of transportation in the Plano area. HOTCOG represents a six county region and implemented a program to increase ridership across their area. TAPS also services a six county region. One county, Wise, has particularly low ridership relative to their population. With this in mind, the TAPS TSC aimed to increase usage of TAPS services in Wise County by reaching out to social workers.

Each of these projects is distinct from the others. TAPS and HOTCOG serve several counties with large rural areas, while DART is primarily urban. DART is focusing on one city, while TAPS is concentrating on one county and HOTCOG is working with six counties. Each TSC is also providing training in their own unique way. By integrating the best practices from academic literature as well as other similar program evaluation studies, the evaluation team developed a distinct methodology that combines both qualitative and quantitative social science research techniques for a program evaluation design that is well-defined, open, inclusive, participatory, and considers the unique features of each site.

1.2   Evaluation Goals

The goals of this evaluation study have been to implement a robust program evaluation design to:

- analyze the CTAA training components and assess its efficacy for the pilot site participants
- assess the intended and unintended outcomes of the three UWR pilot programs and whether the sites have been able to implement the mobilization coordination plans as desired
- systematically understand whether customer access to transportation at the pilot site regions have been simplified in any way as a result of actions and networking by the transportation solutions coordinators
- understand whether the Transportation Solutions Coordinators at the three pilot sites have been effective in networking and partnering with appropriate stakeholders to implement the project in their respective areas

- understand whether the Transportation Solution Coordinators had any impact on improving the transportation awareness and knowledge base of the people they trained in their respective regions

- understand comparatively how and why some pilots might have more leverage in using existing available resources for better serving the needs of the stakeholders they trained

- work collaboratively with the pilot sites and TxDOT to implement the evaluation design

- create an open process for sites and TxDOT feedback on the evaluation process and mechanisms

- plan and deliver an effective program evaluation analysis to appropriately inform future similar mobility management projects in Texas.

1.3   Evaluation Methodology, Techniques & Components

The study team implemented a design centering on both a **process** and an **outcome** evaluation to assess whether the goals of the UWR project have been achieved. A process (or formative) evaluation was intended to help document and analyze the early development and actual implementation of the UWR project, assessing whether strategies were implemented as planned and whether the expected outcomes were achieved. This process evaluation began during the program planning phase and continued through program implementation. It focused on the planning phase, the CTAA curriculum content and the subsequent training workshop formats and content at the three sites. Its purpose was to describe how the program was implemented--who was involved, what was learned and what problems were experienced. This process evaluation proved useful for monitoring project implementation, for identifying gaps and changes in the planned workshop/training operations; and suggested mid-course improvements, when needed.

In contrast to process evaluation, the outcome (or summative) evaluation determined whether the training that was provided to the case workers and mobility managers led to the desired changes (ultimately, the culture shift in terms of making transportation an integral component of providing public services to the needed population) . Typically more complex than a process evaluation, this outcome evaluation was undertaken only because there had been a clear statement about what changes were expected, appropriate measures to be selected for tracking such changes, and the

mechanisms established to collect reliable data on the pilot outcomes. For the UWR evaluation project, assessing whether the direct service providers were able to address the unmet needs of the transportation disadvantaged population in the three pilot areas with the help of the training that they received was important.

The process and outcome evaluation based design was implemented with the help of the following **methodological research techniques**:

Content Analysis

This technique was used as a method for summarizing any form of content by exploring and assessing various aspects of the subject matter in a document. It is most commonly used by social science researchers to analyze written documents. We proposed it as a direct, valid methodology for evaluating project specific documents that were shared with our team and to reflect upon the processes and impact of the training-based interventions in the three pilot regions.

Direct Observation (semi-structured)

In the context of this evaluation study, this technique involved carefully observing key training events related to the three pilot projects with an eye toward learning more about the elements and effectiveness of the interventions. Enormous possibilities existed in using direct observation as a valid data collection method for this evaluation study. Evaluators observing the training events could confirm information gathered through other program evaluation methods. With the help of observation guides, recording sheets, field notes and debriefing guides, the evaluation staff has been well equipped to use this method to secure descriptive data during project initiation and to document project activities, processes and intended outcomes.

Pilot Site Transportation Data Analysis

Our expert evaluation team members collected data from HOTCOG and DART. Records of each demand-response ride in their service regions over several years were provided to the team. The information was used to create monthly and annual measures of the quantity of unique riders served, number of rides provided and the level of passenger-miles. Further, data were obtained for the Waco Transit District (WTD), the public transportation provider for the urban areas of HOTCOG. For WTD, data were available for the number of fixed-route and demand-response rides provided each month. The evaluation team used statistical analysis techniques to examine the effect of the mobility management trainings on the public transportation ridership in the target areas.

Cross-Site Comparative Case Study

The evaluation team also used a comparative case studies approach that not only evaluated the individual sites in isolation from one another but also used collected information to decipher important similarities, differences, and patterns among the three sites in order to better understand how they impacted the target populations. In analyzing and interpreting data collected at multiple sites through multiple methods, social scientists routinely apply these techniques in comparative research to establish meaningful connections among multiple points of evidence from varied settings.

On-Line Participant Surveys

Surveys of program participants at the first training and at the three sites followed standard procedures. The protocols and instruments were developed in collaboration with the TxDOT project management group. Site-specific surveys were implemented as pre- and post-surveys. As necessary components of an impact evaluation, pre- and post-surveys help identify what changed from the beginning of the program to the end. Pre- and post-tests helped document the service delivery of the interventions, measure the outcomes, and demonstrate their effectiveness. Pre-test surveys collected baseline data, while post-test surveys collected data after the implementation of interventions.

For the pre-survey, respondents completed the questionnaire immediately preceding the mobility management trainings. For the post-survey, the primary method of participant recruitment was via an e-mailed letter that invited the respondents to log on to a website to access the survey. A unique identifier was provided in the email for use in the on-line surveys to ensure tracking of respondents. This enabled us to target non-responders as well as guard against duplicate responses. We utilized reminder emails to increase response rates.

Focus Group Sessions

These sessions were conducted to collect rich, qualitative data targeted at program participants at two of the locations. The evaluation team designed the facilitation protocol to guide the sessions. This protocol (attached in the Appendix IV) detailed the questions to be answered during the focus groups sessions and the facilitation techniques. Session locations were chosen with great care so that transportation access to all segments of stakeholders and session participants was available.

The study team proposed that each session accommodates up to twenty participants and last about two hours. Light refreshments helped set a relaxed and friendly tone that facilitated uninhibited discussion. The sessions provided qualitative data, personal stories, and relevant information from the participants. The sessions utilized facilitated feedback mechanism and addressed a list of strengths, weaknesses, and important issues surrounding the pilot projects and their impact. The focus group discussions were facilitated by our expert facilitation staff where participants could comfortably address important details on the context about the local challenges and successes. The sessions were facilitated by three study team members (each trained and experienced with leading focus groups and community listening sessions) who ran the sessions professionally. Group responses and comments were written on a flip chart to help organize and facilitate the discussions and generate a prioritized list of feedback. In addition, each session was also audio recorded for later analysis, to capture appropriate data and check data coding validity and reliability. In order to capture the appropriate data, the moderators followed the detailed facilitation protocols.

Telephone Interviews

Since program participants could not be appropriately recruited for one of the sites, the evaluation team used this mechanism to serve as a virtual focus group discussion over telephone. These interviews involved asking specific questions aimed mostly at obtaining information that enabled the indicators to be measured. Questions were chosen from the focus group facilitation guide for the sites for utmost comparability with focus group data from the two other sites. While wrapping up this report, telephone interviews were also conducted with the three TSCs to catch their perspectives on key areas of the project.

With the help of these various techniques, over a period of twenty-three months, the evaluation team implemented the process and outcome-based evaluation design for this study. The findings are primarily presented in chapters three, four and five of this report.

2   MOBILITY MANAGEMENT

LITERATURE

Although the Federal government operates sixty-two programs and has spent $2.4 billion funding transportation for disadvantaged persons, over 1.5 million people in the nation still experience difficulty accessing transportation (Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2003; U.S. GAO 2003). Largely, persons with disabilities, low income populations and older adults are disproportionately impacted by the lack of necessary access to transportation (U.S. GAO 2003; Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2003). For these individuals, lack of access means missed opportunities to get jobs, attend school, make doctor's appointments, or simply travel to desired destinations. Many of these individuals could benefit from these transportation options if they were simply aware of their availability and knew how to navigate the transportation system. Working with the social service agencies, local mobility managers can fill this gap and play a vital role by advocating and solving the transportation shortfalls these disadvantaged groups regularly experience. The UWR Pilot project centers on this need for mobility management.

To understand whether the three pilot projects implemented their programs by adequately embracing the concept of mobility management, one must have some knowledge of what the term implies historically in the context of the transportation literature. Thus, we need to understand the origin and development of the mobility management concept. This chapter reflects upon the origin of the idea, its historical importance in addressing transportation barriers, and the assessment and measurement indicators dealing with the concept over time in the transportation literature. The national context of mobility management detailed in this chapter provides the foundation for the evaluation of mobility management centered UWR pilots in Texas.

2.1   Mobility Management Definitions

As far as its origin is concerned, many researchers identify the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) with the creation of mobility management. This act promoted multi-modal solutions to a commuter's transportation needs (Ellis 2009). In 1997, Murray, et al. defined mobility management as a tool for transportation agencies that "responds to and

influences demands of the market by undertaking actions and supportive strategies, directly or in collaboration with others, to provide a full-range of options to the single-occupant automobile" (16). Recent definitions of mobility management describe mobility management through a lens based on "the needs of human service agency consumers and the transportation-disadvantaged community at large" (Massachusetts HHS 2012). In this definition, mobility management allows transportation providers to work with human service agencies, which are tasked with determining the transportation needs of their clients and create partnerships to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the community's transportation services (Ellis 2009). This definition most accurately reflects the way mobility management is envisioned in the three UWR pilot projects that serve as the major focus of this evaluation study.

2.2   Mobility Management Need

When examining access to transportation, many states, local governments, and community organizations noted that the key barrier to public transportation centers on basic trip planning. Many potential users remained unaware of transportation services in their community, how to access these services, or how to plan their trip utilizing the services. Mobility management helps overcome this barrier. So, the implementation of mobility management makes for a more coordinated and efficient use of the different types of transportation services that exist within a community, ultimately resulting in big savings for transit agencies. Mobility management also raises the public's awareness of different aspects of transportation where it principally leans towards addressing the needs of passengers and various other transport systems (Burkhardt and McLary 2003). Mobility managers serve as operations managers, trip planning coordinators, brokers between transportation providers, social service agencies, and clients, services, advocates, and problem solvers.

2.3   Mobility Management Funding

In the United States, mobility management is often funded at the state and local levels through federal dollars. Mobility management is an eligible activity for the following federal programs: United We Ride Initiative; the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) administered by the Department of Transportation (DOT); and by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs (e.g., 5307, 5310, 5311, 5316, and 5317).

2.4   Mobility Management Measures

At the inception of the Federal United We Ride (UWR) initiative, the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) created a logic model to gauge the program's success. The overall goal was to increase the quality of life for low income persons, persons with disabilities and seniors by improving access to transportation which would also improve their access to resources. This goal was broken into three basic components: 1) offer more rides using existing resources; 2) serve as the point of access for transportation services; and 3) increase customer/client satisfaction. In this logic model, progress was to be tracked with the help of the total number of agencies participating in the programs, number of rides provided as a result of the programs and number of people reporting greater satisfaction. As key outcome measures, they identified the measurable changes in the coordinated transportation systems where the programs took place, simple points of transportation access established in the communities and customer satisfaction. In addition to these measures, Litman (2003) emphasized that mobility management measures are also influenced by factors that promote and improve the attractiveness of using public transportation, cycling, walking, car-sharing, flexible work schedules, or a combination of these as alternatives to drive alone trips to work.

Most of the mobility management literature focus on the coordination of transportation services to avoid duplication, securing funding/additional resources for transportation services, improving customer satisfaction, and increasing public awareness of transportation services. Consequently, most transportation agencies evaluate the effectiveness of their mobility management program via increased ridership, calls/inquiries, number of vouchers issued, number of trips made, and number of new routes/services created. Agencies also analyze ridership to determine if lower income persons, seniors, children, and persons with disabilities have increased service access, and agencies look for revenue increases and savings. For example, Maryland's Delmarva Community Services, Inc. noted an increased number of persons receiving trip planning/travel training, increased volunteer driver trips, increased voucher trips, and increased transit travel orientation (Ellis 2007). Miami-Dade Transit created a Medicaid Transit Pass Program that provides $7 million savings to the Medicaid program annually (Dorn 2004; Rogers 2005, 8). Finally, Capital Metro in Austin, Texas, created the Easy Rider Program for seniors and persons with disabilities to offer free fixed-route rides versus paratransit. Capital Metro provided over 188,000 rides in April 2007 alone using this program (Community Transportation Association of America 2012, 1).

2.5   Texas Mobility Management

In Texas, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) administers the Mobility Management program as a part of their overall transportation responsibilities. TxDOT uses several funding mechanisms to support projects involving mobility management. These programs include Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP), Section 5304 Planning, Job Access Reverse Commute

Table 2.1: Mobility Management Goals & Objectives adapted from USDOT

Goals	Objectives
Focus on the Individual	1. Provide customer-driven transportation services. 2. Develop and offer services to meet individual's needs. 3. Focus on the quality of customer service.
Improve Coordination	1. Establish partnerships to coordinate transportation projects, planning, service, and expertise. 2. Coordinate service delivery to eliminate overlaps. 3. Close transportation gaps by offering service in areas that may not be currently served by a local transit provider.
Promote Accessibility and Livability	1. Offer transportation services that are accessible, lead to livable communities and improve quality of life. 2. Use universal design concepts to integrate transit-oriented and pedestrian-oriented design in community development. 3. Consider the effect of land use design and development on the provision of transportation mobility and accessibility.
Ensure Diversity in Products and Services	1. Ensure meaningful access to transportation service for older adults, people with disabilities, children and youth, and individuals with lower incomes. 2. Offer materials for those with language barriers. 3. When possible, use universal symbols for transportation services.
Foster Education and Awareness	1. Change individuals' attitudes and behavior toward alternative transportation choices through education and marketing. 2. Build a strong foundation for mobility management programs through funding and resource support. 3. Provide public information on transportations service options. 4. Educate transit agency staff: health, human service, and workforce case workers; board members and policymakers.
Promote Financial Sustainability	1. Improve service efficiency and effectiveness. 2. Leverage limited funding and resources through partnerships. 3. Utilize advanced technologies to manage and monitor transportation systems.
Ensure Safety and Security	1. Ensure safe and secure transportation services for the customer.

Source: Sen, et al. 2011

(JARC), New Freedom, Inter-City Bus, Rural Discretionary, and United We Ride (UWR) funds (TxDOT 2011). As TxDOT strives to embrace the strategies of mobility management for public transportation, finding tangible ways to measure the success of its programs remains paramount. Recently, Sen et al. (2011), in a report for TxDOT, recommended that to measure mobility management, transit agencies should develop programs that contain goals, objectives, performance measures (qualitative and quantitative), desired outcomes, and means to measure outcomes. Building upon the three core directives established by the United We Ride Program (UWR) and United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), six goals and accompanying objectives were presented in this report as outlined in Table 2.1.

Using the six major transportation goals and objectives, Sen et al. (2011) created a matrix with performance measures, outcomes, methods of measuring outcomes, and the agency responsible for measuring those outcomes. The authors noted that performance measures need to be appropriate for the jurisdiction (or typology) i.e. rural, small regional, or metro. The authors also indicated that transit agencies/providers were not the only entities that should measure program outcomes. Depending upon the goal and objectives, various stakeholders could also measure outcomes, i.e., Councils of Governments (COGs), workforce, social service agencies, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs), local developers, and school districts. An example of the matrix is shown Table 2.2.

Based on the literature discussed above, this evaluation study incorporates some key elements that have been used to assess the effectiveness of the three UWR pilot projects. The overarching goal of TxDOT's UWR program has been to improve access to transportation for the underserved populations by engaging social caseworkers and mobility managers. The project also sought to determine how successful the three selected pilot programs have been in achieving the goals and objectives envisioned for their individual mobility management programs. Based on the analysis of the successes and lessons learned from the three pilot projects, TxDOT hopes to continue providing mobility management training to individuals around the state. The following chapters summarize the evaluation findings from the three pilot projects in Texas.

Table 2.2: Example of Performance Measures for Mobility Management

Goals	Objectives	Performance Measures	Outcomes	How Measured	Who Measures	Rural	Small Regional	Metro
A. Focus on the individual	1. Provide customer driven transportation services	Increase the range of transport options & service providers	More service options in the regional service area Fewer passenger trip refusals	Number of transport options available Expanded service area	Transit providers Lead agency for regional coordination	X	X	X
	2. Develop & offer services to meet individual's needs	Assessment of needs based on research and community outreach	Expanded service area Increased transit ridership	Expanded service area Passenger counts in newly expanded areas of service & increase in passenger boardings	Transit providers Stakeholders involved in regional coordination Councils of Governments Metropolitan Transit Organizations (MPOs)	X	X	X

Source: Sen, et al. 2011

3   CTAA TRAINING EVALUATION

One of the key goals of the UWR project was to ensure that the three mobility managers received adequate training from experienced instructors. Toward that end, TxDOT contracted with the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) to provide the *Transportation Solutions Coordinator* (TSC) *Training* program for the participant pilot sites. This curriculum was created by CTAA and Easter Seals with input from a seventeen-member national advisory panel. The development was funded, in part, by the Employment & Training Administration and the Office of Disability Employment Policy (U.S. Department of Labor) and the Federal Transit Administration (U.S. Department of Transportation). The CTAA program had many intended benefits. First, it represented a quality curriculum that had been vetted, endorsed and highly recommended by many professionals in the transportation field. Second, it provided direct, face-to-face instruction with all participants. Third, CTAA agreed to assist the designated TSCs in implementing their own projects. Last, CTAA provided a certification to TSCs who completed the training and offered them additional assistance in helping them design their own trainings. This provided a powerful incentive to potential participants by providing credentials to individuals for furthering their professional careers.

TxDOT launched UWR on July 27, 2010 with a two-and-a-half day CTAA training with twenty-one participants representing selected human service agencies from three specific areas of Texas: Wise County, Collin County, and the Heart of Texas Region (Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone, and McLennan counties). Following the training, on July 29, a two-hour long focus group was conducted. Drs. Trey Marchbanks and Nandita Chaudhuri from the evaluation team served as key facilitators and listeners for the session. The focus group guide was reviewed and approved for ethics concerns prior to the training by the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. All the participants officially consented to the focus group process by reviewing and signing the consent protocol. The signed documents were collected by the facilitators before starting the session. During the session, participant responses were documented and the session was fully audio-taped. Ms. Gwen Goodwin and Ms. Sara Land from CTTR assisted in the focus group process by flip-charting and note-taking. These flip-charts and audio-tapes were used later for accurate data processing.

3.1 CTAA Training Content and Implementation

The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) training was provided July 27-29, 2010 at TxDOT facilitates in Austin, Texas to the three designated TSCs from the pilot sites and their regional partners and participants. In addition, managerial representatives of various agencies responsible for social services attended. In order to encourage attendance, all travel expenses for attendees were paid for by TxDOT. Agencies were responsible, however, for the personnel expenses associated with participants' time. Participating agencies included:

- Texas Department of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
- Texas Veterans Leadership Program (VLP)
- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)
- Workforce Solutions
- Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS)
- Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

These agency leaders were included in order to provide information about what part of the CTAA training would be of interest to field-level caseworkers in their agency. This feedback was vital in helping the TSCs tailor their programs to their own local context.

CTAA instruction included nine core modules or sections. The sections or modules included:

- Introduction
- Functions of a Transportation Solutions Coordinator
- Identifying Transportation Services in Your Community
- Funding for Community Transportation Services and Individual Riders
- Programs that Help Individuals Access Transportation
- Responding to the Transportation Needs of Specific Populations
- Developing an Individualized Transportation Plan
- Becoming Part of the Solution

The comprehensive content in the sections provided a foundation for transit leaders and innovators to better serve their communities and passengers. Taken together, the modules teach mobility

managers and other transportation coordinators an effective model for sharing mobility information and learning about mobility needs through relationships with frontline staff in human service, workforce development, and nonprofit organizations.

The training on Day One began with a brief overview of the project and with a sense of why the participants should care about transportation access, followed by establishing CTAA's qualifications. Participants were then asked to introduce themselves to each other and to discuss what this project could mean for their organization. In order to help "break the ice" and improve communication, CTAA used a game requiring movement and discussion that helped establish a comfortable learning environment.

Day One continued with the substantive training, discussing the benefits of transportation access and introducing the TSC concept. A representative of the Regional Foundation Library at the University of Texas came to educate participants on some of the options available to help their agencies find foundation support. The day concluded with videos that demonstrated the value of public transportation and how to orient new riders to a public transit system.

Day Two began by breaking into groups to discuss the challenges the participants face when dealing with groups with special needs. Later, a TxDOT representative discussed the Job Access/Reverse Commute and New Freedom programs and how local areas can apply for the federal pass-through funds.[2] Participants were then asked to articulate what they would like the local mobility management trainings to include. The day concluded with a role-playing exercise to help individuals convince fellow employees of the importance of attending the local mobility management trainings.

Day Three concluded the training. The bulk of the time was spent "wrapping up," and letting the participants know what to expect in the future. Also, the evaluation team conducted a focus group

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[2] Job Access/Reverse Commute (JARC) is a federal grant program administered by the Texas Department of Transportation in the state. The primary goal of the program is to provide transportation access that supports employment opportunities, particularly for low-income or unemployed individuals. The program also seeks to broaden transportation options for individuals who reside in urban areas to secure employment in suburban and/or rural areas.

New Freedom is another federal grant program administered by the Texas Department of Transportation in the state. This program seeks to broaden transportation access for persons with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

to evaluate the strengths and benefits of the training, the results of which are discussed in the next section.

3.2   Evaluation Findings

Findings from Focus Groups

The focus group participants were asked in a group session to answer questions designed to determine their feelings, thoughts and opinions concerning the United We Ride Project. Participants were encouraged to interact frankly and openly with the research team. In order to facilitate this, the CTAA instructors and TxDOT team members left the room. Where appropriate, individuals were encouraged to explore issues more fully through the use of appropriate probing questions. The findings from this focus group primarily contributed to the process evaluation component of the UWR project. The findings presented here are thematically organized around the key categories of questions posed by the facilitators. To respect confidentiality principles, only aggregated responses are discussed. As a rule of thumb for any focus group data processing, only responses that showed an overwhelming support are included in the discussions summarized here.

Most importantly, findings suggested that the training helped the participants know who the Transportation Solutions Coordinators for their region are and provided the opportunity to establish relationships and open channels of communication amongst themselves. In addition, they got new tools and the course modules, which could be helpful down the road in assisting clients or helping colleagues to think better in providing such assistance.

Project Goals and Challenges
One message that resonated with respondents was the need for the various human service agencies to come together and coordinate in order to effectively serve the transportation needs of their clients. Another agreement centered on the need for a mobility manager or a Transportation Solutions Coordinator (TSC). There was also a unified understanding that each participating agency could be utilized by TxDOT to serve the needs of the UWR project. However, the participants lacked an understanding of the "why" behind the whole project, "how" everything started and "who" are the key players. They wanted greater clarification on the key goals of the project. They were also unsure of the project's target population and on whom the project will have its impact. They desired clarification on the expected role their agency has and their expected level of involvement in the UWR project. Respondents were not sure whether the right people attended the

first two-day training. They were also not sure what the mode of communication in the coming months from TxDOT to all the participants would be since everybody needs to be in the loop with effective communication efforts. Based on the collected data, the evaluation team charted the participants' understanding of key project challenges that emerged from the 2-day training and their suggested strategies to deal with the challenges. Table 3.1 below organizes this information.

Table 3.1. Project Challenges: Reasons and Overcoming Strategies

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS	UNDERSTANING OF WHY THIS CHALLENGE WILL EMERGE	SUGGESTED STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGE
Achieve coordination among agencies to serve project goals.	Project goals are not clear at this stage. Therefore, the participants do not know what it involves. However, whatever effort is needed, it will be perceived as "one more thing to do" by agencies.	Clearly communicate to the participants what the project involves. For communication, use Skype teleconferences rather than requiring travel for face-to-face time.
Effective role performance for the Transportation Solutions Coordinator.	TSCs will need to adapt to their new roles. Will involve proactive initiative and thoughtful coordination among agencies. Requires buy-in from the agency managers. Need to use agency contacts effectively. Will inevitably go through coordination fatigue. Need to repeatedly assess and reassess everyone's level of commitment and will need to keep people meaningfully involved and make them feel connected and interested. Will need to learn how to communicate needs efficiently.	Assess the pros and cons of all coordination activities. Use whatever resources are available appropriately. Use the agency partners as creatively as possible. Be proactive and communicate better with all other agencies (those who lacked representatives at the first training) in your area and with TxDOT. Take definite measures and explore creative avenues to keep people connected and involved.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS	UNDERSTANING OF WHY THIS CHALLENGE WILL EMERGE	SUGGESTED STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGE
Fleshing out all the non-TSC participants' roles in the coming months.	Have to obtain buy-in from agency managers. The human service agencies are large and have several specialized components but only a small section has been present in the training. Everyone realized that some key partners were missing from the training although not sure as to exactly who was missing or who needed to be present for the purpose of the UWR project. No one is clear whether/how to connect with the missing partners. Will have to maintain momentum and feel interested throughout the span of the project with limited training in transportation.	Provide clarity of project goals. TxDOT and TSCs need to partner to take a balanced role in keeping the right persons involved in the project in a meaningful and effective way. Hold regular teleconferencing.
Come up with a list of measurable outcomes for the project.	Because the project goals are not clear, it is not clear who and exactly what the project will affect. Data are not readily available. Further, finding out who has data and in what specific forms will be difficult.	Identify and strategize very clearly the short and long-term goals for the project as soon as possible. Identify all possible data sources with the participating agencies. Delineate clearly at the outset what and how much to measure. Collect only the data that will be needed through effective avenues.
Overcome coordination fatigue.	Because the very role of the TSC is challenging. The fact that TSCs already have other tasks to accomplish than transportation coordination adds to this difficulty. Further, individuals in this role will have to creatively engage all participants and keep them interested and engaged, an extremely difficult task.	Assess the pros and cons of all coordination activities. Use whatever resources are available appropriately. Use the agency partners as creatively as possible. Be proactive and communicate better with all other agencies (including those who lacked representatives at the first training) in your area and with TxDOT. Take definite measures and explore creative avenues to keep people connected and involved. Share information effectively with the participating agencies. There will be a need for re-education and maintaining a process that will produce efficient communication, better balance and less discrimination.

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS	UNDERSTANING OF WHY THIS CHALLENGE WILL EMERGE	SUGGESTED STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGE
Achieve buy-in from the leaders of all possible human service agencies.	Achieving buy-in will be difficult without clear and measurable goals outlined (both short-term and long-term) for the project. Further, some agency leaders may already think that transportation is a small focus for serving their clientele. Due to unclear goals, many participants felt that the project might be placed on the back burner once they return to their agencies simply because they do not know what to do next.	Identify and articulate very clearly the short and long-term goals of the project as soon as possible. Explain how serving transportation needs of the clients appropriately constitutes the heart of every human service agency's mission. Better market and publicize the project with presence at regular agency meetings, inserts in agency bulletins etc. Coordinate convenient times for teleconferences and meetings.

Training Utility and Suggestions for Change

The respondents unanimously felt that the training helped them establish relationships with representatives from other local government agencies. They came to know the three Transportation Solutions Coordinators (TSCs) and their roles in the three pilot regions while being exposed to various transportation coordination ideas. Talking about the launching of the project and the project process during the focus group session was seen as useful since the questions helped participants to think about the project itself and their participation in the training over the previous two days. They felt that the resource kits made available (specifically the transportation solutions coordinator study modules, participants' contact information) during the training will be useful in the long run. They agreed that the training provided mechanisms to reach out to their clients and there was potential for the process to enrich the skill-sets of the various agencies to better serve the transportation needs of the clients.

On the weaker side, participants felt that the training was more focused on the role of the TSC while the individual roles for all other participants remained unclear; the next steps for all the participants were not clarified; and the connection between the training and the project outcomes were also unclear. Respondents felt that the training did not have any roadmaps to follow except for the study modules. Content of the study modules were new, unknown and overwhelming to most individuals. They emphasized that the first day of training was particularly too slow and difficult to understand.

They wanted CTAA to come up with a better title for the training since all the training participants would not be mobility managers and to include region-specific content and examples while providing a road-map at the beginning and to touch base with the road-map at regular intervals during the training. They also suggested involving the participants early with the modules. While avoiding irrelevant details, the participants indicated a need to address how everyone could incorporate the teachings into their job roles. For performing needs assessment in the three pilot regions, participants felt that any form that will be used needed to be tailored to the needs of the communities and agencies as well as the advocates and that forms should not be reinvented but simplified with clear instructions.

Findings from Surveys

Prior to the beginning of the CTAA training, participants were given a survey to assess their overall knowledge and opinions regarding the relationship between public transportation and the performance of their jobs. The paper-based survey, included in Appendix I, was designed to take no more than fifteen minutes in order to minimize inconvenience to the respondent. This was designed, in terms of evaluation methodology, as a pre-implementation survey.

Participants were then contacted approximately two months following the transportation solutions coordinator training by email and asked to participate in a condensed web version of the survey. The goal of this second post-implementation survey was to determine whether the respondents' knowledge and awareness of transportation issues related to their jobs increased. Each individual was contacted at least three times requesting their participation. The overall response rate for the survey was 76%, quite high compared to many comparable surveys. A copy of the web-based survey is included in Appendix II.

The vast majority of the participants were participating in an advisory role rather than training to become transportation solutions coordinators. As such, many aspects of the training were not directly germane to their daily tasks. However, exposure to many of the tools offered in the training and the ability to network with their local transportation solutions coordinator were thought to have provided some benefit in solving transportation issues. Further, the training highlighted the importance of transportation generally, increasing the likelihood that participants would view securing access to transportation as an important part of serving their clients.

Importance of Transportation

As noted above, the majority of the participants did not work for a transportation agency, nor did they serve in a dedicated role as a transportation coordinator. As such, these individuals may not have fully appreciated the importance of transportation access to helping their clients. The training spent a great deal of time focusing upon the significance of transportation access to every individual, including those with limited resources. Figure 3.1 demonstrates that the training was associated with changed views of the importance of transportation for serving clients. About 75% of respondents indicated that the training at least somewhat changed their views in this area, with 25% indicating that their opinions on transportation changed quite a bit.

Figure 3.1: Training and Importance of Transportation
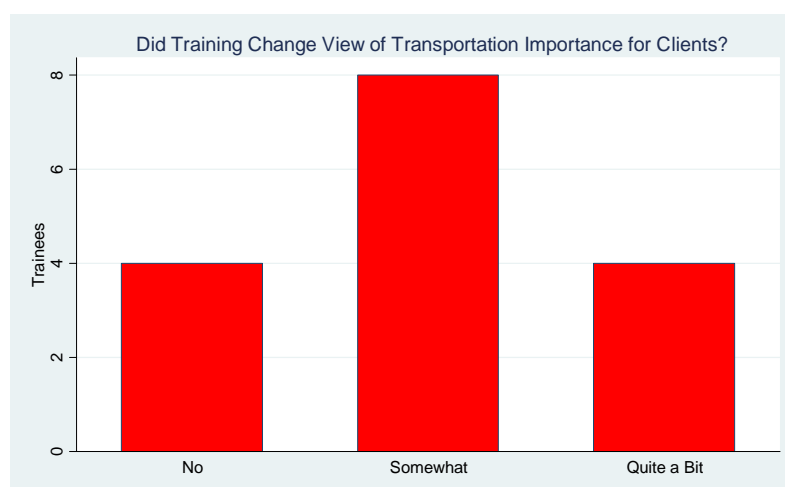
The comments left by the participants on the follow-up survey portray the importance of this change. For one individual, "The TSC training strengthened my view that transportation is a lifeline for our clients." Another participant noted that without transportation, the goals of agencies cannot be met: "Too many agencies are creating plans and setting goals for clients that they cannot achieve without transportation." For another individual, transportation was always recognized as important, but simply not addressed: "Our agency already knew the importance of transportation but it seemed to us that the topic has just been ignored or we felt we had to just accept what is available and that there is nothing that can be done to improve transportation problems…after going to the training I felt that there is a movement to solve transportation problems in Texas."

If caseworkers see transportation as more important for their clients, one would expect that they would also be more proactive in considering the travel difficulties that their clients face when working with them. Figure 3.2 demonstrates that this is the case. About 73% of the respondents indicated they consider the transportation issues their clients face at least somewhat more following the training. Half of the respondents who indicated they did not increase consideration of these issues noted the lack of change was because they were routinely considering transportation prior to the training. If you remove the individuals who were already routinely considering the transportation needs of their clients before the survey, one finds that 85% of participants consider the transportation needs of their clients more after participating in the training.

Collectively, these two survey questions indicate that the transportation solutions coordinator training is successful in elevating the importance of transportation access for clients in the minds of the participants. These are important findings, for if case managers do not see value in linking clients with transportation options, providing them with access to solutions will be of marginal value.

Figure 3.2: Training and Considering Client Transportation Needs
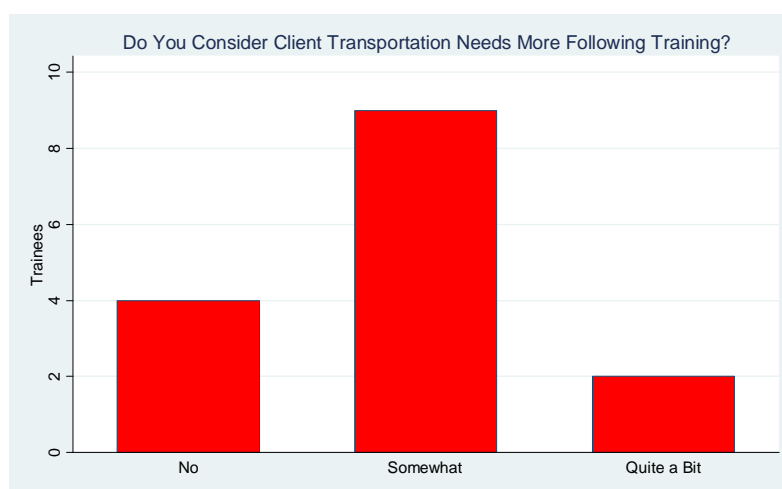
Difficulty Locating Transportation
By being introduced to a course on transportation solutions coordination, one would expect that participants would be able to better locate transportation options for the clients they serve. Prior to the training, 75% of the participants noted that finding transportation assistance for their client population was somewhat or very difficult to accomplish. Figure 3.3 indicates that for these

individuals, the training program resulted in a general reduction in this challenge. One-third of those with prior difficulty indicated they had fewer problems finding resources following the training. The findings were not unanimous, however. The majority of these respondents did not see a reduction in the difficulty associated with locating transportation, and one respondent even showed increased difficulty. Taken as a whole, though, the data suggest that there is some benefit to the program in improving case managers' ability to link their clients with transportation assistance.

Figure 3.3: Training and Difficulty Finding Transportation Assistance
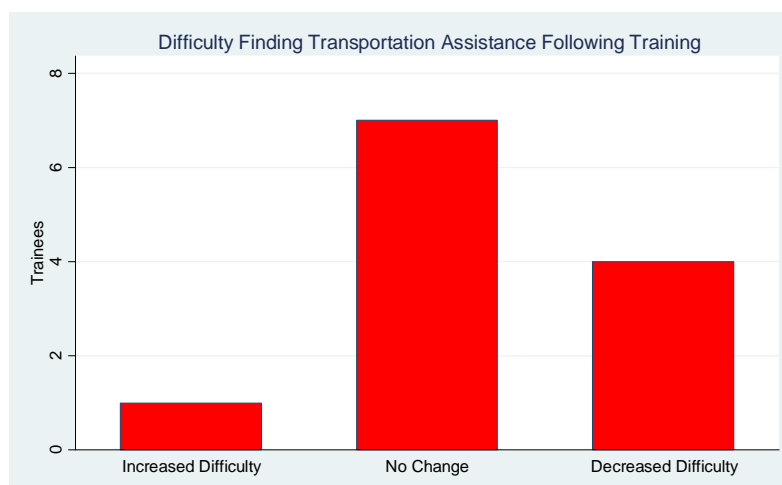
Figure 3.4 Training and Confidence in Finding Transportation Information
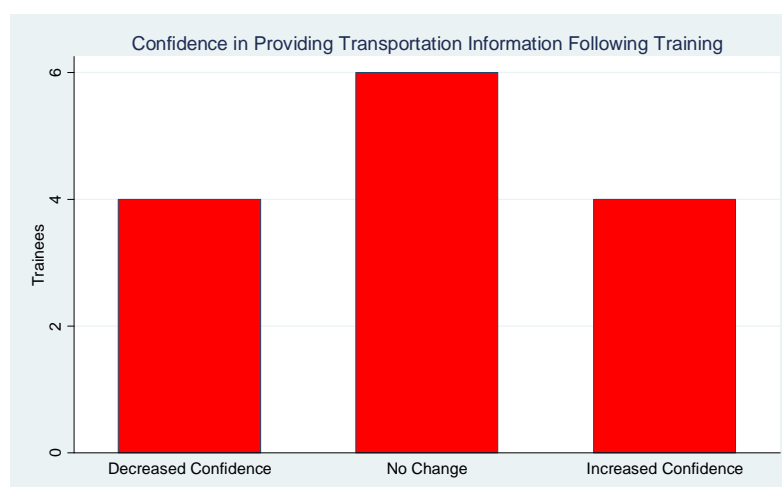
Program participants also expressed some difficulty in providing adequate information when clients asked them transportation-related questions. About 69% of participants felt they could only provide sufficient material sometimes or rarely before the training. One expectation is that through the

training, these individuals would be better able to provide necessary information. Figure 3.4 shows mixed results. Participants were just as likely to report decreased confidence in their ability to provide adequate information as they were to report increased confidence.[3]

There is little theoretical reason to believe that the training program actually decreased individuals' ability to actually provide adequate information, making these results surprising. One potential explanation for the findings is that after learning more about transportation options, the participants became aware that there was much more available then they previously realized. These individuals may have been confident in their responses in the past simply because they were unaware of the options available and are now knowledgeable enough to realize they are not familiar enough with these other options to speak with confidence. Another potential explanation is that the training prompted the individuals to think more seriously about the importance of transportation. Individuals may be giving the same responses to questions, but having the greater desire to give quality information makes them less confident.

Knowledge of Transportation Options
As participants took part in the training they were exposed to various options that are available nationally. In addition, the trainees were seated with their regional transportation solutions coordinator and provided with ample time for interaction and networking. Through the trainings and interactions the participants were to learn about the availability of various options in their service areas.

In both the pre- and post-surveys, participants were asked to identify the transportation options available in their area. The list of options included: bus; dial-a-ride; taxi cabs; vanpools; and target-specific transportation (i.e., students). Respondents were also able to note any other public transportation choices available in their region.

If the training resulted in better knowledge of transportation availability in the area, we should see two processes occur. First, respondents should note options in the follow-up survey that were absent in the pre-survey. Further, we should expect to see respondents not select options on the post-survey that they mistakenly thought were available on the pre-survey. Figure 3.5 indicates that

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[3] One individual who indicated they always could provide adequate information before the training was excluded from the follow-up analysis.

Figure 3.5: Training and Transportation Options Knowledge
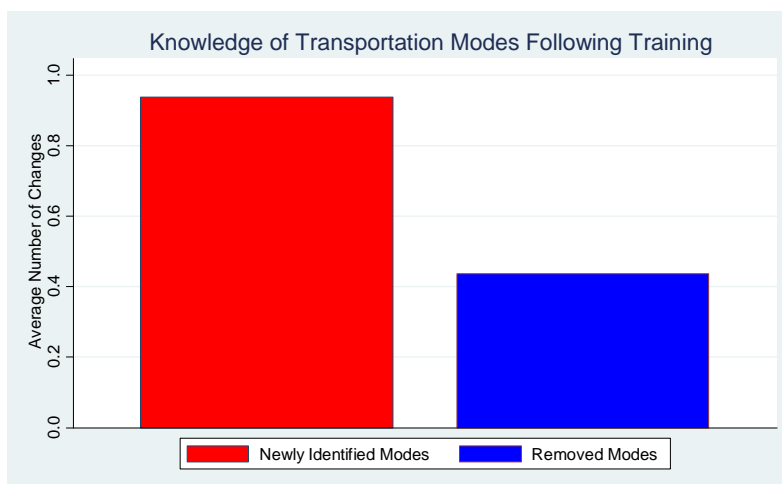
this indeed occurred. The typical respondents identified additional modes of public transportation available in their region following the training. Conversely, respondents also removed travel modes from their follow-up survey, suggesting that they learned travel options they believed to exist were not available. The results are reflective of participants having a better knowledge of what public transportation services are available in their area.

As mentioned previously, most of the participants in the training were not transportation solutions coordinators but were instead serving an advisory role. Of the attendants who were not TSCs, only

Figure 3.6 Training and Identifying Transportation Solutions Coordinator
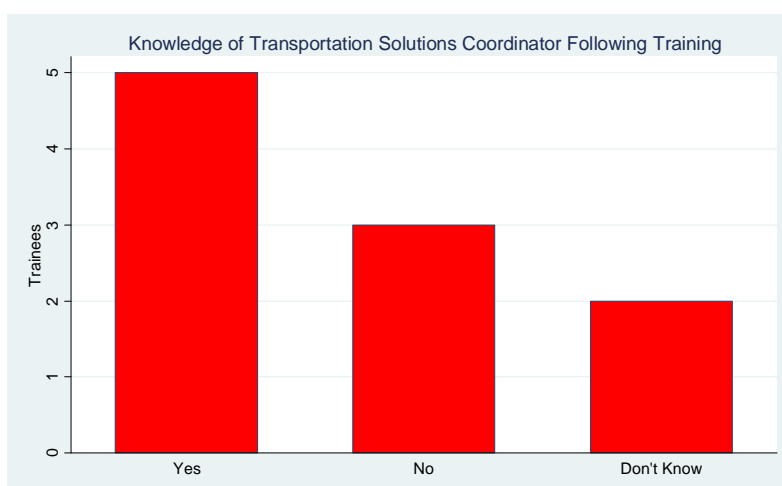
28% were aware that there was a TSC in their region. Of the remaining participants, Figure 3.6 indicates that 50% were able to affirmatively answer that there was a TSC for their region following

the training. This finding is somewhat noteworthy considering the TSCs were individually identified during the training process. That more individuals are aware of their TSCs and how to contact them is encouraging. However, that more participants were not aware of their TSCs given the amount of time the TSCs spent with their fellow trainees and the fact that they were directly identified during the process is surprising. The two measures evaluated here, knowledge of their TSC and improved knowledge of available modes of transportation, provide a mostly positive picture. A total of 50% of the individuals who came to the training without knowing their region had a TSC, left with that knowledge and retained it for two months.

Broader Transportation Awareness
Program participants were also asked about the availability of information related to public transportation in their areas. Because the respondents were connected with their regional Transportation Solutions Coordinator, the evaluation team expected to see trainees viewing information as more available. However, as Figure 3.7 indicates, the opposite was the case. One-third of participants indicated that their perception of information availability was lower than it was prior to the program implementation. Only one respondent felt information was more accessible following the training. The majority of individuals saw no difference in ease of access following the program.

Figure 3.7: Training and Perceived Availability of Transportation Information
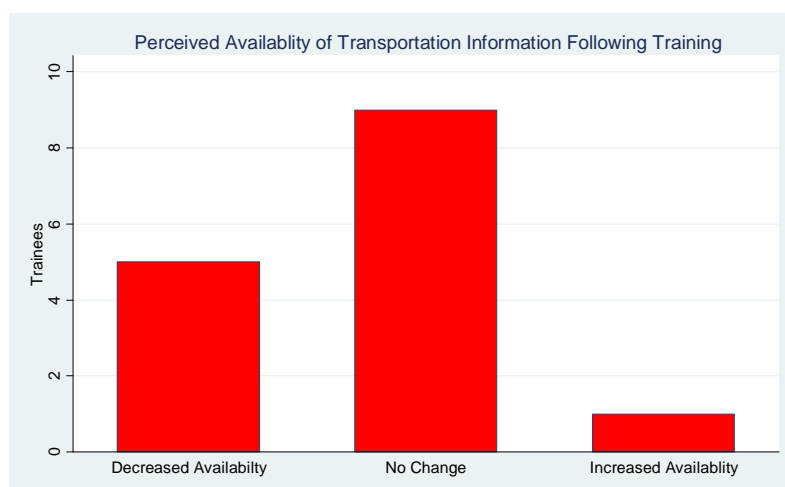
These results are surprising since the level of information did not decrease. One potential explanation for the finding is that the training increased view of transportation's importance to

transportation demonstrated in. Figure 3.7 may result from an overall belief that the information available is insufficient relative to its importance—despite the level of information staying static.

One key finding from the focus group was that a major benefit of bringing individuals from diverse backgrounds was the opportunity to network with one another. Individuals from a variety of agencies worked, ate and socialized together over a three day period. The research team expected that this networking would lead to improved communication across agencies in regards to transportation needs. Figure 3.8 indicates that 27% of individuals perceived less communication between their agency and other agencies regarding transportation issues following the training compared to only one individual who felt communication improved. One important point to note is that the question asks about the *agency* rather than the individual. More than likely, there was not a change in the actual level of communication, but instead there was less communication than the individual felt necessary given the importance of transportation issues to the participant.

Figure 3.8: Training and Inter-Agency Communication
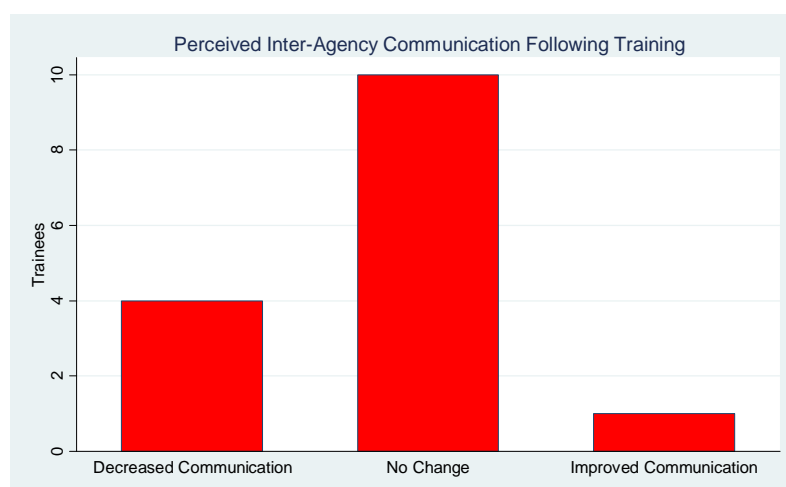
4   PILOT SITES

4.1   Introduction

After the attending the July 2011 two-day Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) training, the Mobility Managers from the three pilot sites were charged with the responsibility of implementing their own United We Ride pilot projects in their respective service regions. Each Mobility Manager used the CTAA training modules as a starting point to develop training specifically for the social service agencies in their region. In some cases, the training was a two hour informational course with a presentation while in others; the training included a three hour training session with a training manual for each participant. The content and reach of the training was reshaped by the TSCs to adapt to the context and the needs of the three sites.

This chapter focuses on the process and outcome evaluation findings of the three pilot projects. Information about the three pilot projects was obtained via training material, interviews, meeting observations, participant surveys, focus group discussions, and final progress reports submitted by each TSC. The discussion below describes each pilot project's goals, implementation process, focus group feedback following training, data analysis and project outcomes.

4.2   HOTCOG

Heart of Texas Council of Governments (HOTCOG) and the Heart of Texas Rural Transit District (HOTRTD), serves Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone and McLennan counties in Texas. Information retrieved from HOTCOG's UWR application for the grant describes their program as a mechanism to assist the current mobility manager to train and maintain a network of social service agencies and stakeholders to determine area transportation needs and offer solutions to serve their clients. The desired result was increasing ridership, minimizing duplication of services, maximizing resources, and creating partnerships to address unmet transportation needs within HOTRTD's service area.

HOTCOG Transportation Solutions Coordinator Goals
HOTCOG's TSC described TxDOT's United We Ride pilot project goal as a way to simplify the individual customers' access to public transportation by assuring that

- Case workers and mobility managers from diverse agencies are fully informed of transportation resources and needs in their communities, and

- Diverse agencies integrate practices to assure individual customers' transportation needs are routinely and efficiently met as part of each agency's stand operating procedures

The HOTCOG TSC explained the project's training goals and objectives with the help of six key components:

- Access: to increase and/or enhance access for customers

- Response: to improve response to customer transportation needs

- Unmet Needs: to define unmet transportation needs for customers

- Customer Knowledge: to improve customer knowledge and awareness of transportation services

- Agency's Knowledge: to improve agency representatives' knowledge and awareness of existing transportation services

- Coordination: to improve service agency partnerships and coordination of transportation services

The HOTCOG TSC explained that the key problem with providing transit services to the HOTCOG community involved lack of awareness. Many people remained unaware of the transit agency and the services offered by them. Moreover, the public who were aware of the transit agency mistakenly thought that the transit services were only for the elderly or persons with disabilities; this is a misconception that the transit agency wanted to dispel.

The transit agency wanted to attract new riders and encourage them to use transit for all their daily trips. To help achieve this goal, the HOTCOG TSC wanted to target school children, seniors, and persons making medical trips as potential new riders. The transit agency could accommodate new riders and increases in the number of trips within their current structure. Finally, the TSC believed that securing additional resources to help clients to pay for transportation was also important. The

perception was that cost still prohibited some potential riders from using transit services. Securing additional funding could eliminate cost as a barrier to transit for potential users.

Considering all these issues, the TSC outlined the following measurable goals for the UWR project:

- Offer services to more people
- Provide more trips
- Increase customer miles ridden

HOTCOG Pilot Implementation

For the case manager training, the TSC created a formal presentation and a companion fifty-five page training manual for each workshop participant. The training manual described the project goal, training goals and objectives, mobility management, Waco Transit services, Heart of Texas Council of Government services, and the Individualized Transportation Plan (ITP).

The TSC held the first of four case manager workshops on November 4, 2010 at the Waco Transit System Administration Office. The twenty-eight participants represented Child Protective Services, Texas Department on Aging and Disability Services, Area Agency on Aging, Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services, Catholic Charities, and Workforce Solutions. During the workshop, the case workers also had the opportunity to tour the Waco Transit's Bus Transfer Station and learn about various types of fixed route and paratransit vehicles. To get feedback on the training module, the TSC held a follow-up meeting with ten attendees from the November 4, 2010 training. Personnel from the Transit Services provided transit brochures and local bus schedules during the training and did a short presentation on local transit issues.

After attending the November training, several groups requested special training sessions for their organizations. One such training included a December 2, 2010 session hosted by the Ombudsman Manager for the Heart of Texas Council of Government (HOTCOG). This session was an abbreviated version of the TSC training that was organized for twenty-eight participants. On January 13, 2011, the TSC held a meeting for the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services (DARS). Seventeen case managers from the Heart of Texas and Brazos regions attended.

As interest grew in the community, additional presentations and trainings were given. In February 2011, the HOTCOG TSC met with staff from the Department of Family and Protective Services

and the Work Incentives Seminar Event (WISE) held at the Heart of Texas Workforce Solutions office. In March and April 2011, the TSC's activities included a conference call with the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council regarding regional coordination councils. In addition, the TSC partnered with the Workforce Board and Waco Transit and met with the directors of the Education Center and Boys and Girls Club in Marlin, Texas regarding after school and summer transportation options for children attending events and activities at their facilities. In hopes of developing a voucher program for participants, information was also shared with the ATI Career Training Center of Waco, Texas. Finally, the TSC also met with high school seniors, who attended the Spring Transition Fair at Hill Junior College, to determine their transportation needs once they entered college.

The TSC's approach seemed creative in casting a wide net to engage populations that are most often disenfranchised. For example, the TSC reported meeting with the Warrior Transition Brigade at Fort Hood to identify the types of transportation services wounded soldiers need. The TSC also reported seeking a partnership with the Veterans Coalition for the Heart of Texas, who supports veterans and their families. Besides, information was presented to the Community Resource Coordination Groups of Texas, which primarily assists families of children with disabilities.

The TSC's training and networking received positive response within the region and throughout the state as the meetings and trainings also led to invitations to speak at the 2011 Texas Statewide Independent Living Conference in Austin and at the 2011 Transportation Workshop in San Antonio on July 25.

Evaluation Findings-Data Analysis

Rural Areas
The Heart of Texas Council of Governments (HOTCOG) provided the evaluation team with data including each demand-response ride from its six county service area for Fiscal Years (FY) 2009-2011. In addition, HOTCOG provided the first month's data for FY 2012 (September). These data represent only the rural areas of the HOTCOG region, as the urban areas are served by Waco Transit System. HOTCOG utilizes the Transportation Manager System from Shah Software to record information regarding each of its demand-response rides.[4] Common information recorded

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[4] Transportation Manager System is a routing and scheduling tool offered by Shah Software. The system allows for the organization of demand-response requests including the including time,

includes destinations, miles traveled, identification of rider, number of passengers, agency responsible for payment and disability status along with many other data elements.

As mentioned earlier, the HOTCOG transportation Solutions Coordinator's (TSC) key measurable goals for the project were to:

- Increase the number of riders
- Increase the number of rides provided
- Increase the number of passenger-miles traveled

The data analyses presented below focus upon these three measures. Data from the first month of FY 2012 are used to project key data for the remainder of the fiscal year. In calculating the projected levels, the evaluation team accounted for seasonal effects that often occur with monthly data. For instance, elderly riders may be less likely to require public medical transportation during holiday times when family members are more likely to be visiting them for the holidays.[5] This provides a more confident estimate of ridership levels for the fiscal year.

Number of Riders

The first HOTCOG training took place around the end of November 2010, approximately one-fourth of the way through FY 2011.[6] If changes in usage are to occur because of the training, they would be expected to occur in FY 2011. Figure 4.1 indicates that, indeed, there was a sizeable increase in the number of unique riders served by HOTCOG during FY 2011. In fact, there was a

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origination and destination. In addition, the software allows for the collection of other basic information such as agency responsible for payment, odometer readings and disability status. The system is often referred simply as "Shah" by practitioners.

[5] For instance, during Fiscal Years 2009-2011, September represented 9.06% of a fiscal year's rides on average rather than the 8.3% one would expect by simply using one-twelfth. To obtain the projected value for Fiscal Year 2012, the evaluation team divided September's ridership value by 0.096. In all cases, September represented a higher portion of the fiscal years' measures; therefore, this approach represents a smaller projected value than multiplying by twelve.

[6] Fiscal Years in Texas range from September 1 to August 31 of the following year with the year value representing the calendar year for August. For instance September 15, 2010 occurs in Fiscal Year 2011, as does February 3, 2011.

Figure 4.1 HOTCOG Ridership by Fiscal Years
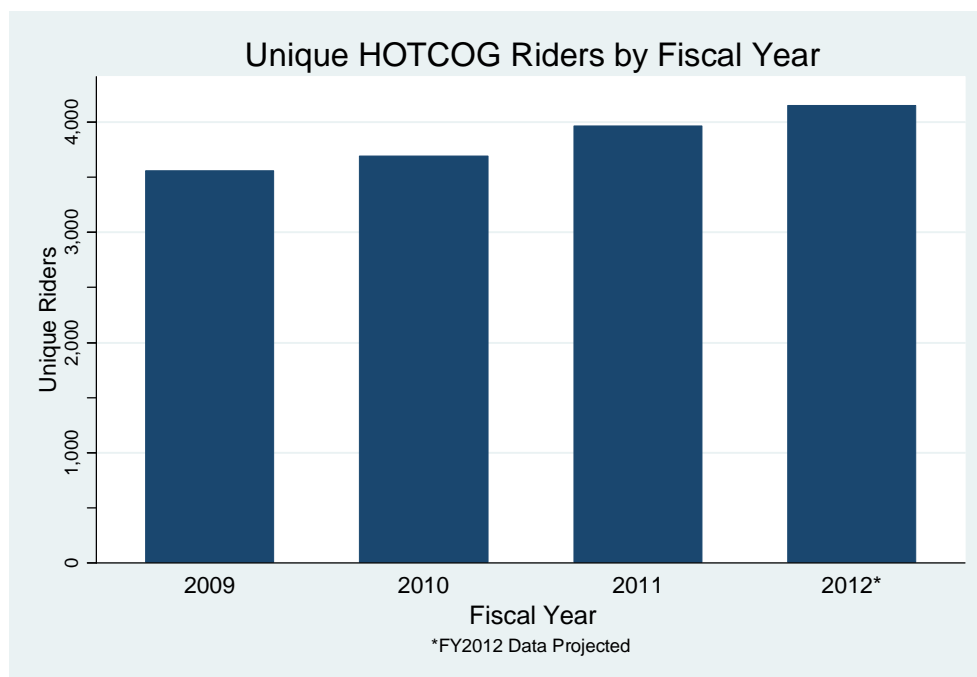
7.4% increase in ridership in FY 2011 compared to a 3.9% increase in FY 2010. FY 2012 is projected to continue this trend with a 4.7% increase.

The FY 2011 findings are even more substantive when one considers that the mobility management training occurred three months into the fiscal year. In fact, if one projects the number of riders based upon the first three months of the fiscal year, FY2011 would have only had an expected increase in ridership of 0.3%. That the sharp rise in riders occurred in the months following the mobility management training provides evidence that the training was effective in increasing the number of HOTCOG riders.

The projected increase for FY 2012 is moderate relative to the high expansion in FY 2011. However, three things need to be considered. First, the increase is still robust when compared to the FY 2010 increase. Next, sustaining large growth following a year with particularly large increase can prove particularly difficult as there are likely fewer individuals who have not already been targeted as a rider. Last, the projection for FY 2012 is based upon one month of data only and as such, is less reliable.

As an additional tool, the evaluation team utilizes multivariate techniques to remove the impacts of long-term trends in ridership and the seasonal effects related to given month. Figure 4.2 displays the findings of the multivariate model. The dashed line represents the expected level of ridership for the HOTCOG system had the mobility management not occurred, while the solid line indicates the predicted number of riders each month given the training implementation in FY 2011.

Figure 4.2: Training and HOTOG Riders
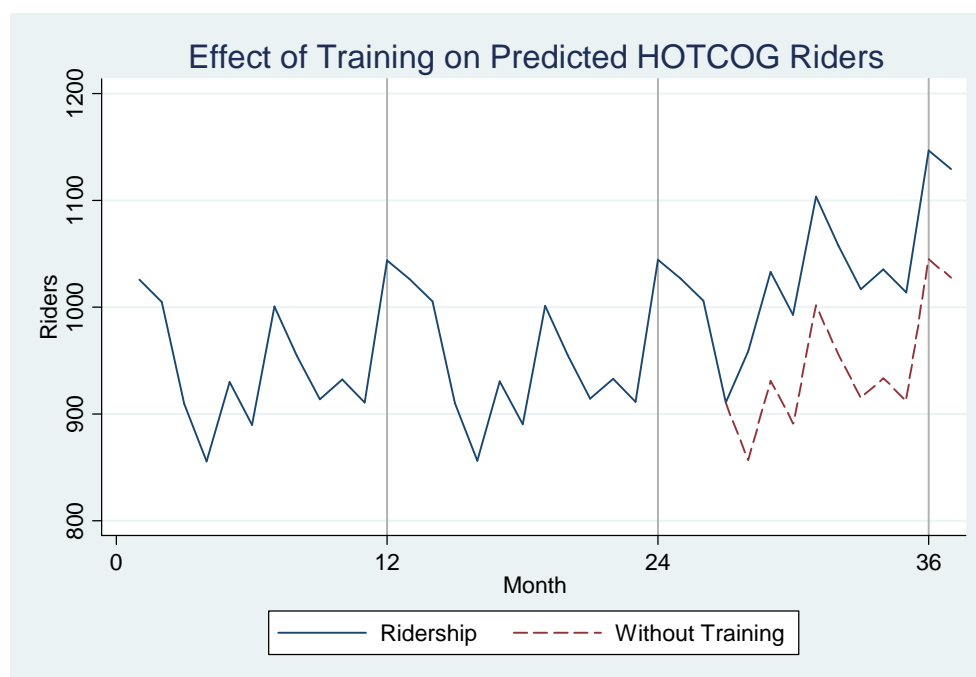
As the figure indicates, the model predicts that months following mobility management training have 102 more riders than they likely would have if the training not taken place. When one considers there are 978 riders on the HOTCOG system in a typical month, this represents an increase of approximately ten percent in ridership for HOTOCG compared to what would be expected if the mobility management training was absent. Each of the analyses is supportive of a relationship existing between the training program and HOTCOG ridership.

Number of Rides

In addition to number of riders, the transportation solutions coordinator aimed to increase the number of rides provided as well. Similar to the rider analysis above, if the program has an impact on the number of rides, we should see an effect in FY 2011. Figure 4.3 illustrates that there was an 11.7% increase in the number of rides provided by HOTCOG in FY 2011 compared to FY 2010. This contrasts with a 0.7% decrease from FY 2009 to FY 2010. FY 2012 is on pace for an overall increase in the number of rides of 6.8%.

Figure 4.3: Annual Rides Provided by HOTCOG
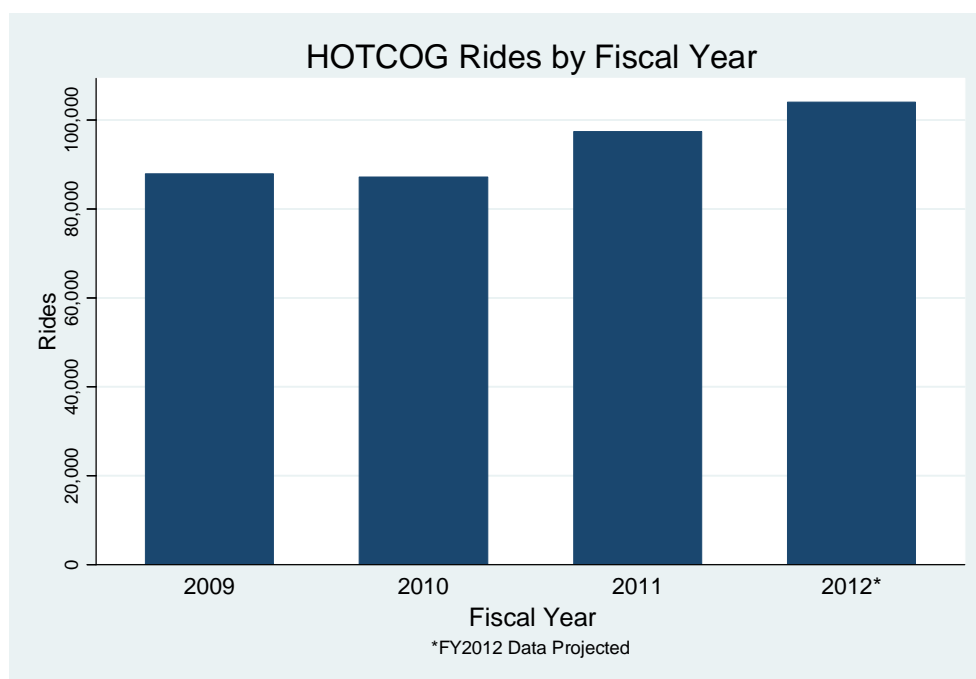
Since the initial mobility management training occurred three months into the fiscal year, if one projected FY 2011 data off of the quarter alone, an expected 8.7% increase in rides is expected. As such, an increase in the number of rides was already evident prior to the training. However, the overall increase (11.7%) is larger than the early trend. Taken together, these data suggest that the mobility management trainings by HOTCOG can be linked to an increase in ridership.

Removing the impacts of long-term trends in ridership and the effects of seasonality related to months provides a more accurate picture of the increases in riders related to the mobility management training. Multivariate analyses make such isolation possible. Figure 4.4 displays the

estimated impact of the mobility management training on the number of rides per month. The solid line indicates the predicted level of ridership given the mobility management training while the dashed line represents the expected level of ridership for the HOTCOG system had the mobility management not occurred.

Figure 4.4: HOTCOG Provided Rides Following Training
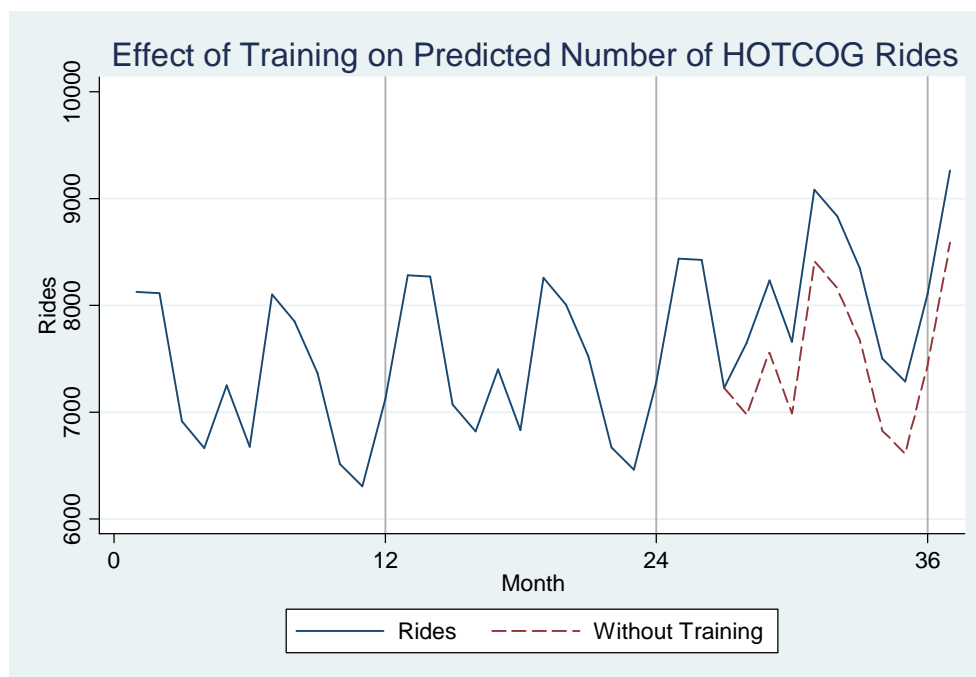
As the figure indicates, without the mobility management training, HOTCOG would be expected to have 674 fewer trips each month—roughly a 9% reduction trips provided. Taken in concert with the annual data presented above, the analyses indicate a substantively significant relationship between the training program and an increase in the number rides provided by HOTCOG

Passenger Miles

The final goal of the transportation solutions coordinator was to increase the number of passenger miles traveled through the mobility management training. Figure 4.5 shows the overall trend in passenger miles provided by HOTCOG. Prior to the implementation of the mobility management training there was an increasing trend in passenger miles. FY 2010 included 5.5% more miles than did FY 2009.

The implementation of the mobility management training coincided with an increase in the growth of passenger miles provided by HOTCOG. FY 2011 witnessed a 16.1% increase in passenger miles relative to FY 2010. FY 2012 is on pace for an additional increase of 20.0%. Recall that the mobility management training began three months into FY 2011. While these increases are impressive, during the first three months of FY 2011, HOTCOG was on pace for an increase of passenger miles of 15.8%. HOTCOG was already experiencing substantive increases in miles traveled prior to the implementation of the mobility management program.

Figure 4.5: Annual Passenger-Miles Provided by HOTCOG
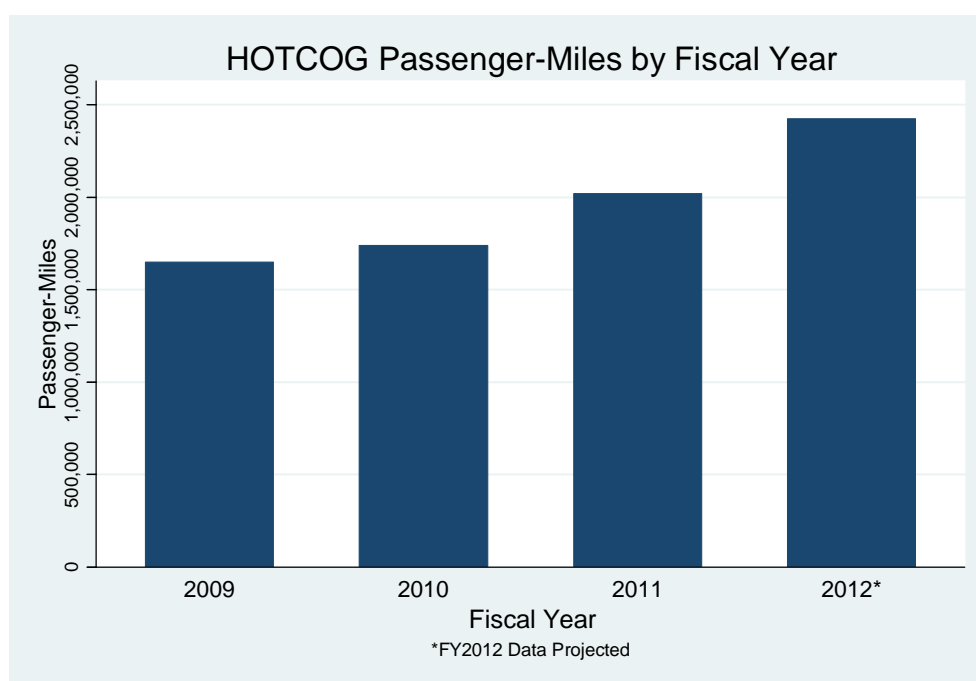
Multivariate analyses provide a more nuanced view of the observed relationship between passenger miles and the introduction of mobility management training. Figure 4.6 indicates the impact of the mobility management program on the predicted passenger miles provided by HOTCOG after accounting for an overall trend and the seasonal effects caused by each month.

As the figure indicates, the months following the mobility management training are associated with an expectation of 10,336 more passenger miles than would be expected had the training not occurred. This represents an increase of roughly seven percent.

Taken together, the bivariate and multivariate analyses provide mixed support for the efficacy of the mobility management training in increasing passenger miles provided by HOTCOG. The bivariate analyses show a relatively small increase after accounting for growth patterns already in place. The multivariate analysis, on the other hand, indicates a significant increase in the passenger miles.

Figure 4.6: Training and HOTCOG Passenger Miles
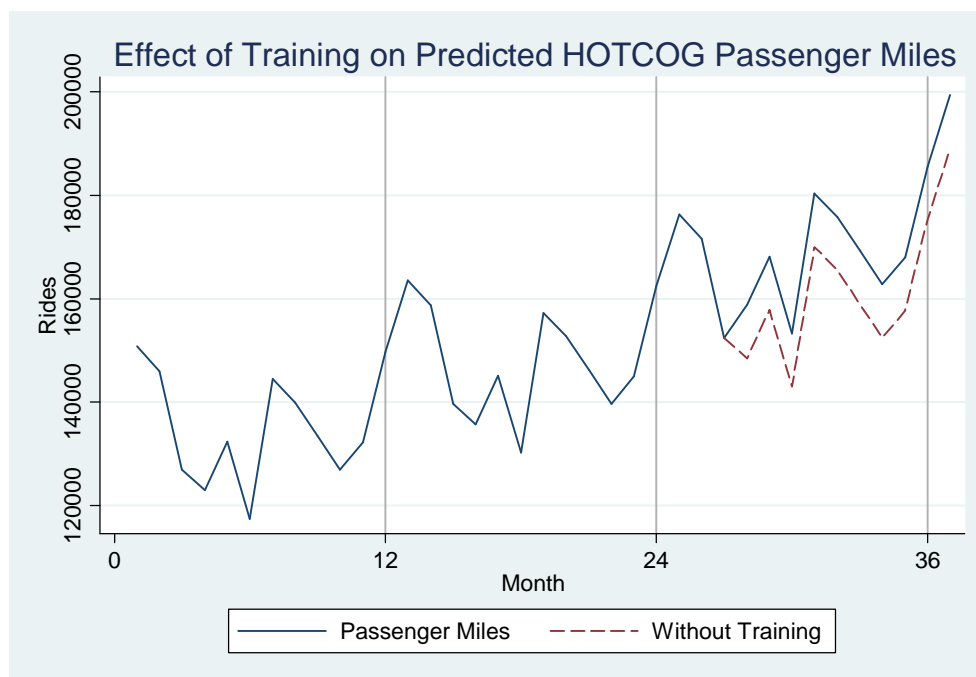
Thus, there are substantive increases in ridership that persist even after controlling for trends and seasonal effects while the findings for the passenger miles provided by HOTCOG are less convincing. However, there was evidence that arose from the multivariate analyses demonstrating that the training was successful in increasing passenger miles

Urban Analysis
Within HOTCOG, Waco is the sole urban city. In this area, public transportation is provided by through the Waco Transit System (WTS). WTS provides both fixed-route rides as well as demand-response.[7] While the mobility management training is provided by HOTCOG, the transportation

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[7] Fixed-route rides are those trips taken by an individual on a bus, train or van that has a regularly scheduled route, typically with designated stops. Demand-response rides are those that result from an individual scheduling an appointment to be picked up and taken to a specific location. Typically, these pickup and/or drop-off locations are not located on a fixed-route stop.

solutions coordinator provided information about WTS during trainings and had the same goals for WTS as for HOTCOG:

- Increase the number of riders
- Increase the number of rides provided
- Increase the number of passenger-miles traveled

The evaluation team was not directly provided with information from WTS. However, the National Transit Database provides information on the number of fixed-route and demand-response rides provided by WTS.[8] While the goals of the program include increases in the number of unique riders and passenger-miles traveled, data are available only for the number of rides provided. However, these analyses have the unique advantage of looking at both fixed-route rides as well as demand-response trips.

Further, the National Transit Database has the additional advantage of providing data over a longer-time frame, going back to FY 2007, allowing for a more complete look at trends in WTS ridership. Like HOTCOG, WTS data are incomplete for FY 2012. Ridership information is available only for the first two months of the fiscal year. Ridership for FY 2012 is projected utilizing these first two months of data. Similar to the rural HOTCOG analysis, the evaluation team accounted for the seasonal effects associated with monthly data. For instance, university students may require less public transportation when school is not in session.[9] This provides a more confident estimate of ridership levels for the fiscal year.

Fixed-Route
With the mobility management training taking place during FY 2011, one would expect any increases in rides caused by the training to take place in FY 2011 and FY 2012. As Figure 4.7 indicates there was a substantive increase in ridership from FY 2010 to FY2011 of 20.2% in

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[8] http://www.ntdprogram.gov/ntdprogram/data.htm

[9] For instance, during Fiscal Years 2007-2011, September and October represent 20% of a fiscal year's fixed-route rides on average rather than the 16.7% one would expect by simply using one-sixth. To obtain the projected value for Fiscal Year 2012, the evaluation team divided September and October's ridership value by 0.20. In all cases, these months represented a higher portion of the fiscal years' measures; therefore, this approach represents a smaller, projected value than multiplying by six.

Figure 4.7: Annual Fixed-Route Rides Provided by WTS
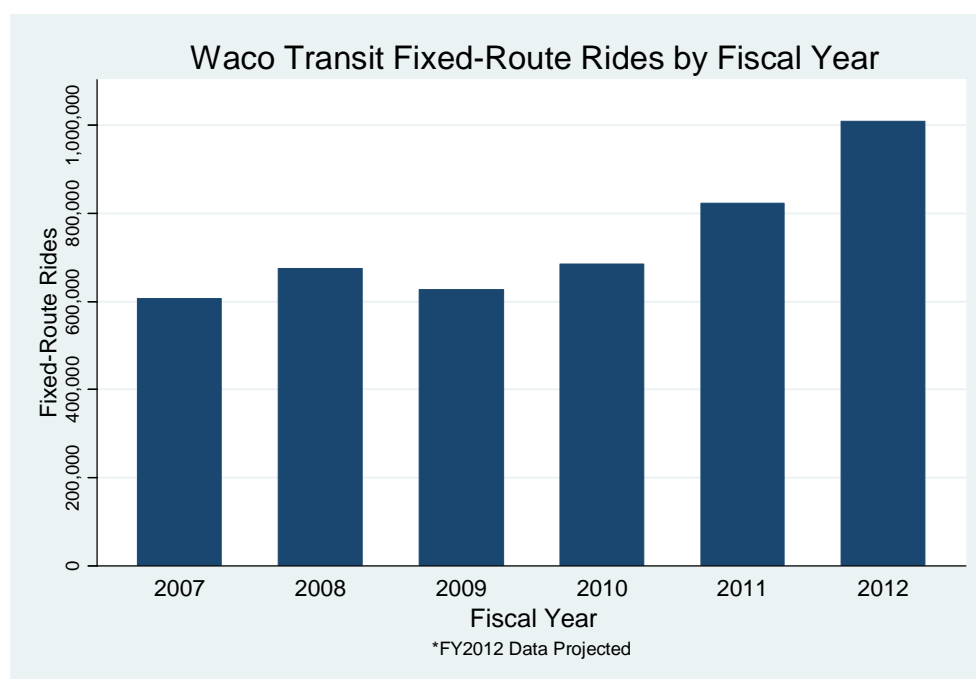
comparison to an increase of 9.3% from FY 2009 to FY2010. FY 2012 is on pace for a 22.6% increase, or a 47.4% increase from FY 2010, the last fiscal year without the training. Fiscal Years 2011 and 2012 are on pace to average annual growth of 21.4% compared to an average annual growth of 4.4% in the three fiscal years prior to the mobility management training.

Despite the substantive increase seen in FY 2011, the growth may not be directly attributable to the program. During the first three months of FY2011, WTS was on pace for a 23.2% increase in ridership compared to the previous year. While there is no reason to expect that the program lowered ridership on WTS, the bivariate results here are mixed—there is a sizeable increase in WTS ridership; however, the system was already on pace for a slightly larger increase before the trainings. The increases in ridership are sustained, though, into FY 2012, providing evidence of the association between mobility management training and increased WTS ridership.

To better understand the relationship between the mobility management training and WTS fixed-route ridership, the evaluation team utilized multivariate techniques to remove the effects of long-term trends and seasonality to more clearly isolate the relationship that exists between the training and increased ridership. Figure 4.8 presents the results of this analysis. The solid line represents the monthly predicted ridership. The dashed line depicts the predicted ridership had the training

Figure 4.8: Training and WTS Fixed-Route Rides
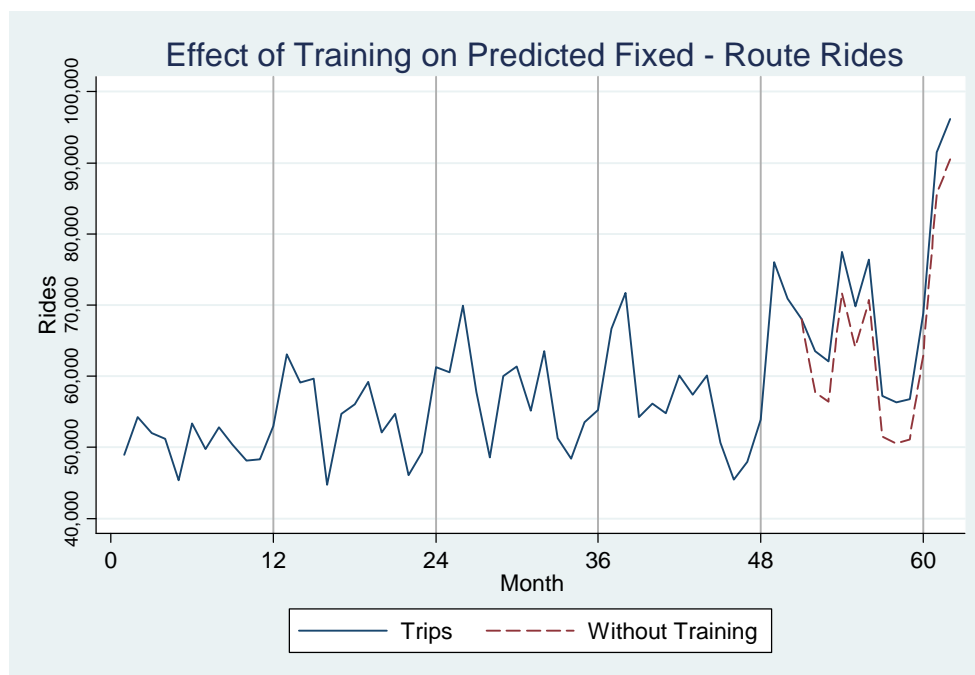
program not been implemented. As shown, the mobility management training is associated with an additional 5,726 expected rides each month following the program. This translates into a 9.8% increase in predicted rides each month. The steepness of the increases following month fifty-nine makes observing the difference between the lines difficult. Using the vertical line for month sixty helps confirm that there is a substantive separation between the two lines.

Demand-Response
In addition to its fixed-route services, WTS offers demand-response services to clients in its service area who are unable to utilize the fixed-route buses due to a disability six days a week, fourteen hours a day. In addition to themselves, personal care assistants and one guest may ride at no additional charge.

Figure 4.9 shows the annual ridership for WTS demand response. The use of WTS demand-response services was 4.3% lower in FY 2011 than in FY 2010, not supportive of the mobility management training increasing ridership. Moreover, during the first three months of FY 2011 (the months prior to the program implementation), WTS was projected to have a slight annual increase in demand-response trips. However, the FY 2011 decline was less than the FY 2010 annual decline of 9.4%. In fact, the number of WTS demand-response rides declined for each year that the

Figure 4.9: WTS Annual Demand-Response Rides
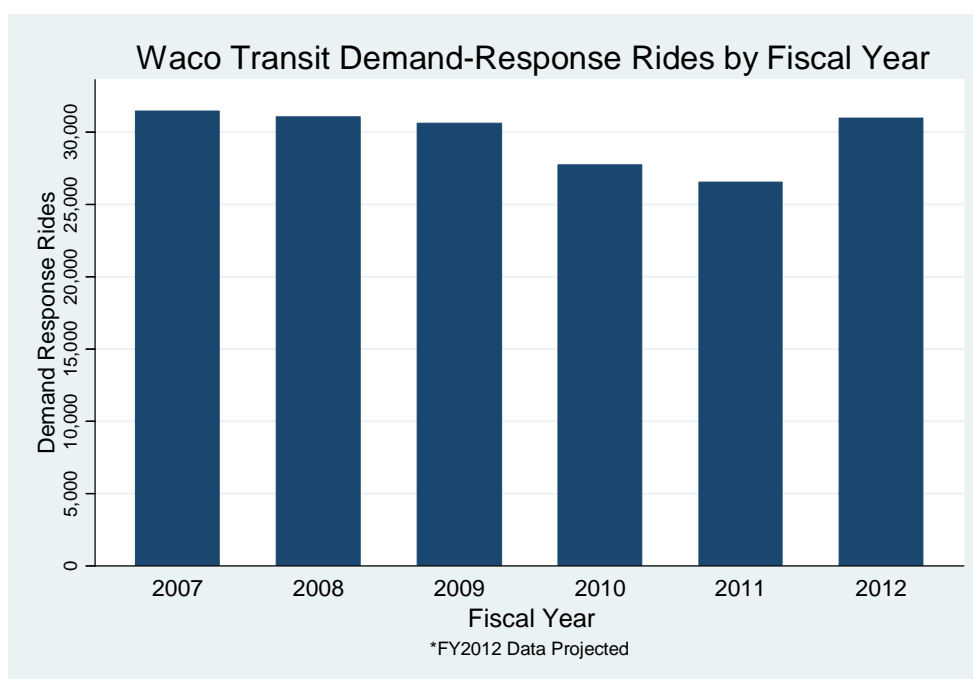
evaluation team had data prior to the implementation of the training program. Further, FY 2012 is on pace to reverse the declining trend with a projected increase of 16.9% demand response rides when compared to FY 2011. Overall, the bivariate analysis does not provide a great deal of support for the program affecting WTS demand-response ridership levels. However, given the projected increases in FY 2012, one cannot definitively rule out a relationship.

By removing the effects of long-term trends in ridership and spikes associated with certain months through the use of multivariate methods, the evaluation team finds no evidence of an increase in WTS demand-response ridership related to the mobility management program. Figure 4.10 depicts the outcomes of the multivariate model. The solid line represents the monthly predicted WTS demand response lines. The dashed line depicts the predicted level of rides had the mobility management program not been implemented.

As the figure indicates, the model predicts that the mobility management training is associated with slightly lower WTS demand-response rides. However, the relationship fails to achieve statistical significance. In other words, from a statistical perspective, there is no relationship between the training program and demand-response trips. When one considers this in concert with the bivariate

data, the findings indicate that the program was not associated with changes in the use of demand-response rides on the WTS—either positive or negative.

Figure 4.10: Training and WTS Demand-Response Rides
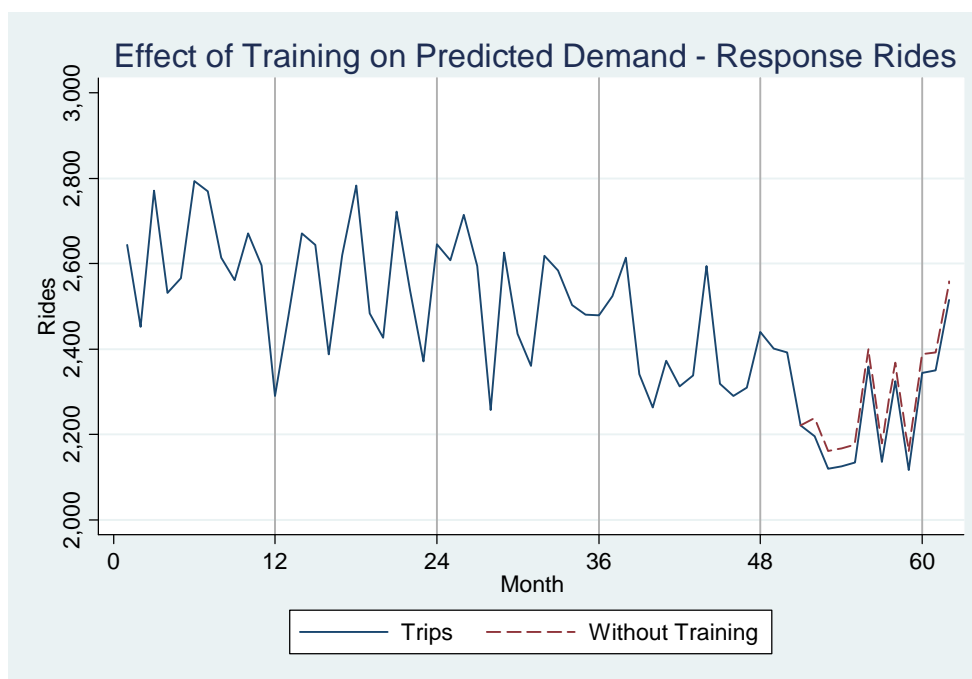
Evaluation Findings-Survey

HOTCOG mobility management participants completed a survey prior to the training which helped to assess the importance they placed on transportation access for their clients and their overall knowledge of public transportation options.[10] In the months following the training, participants were emailed an invitation to participate in a follow-up survey to assess changes in their transportation-related knowledge and opinions.[11] One of the HOTCOG trainings was given to a regional office of a state social services agency. This training included many individuals from outside the HOTCOG service area. The survey results presented here reflect perceptions of only those participants who work in at least one of HOTCOG's six counties.

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[10] A copy of the survey is available in Appendix I

[11] A Copy of the follow-up survey is included in Appendix II

Importance of Transportation

After completing training emphasizing the importance of transportation access in each individual's life, one would anticipate that many trainees would alter their perception of transportation's importance in their clients' lives. In fact, as Figure 4.11 shows, 65% of those who took part in the training indicated that they changed their views at least somewhat concerning the importance transportation for those they assist. About 30% of these trainees changed their views "quite a bit."

Figure 4.11: Training and Importance of Transportation
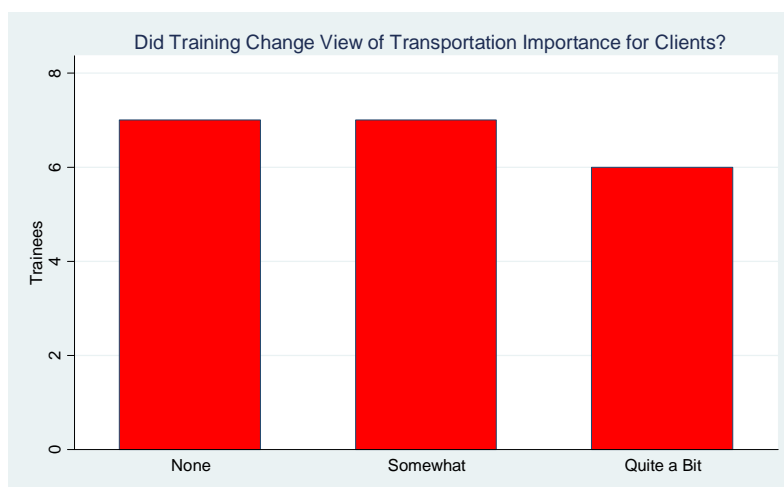
Figure 4.12: Training and Considering Client Transportation Needs
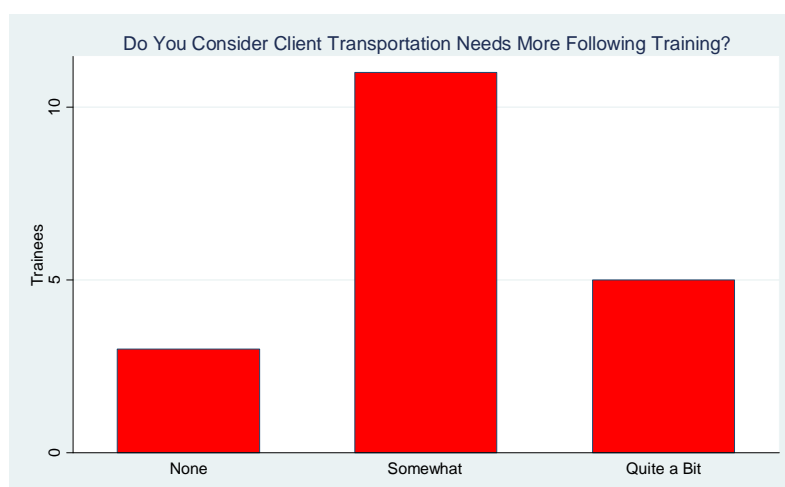
The comments offered by participants support the notion that their views of transportation's importance changed, for the better. One respondent indicated that transportation "is needed more

than I realized." Another noted, "The training helped to emphasize how important transportation is to our clients for their daily living needs."

This increased awareness of the significant role that transportation plays affected how the case managers performed their jobs. As indicated in Figure 4.12, about 84% of respondents indicated that they consider the transportation needs of their clientele at least somewhat more than before the training—with more than a quarter indicating they consider their transportation needs quite a bit more.

Collectively, these two measures indicate that the mobility management training was successful in affecting how case managers view transportation. Simultaneously, this translates into the caseworkers giving extra attention to the mobility needs of their clients.

Difficulty Locating Transportation
92% of participants in the mobility management training indicated that prior to their participation, identifying transportation assistance for their clients was at least somewhat difficult, with 36% indicating that it was very difficult to find transportation assistance. When focusing on those who

Figure 4.13: Training and Difficulty Finding Transportation Assistance
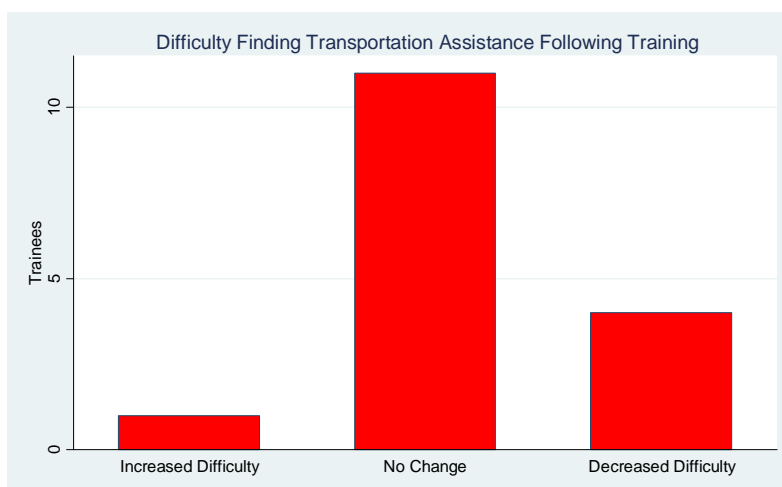
reported prior difficulty, Figure 4.13 indicates that the training helped ease the difficulty of finding transportation for 25% of the respondents. While this represents a rather small percentage, it does indicate that a substantive percentage of participants are better able to link their clients to

transportation options. Surprisingly, one respondent indicated more difficulty locating assistance than they did prior to the training.

Only 27% of the participants felt as if they mostly or always could provide adequate transportation related information to their clients when asked before the training. Figure 4.14 indicates a substantive improvement in the confidence of social workers in providing this information following the program. About 56% of participants felt more confident in offering mobility advice to their clients after the training.[12] Following the training, 65% of participants indicated that they mostly or always could provide adequate transportation related information to their clients when asked, representing a sizeable increase from 27%.

Figure 4.14: Training and Confidence in Finding Transportation Information
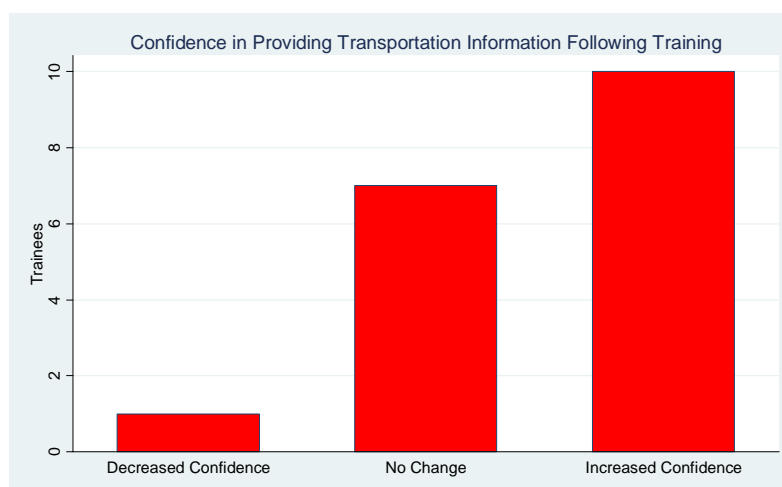
The measures presented above indicate that the program was successful at increasing the confidence of individual case managers to provide information. There is also marginal evidence that the training helped reduce the difficulty associated with locating transportation assistance.

Knowledge of Transportation Options
Having accurate knowledge of what transportation options are available is important. Even the most well-meaning caseworker with false information is not able to provide adequate assistance. Participants were asked to identify the transportation options available in their area in both the pre- and post-surveys. The list of options includes taxi cabs, target-specific transportation (i.e., students),

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[12] Two individuals who claimed to always have adequate information are excluded from the follow-up analysis since they could not show improvement.

Figure 4.15: Training and Transportation Options Knowledge
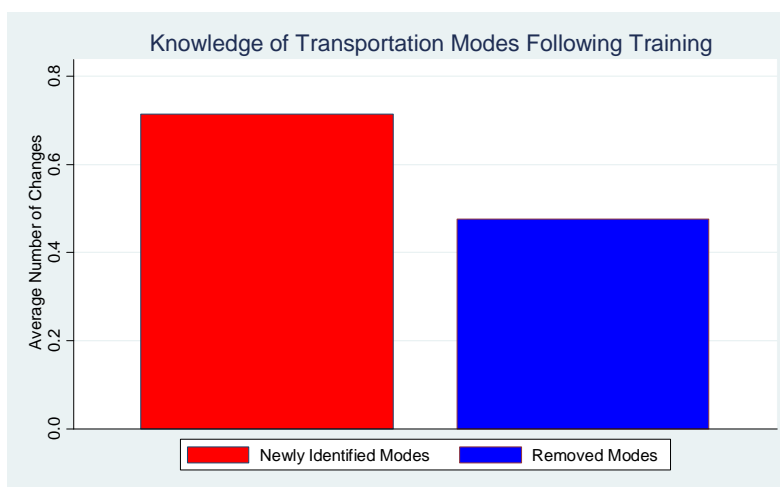
dial-a-ride, bus and vanpools. Respondents could also note other transportation options available in their area.

If the training exposed participants to the options that are available in the region, they should become aware of services they did not know were available. At the same time, they should no longer believe that non-existent options are operational. As shown in Figure 4.15 participants were able to identify new modes of transportation in their area. At the same time, trainees removed transportation options they mistakenly believed to be available. On average, trainees were able to identify 0.7 additional modes of travel and 0.5 fewer modes.

Figure 4.16: Training and Identifying Transportation Solutions Coordinator
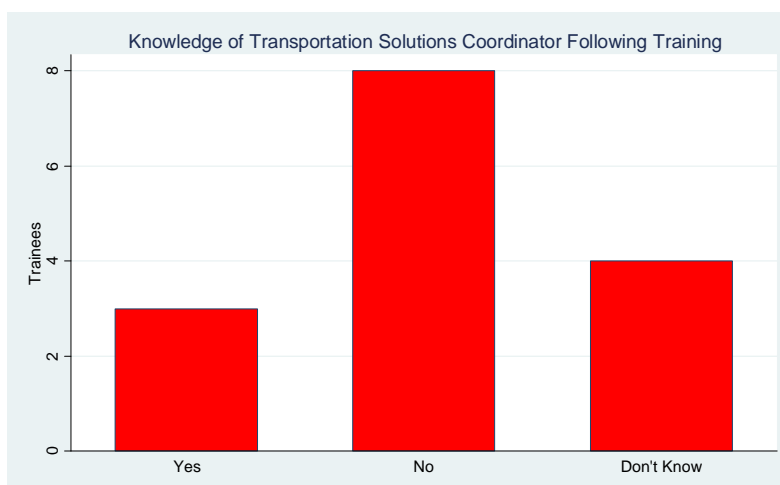
The mobility management training was conducted by the TSC for HOTCOG. Figure 4.16 indicates that few were aware of the TSC position even following the training as only 20% had this knowledge. A possible cause of these findings is that the TSC's official title in the area is a Mobility Management Coordinator. Perhaps if the question were worded differently, the results may have been different.

Taken together, these measures suggest that participants reassess what transportation options are available. Most did not, however, know the TSC. As mentioned above, this is possibly due to a wording problem.

Broader Transportation Awareness
Publicly available information fosters access to public transportation. After completing the training where various information tools were discussed, one would expect to see the participants viewing information as more available. As shown in Figure 4.17 there was a negligible increase in the perceived availability of information. While this finding is not as expected, one important consideration is that respondents felt that information is relatively available with 71% indicating that the materials are at least somewhat available. One contributing factor to the lack of an increase is the already high view of information availability.

Figure 4.17: Training and Perceived Availability of Transportation Information
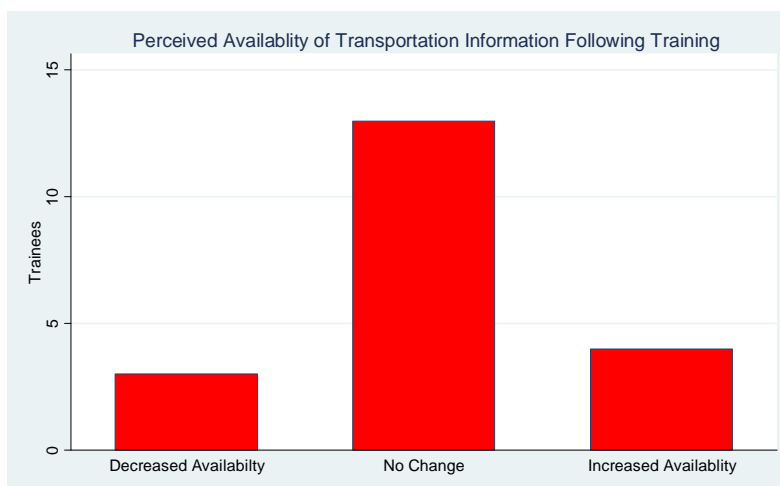
The training sessions brought together individuals from a variety of agencies— thereby facilitating cross-agency communication. Further, the program introduced social workers with a point of contact for transportation concerns. Given this, one would expect to see increased communication across agencies following the training. Figure 4.18 indicates that this did happen. About 41% of respondents felt that the level of communication between their own agency and other agencies regarding transportation needs increased following the mobility management training.

Figure 4.18: Training and Interagency Communication
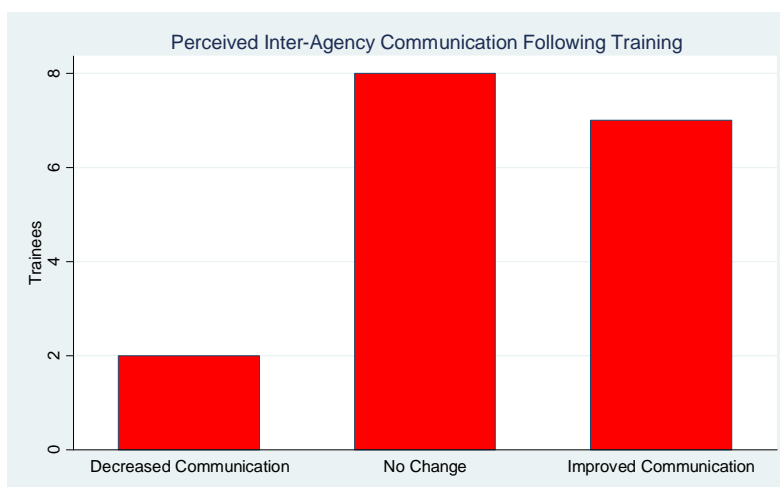
Together, these measures indicate that the training has been successful in improving communication. However, there was not a noteworthy increase in the perceived availability of information. As mentioned above, one related factor was the relatively high perceived level of transportation information prior to the trainings.

Evaluation Findings-Focus Group

The evaluation team invited area social service agencies to share their ideas and observations at a focus group discussion. This meeting occurred after the case managers had almost one year to implement the training and tools they received from the TSC's training. On October 19, 2011, approximately 10 participants representing Workforce Solutions, and Area Agency on Aging case managers provided feedback in a facilitated focus group session. The session was facilitated by three evaluation team members following a structured focus group guide developed solely for these sessions in the three pilot projects. During the session, the PPRI facilitators asked the case managers and other participants a series of questions in an open forum. To encourage open communication,

TxDOT staff and the TSC did not attend the focus group meeting. To set a relaxed tone, refreshments were provided during the two-hour facilitated focus group session. The format was largely similar to the focus group that was conducted following the CTAA training by the evaluation team. Participants were eased into facilitated discussions with the help of strategic ice-breakers. The session was flip-charted and audio recorded by the evaluators for the purpose of note-taking. The implemented protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research at Texas A&M. TxDOT project management staff members were also consulted for their feedback on the protocols. The rich qualitative data collected during the focus group is thematically organized here for analytical purposes into the three following sections. All this information sheds light on the impact of the training by complementing the information gathered from the surveys and data analysis.

Project Goals and Challenges
After the mobility management training provided by the HOTCOG TSC, focus group participants clearly understood the purpose and goals of the project and the role of the TSC in their region. The most noted observation was that mobility management training made social service agencies aware of HOTRTD's transit operations (i.e. schedules, fares, etc.). This indicated that the participants did not have a comprehensive idea of the transit services provided by HORTRTD before the training workshop organized by the TSC. The agency case managers shared the information they gathered with their clients, who then began using the transit options according to their needs and necessities. The second positive comment was about improved communication and networking among area social service agencies. The participants agreed that the training created a social network and even personal relationships between the TSC and the participating agencies that did not exist earlier. This outcome was noted by the focus group participants as an obviously welcome result of the training. The network synergies helped them problem solve transit needs of their clients at times.

Despite these benefits, case managers also noted that gaps in communication still existed. They wanted a formal tool and marketing plan informing the public strategically about transportation services. They hinted that a few workshops or trainings were not sufficient to market transit availabilities appropriately to the target client population for the region. A consistently thought-out plan with adequate tools could be more effective in reaching out to the public and addressing the existing needs.

The participants also acknowledged that institutional memory on the training was lacking and marked this as a huge gap that needed to be addressed thoughtfully. With constant turnovers in agencies, information needed to be centrally available in a way so that even new employees could access necessary information when needed. Thus, case managers wanted a meaningful way to inform clients about transport options regardless of personnel changes within their organizations. Developing on-going information sharing mechanisms within their organizations, they emphasized, could create a new culture where transportation would become part of the daily language of all case workers.

Continuing Barriers to Transportation
Case managers acknowledged that equity for all types of riders in the region was still a major problem. While more clients knew about transportation options, additional public outreach was needed to increase mobility for rural residents, persons with low vision, low income persons, limited English proficiency, low literacy persons, and persons with disabilities. For these groups, there were still serious gaps and barriers that needed to be adequately addressed. For this to happen, key players in the area need to be brought together.

The participants also emphasized the need to develop a systematic mechanism to report information about existing transportation barriers to the transit agency. In this connection, they talked about the existing need for transfer assistance to transit services outside the HOTCOG region that many residents of the area regularly face. They also discussed streamlining and simplifying the existing form to capture transit needs from their clients. While the form is definitely something that is needed, it has been adding to the workload of the agencies. They also mentioned that medical transportation assistance needed to be thought out more comprehensively for families in need. They talked about the possibility of having a handy central landing page on the internet where all information could be centralized and easily available for area residents.

Lessons Learned and Suggestions for Change
On a positive note, the focus group participants stated that low income populations, persons with disabilities in rural areas, and job seekers in rural areas benefited the most from the mobility management and solutions coordination services. This is primarily because the training and the information they obtained from the training made them think more deeply about the unmet needs of these specific groups and come up collaboratively with creative solutions and transit options.

Despite this positive outcome of the mobility management training, however, the agency managers reported that the Individual Transportations Plan (ITP) forms were not beneficial or user friendly for the case workers and their agencies. These added another layer of unwelcome paperwork to their daily job related tasks. Ultimately, these forms were not used by case managers.

As a suggestion, the participants wanted the mobility management training offered as Continuing Education (CE) credits which would be beneficial for various participating agencies. Managers and staff members could obtain CEs to maintain their certifications, and the mobility management training could serve as an incentive for more managers to take the training to obtain their needed CEs while benefitting their clients directly. They also discussed the convenience and possibility of providing on-site training for case managers. Finally, creating a full time Community Relations Specialist was recommended. This Community Relations Specialist could actively make inroads to various communities and related pockets explaining the availability of transportation options.

4.3   DART

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) gets one around Dallas and twelve surrounding cities with modern public transit services and customer facilities tailored to make trips fast, comfortable and economical. DART's extensive network of DART Rail, Trinity Railway Express (TRE) and bus services moves more than 220,000 passengers per day across its 700-square-mile service area. For the purpose of the UWR program, however, the focus was on Plano in Collin County. Plano is the only community in Collin County which has DART services or any general public transportation system. Unlike Dallas County, there has been relatively little mobility management activity in Plano. The UWR project provided the opportunity to introduce the concepts of mobility management and coordinated transportation to the Plano community. Barriers exist in the area when accessing fixed route transit. There is a lack of cross walks, discontinuous sidewalks, etc. These barriers prove cumbersome for seniors or persons with limited mobility or a disability. Recognizing these challenges, DART's UWR project attempted to form partnerships with social service agencies in the area to identify transportation needs and funding/resources to assist clients who are unable to access fixed-route transit.

DART Transportation Solutions Coordinator Goals

After working with DART officials and listening to the transportation needs of the Plano community, the TSC outlined the following program goals to meet the challenges in Plano:

- Identify clients that cannot access traditional fixed-route transit

- Partner with transportation providers to increase options available to clients

- Improve overall transportation access and efficiency

- Bring together transportation mobility managers and human service caseworkers to address their communication barriers

- Document unmet needs in the area

The first challenge in Plano involved the need to improve social service agencies' knowledge of mobility management. Since the term was new for area case managers, basic education regarding the importance of mobility management could raise case managers' awareness, which would ultimately benefit their clients.

A major goal was to identify gaps in transportation service for potential clients who could not access traditional fixed routes. DART officials and Plano stakeholders wanted to identify these individuals and their needs to determine the best method to help them access transit and improve their mobility.

Another related goal was to comprehensively identify available transportation services in the Plano region. This information could be shared with case managers and then given to their clients. Once these services were identified, transportation working groups were to be formed to help address the needs of the Plano area.

 Another key goal was to develop new transportation agreements for sharing information and resources. There was hope that eventually, additional transportation options would result from transit agency collaborations thereby improving transit efficiency scenario in Plano.

DART Pilot Implementation

After the CTAA training, the DART TSC created a three hour training for Plano and Dallas caseworkers. The training was developed with four modules: 1) explaining the mobility management concept, 2) identifying local transportation providers, 3) finding funding sources, and 4) using individualized transportation plans (ITPs) for caseworkers to assess their clients' transportation needs.

The TSC invited local health and human services agencies and non-profit organizations to four training sessions. The first training session was held in Plano on November 3, 2010, and twenty-seven caseworkers attended. The second session on January 28, 2011 was held at the Plano Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) office with thirteen caseworkers in attendance. At the March 9, 2011 Dallas training session, the DART TSC partnered with the Greater Dallas Community Council/Dallas Area Agency on Aging, and Community Transportation Network (CTN). About forty-eight case managers attended and another forty-nine individuals were placed on a waiting list. The TSC noted that a positive outgrowth of the Dallas training was a former trainee creating a mobility training workshop for sixty of his co-workers at the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MHMR) of Tarrant County in July 2011.

Additional positive outgrowths included the DART TSC presenting the mobility management case worker training program before the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Public Transportation Subcommittee. The TSC training was also given at the Independent Living Coaches training held on August 11-12, 2011. Finally, DART secured New Freedom funds to implement five coordinated transportation/mobility management partnership demonstration projects in the Dallas area. The TSC believes that participation in the UWR project laid the foundation for better communication between various state agencies, non-profit organizations, and transportation providers. This foundation will ultimately help resolve transportation issues for seniors, persons with disabilities, and populations with special needs in the targeted area.

Evaluation Findings-Survey

Participants in the mobility management trainings conducted by DART were provided with a pre-survey to assess their overall knowledge of public transportation options and the importance they

placed on transportation access for their clients.[13] Participants were then emailed an invitation to participate in a follow-up survey approximately two months following the training to gauge changes in their knowledge of, and views on, transportation.[14] For the first DART training, the surveys were administered immediately following the training and many of the participants left prior to completing the survey. Because of this, analyses that require answers from both the pre- and post-test contain a small number of responses.

Importance of Transportation
The training sessions highlighted the importance of transportation access in everyone's life, including users of social services. After completion of the training, one might expect that many of the participants would have a changed view of the importance transportation has in their clients' worlds. Figure 4.19 indicates that for many of the participants, this was indeed the case. 50% of program participants altered their perception of the importance of transportation for the individuals they serve at least somewhat—with 18% of attendees changing their views "quite a bit." While one-half did not change their views, this still represents a sizeable percentage of the caseworkers who changed their view of the value of transportation for the individuals they serve.

Figure 4.19: Training and Importance of Transportation

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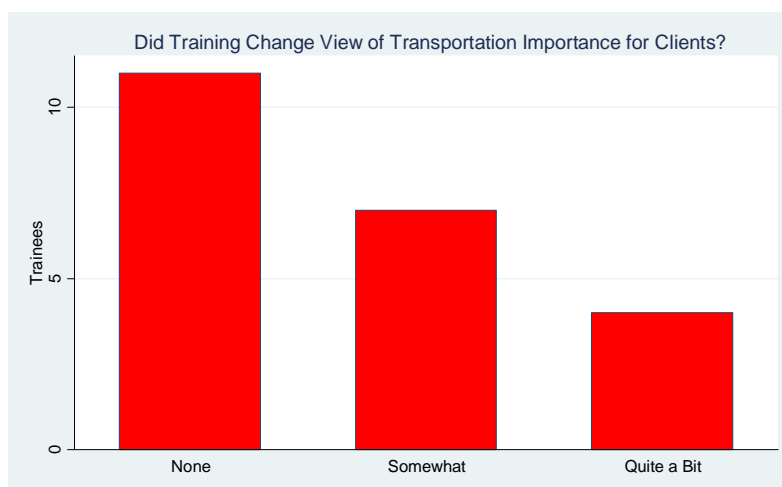
[13] A copy of the survey is available in Appendix I

[14] A copy of the follow-up survey is included in Appendix II

Since participants changed their views about the importance of transportation, one would expect to see an increase in the amount of consideration the caseworkers give to their clients' transportation requirements. This is especially true considering that the individuals attended a training that discussed mechanisms for assessing their clients' needs. Figure 4.20 shows that training participants are indeed providing additional consideration to the transportation needs of the individuals they serve. Fully two-thirds of trainees are contemplating the transportation issues of their clients.

Figure 4.20: Training and Considering Client Transportation Needs
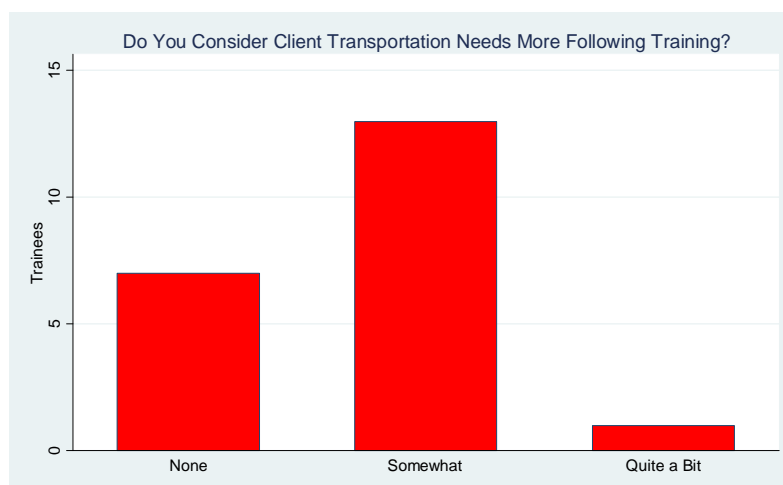
These two indicators suggest that the mobility management training was successful in elevating transportation access as a concern for caseworkers. Those who went through the program were more likely to have changed opinions about the importance of transportation access and are also more likely to consider the transportation needs of their clients. This finding is particularly important since helping case workers link clients to public transportation was a key goal of the Texas United We Ride Project (Dunlap 2009, 6). If case managers do not consider the transportation needs of their clientele, this goal is not likely to be accomplished.

Difficulty Locating Transportation
All case managers who participated in the pre-survey indicated that they faced difficulty in locating transportation assistance for their clients. Further, 75% of participants indicated that they felt they had adequate information to provide clients only sometimes or rarely. This is consistent with the description of Collin County by the Transportation Solutions Coordinator who indicated that public transportation options are greatly limited in the bulk of the county. Despite the limited options,

Figure 4.21 indicates that one-third of program participants indicated the difficulty they faced in locating transportation assistance for their clients decreased following the training.

Likewise, as displayed in Figure 4.22, 43% of trainees indicated that they had increased confidence that they possessed the requisite knowledge to provide adequate information when clients approach them about transportation. The follow-up survey indicates that there are still problems with the overall knowledge with 62% feeling they feel they have adequate information only sometimes or rarely.

Figure 4.21: Training and Difficulty Finding Transportation Assistance
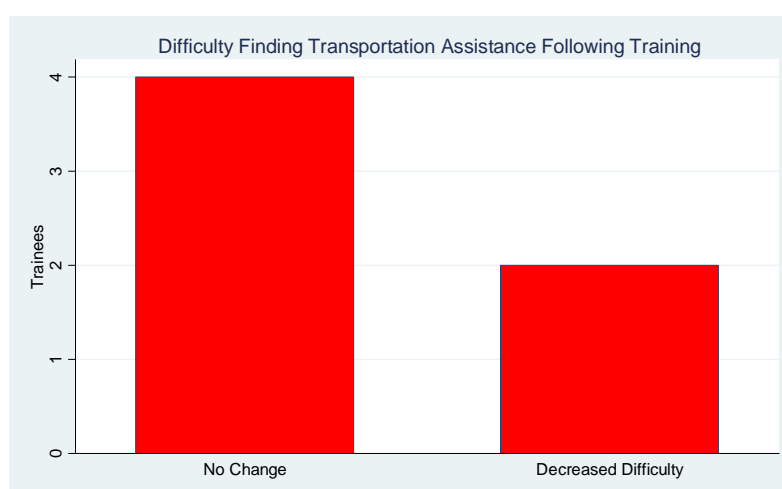
Figure 4.22 Training and Confidence in Finding Transportation Information
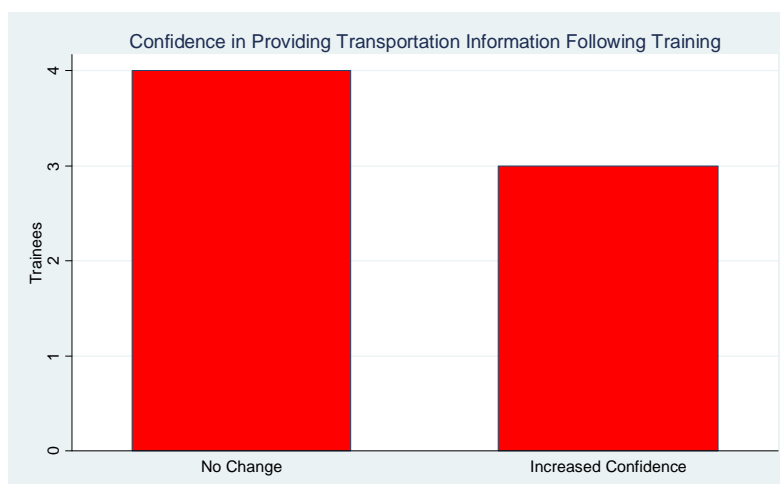
The key goal of the Collin County training was to build relationships that could lead to the creation of new transportation options. The training appears to have had an additional benefit of increasing knowledge of current options and a perceived increase in the ability of individuals to link their clients with these services.

Knowledge of Transportation Options
While transportation options are limited in the Collin County area, case managers need to know what those options are. Further, some of the participants were from other counties with more robust services available through DART. The training covered some of these options that are available in these other areas.

Participants were asked to identify the transportation options available in their area in both the pre- and post-surveys. The list of options incudes: dial-a-ride; bus; vanpools; taxi cabs; target-specific transportation (i.e., students). Respondents could also note other options available in their region.

To the extent that the training resulted in participants discovering what travel options were available that they were unaware of and what programs are unavailable that they mistakenly believed exist, we should see changes in their responses concerning what public modes of transportation are available. Figure 4.23 indicates that participants did indeed change what options they believed were available in their area. On average, trainees were able to identify 0.5 additional modes of travel and 0.17 fewer modes. Collectively, this represents a net-increase of 0.33 additional modes of travel that case workers are aware of.

Figure 4.23 Training and Transportation Options Knowledge
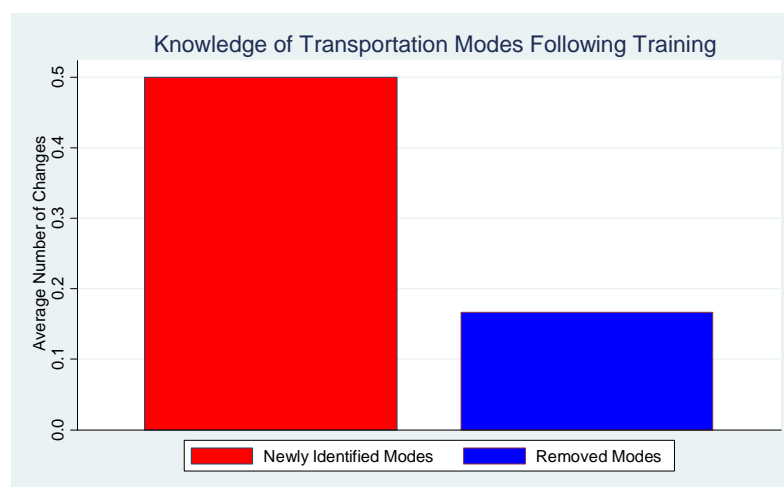
The Collin County trainings had as a key goal the building of a dialogue about what services are needed and prompting individuals to work together to form a collective solution to their transportation issues. The slides presented at the training do not identify who the TSC is because the goal is for the individuals to be empowered to find their own solutions. Not surprisingly, then, there was no increase in knowledge of who the region's TSC was. Figure 4.24 indicates that 40% felt there was not a TSC, while 60% did not know. One potential contributor to this lack of knowledge is that the TSC's official title in the area is Senior Manager Mobility Management & Planning. Perhaps this difference in labeling introduced confusion to the participants.

Following the training, caseworkers had a new perspective on what modes of public transportation are available. However, they did not gain knowledge of who the TSC for their area is. As noted above, the goal of the Collin County training was to foster a dialogue and the slides did not discuss a TSC, making this finding unsurprising.

Figure 4.24: Training and Identifying Transportation Solutions Coordinator
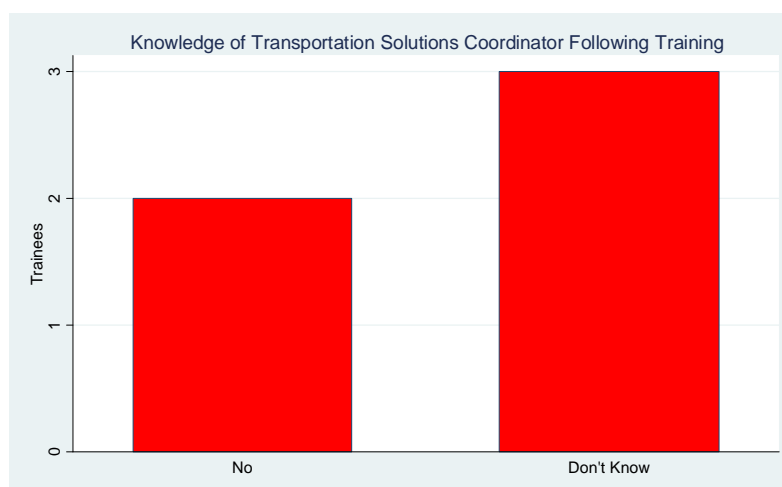
Broader Transportation Awareness
As part of the training, the TSC provided several pieces of information concerning how to access DART services including train maps/schedules, access to paratransit and a collection of specialized transportation resources. Perhaps because of these resources, two-thirds of participants indicated that information about public transportation options was more easily available following the training as shown in Figure 4.25.

As mentioned previously, one of the key goals of the training program was to start a broader dialogue about the need for public transportation options in Collin County that would hopefully lead to the creation of new solutions. As Figure 4.26 indicates, this did not seem to occur. Respondents were unanimous that there was no more transportation-related communication following the training than there was before. Perhaps one reason is that the training was given to caseworkers who do not have the time to create working groups, nor the authority to commit their agency to any substantive agreement. Future trainings may be more successful in this regard if they focus upon higher-level managers in-lieu of case managers.

Figure 4.26: Training and Perceived Availability of Transportation Information
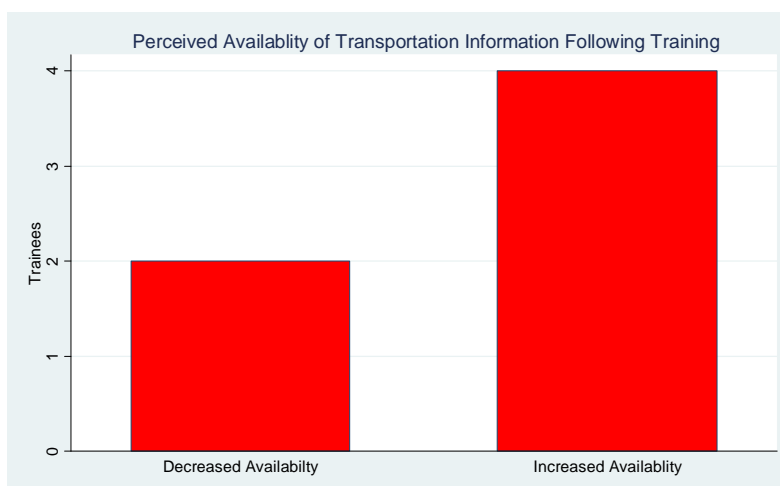
Figure 4.25: Training and Inter-Agency Communication
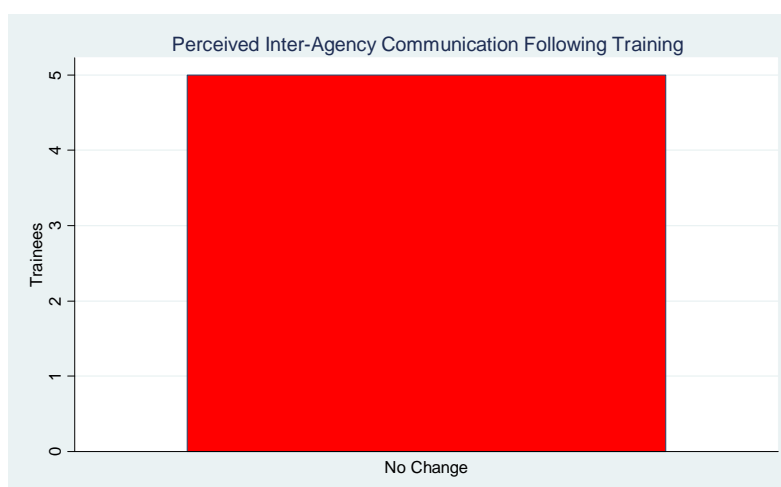
Together, these measures indicate that the trainings are successful in increasing the perceived availability of transportation information. However, at least when focused on caseworkers, the trainings did not succeed at fostering transportation –related conversations between agencies.

Evaluation Findings-Focus Group

On July 7, 2011, eighteen area social service agencies were invited for a follow up focus group meeting. Participants shared their ideas and observations after implementing the training given by the TSC almost one year before.

Project Goals and Challenges
The case managers felt that the TSC training project could prove valuable for several reasons. First, the case managers understood the role of the TSC as an asset to coordinate transportation resources and to solve transportation gaps in services. Their understanding was augmented because many of them were introduced to the concept of the TSC when they attended the initial July 2010 TSC in Austin and the November 2010 mobility management training. In addition, the case managers felt that the training provided information about transportation services and schedules specific to their region, which could be applied to improve their clients' mobility. However, according to the participants, there has been an acute gap in connecting them and their clients with the training following the initial July training. The case managers felt that whatever the original goals of the project were, those goals did not translate into initiatives or efforts that could help their county in locating transportation needs for people who need it. They mentioned, "We know that there was a mobility management training in July and now you are again talking about that training, asking us to talk about the effects that training had in transportation solutions coordination in our county. We would like to tell you that nothing happened in between that we know of; we wish things happened according to how the goals of this project were originally envisioned."

With this idea about the training resonating during the first half hour of the session, the focus group facilitators needed to tweak the questions in the focus group to reflect upon possible benefits of an ideal TSC for their region and what could be the desired skillsets for such a position. The participants discussed several challenging areas where the program could be strengthened. Following the July training, they hoped to form meaningful transit related partnerships or collaborations among various transportation providers and their agencies which did not occur. They also emphasized the need for a two way exchange of information. In this exchange, the social service

agencies would learn about available transportation services, and the transportation providers would learn about their clients' transportation needs and concerns (e.g., the need for shorter trip lengths for their clients). However, the participants felt that this type of exchange, which could have been very beneficial, did not happen in reality. The participants also felt that comprehensive learning about the unmet needs in the area could not be accomplished by the project because of the absence of strong transit partnerships to throw adequate light on these unmet needs.

Continuing Barriers to Transportation
Participants noted that transportation gaps and barriers to transportation still remained to be addressed. Participants commented that transport options were best for Plano residents using DART but the clients in rural areas still lacked viable transport options and still experienced gaps in service especially while traveling from one county to another. This resulted in clients missing appointments, which ultimately increased costs for their human service agencies. Next, follow through with viable solutions once issues or barriers were identified surfaced as a critical component to the project. The case managers wanted all the information gathered to be fully utilized to solve their clients' needs. Finally, case managers acknowledged the need for more funding to support and sustain the program. While managing a voucher program was time consuming, with additional funds, social service agencies could purchase more vouchers and offer them to their clients. One important note is that outside of Plano, Collin County is outside of the DART service area, so they are unable to provide transportation services to the rural areas of the county.

Lessons Learned and Suggestions for Change
A key issue, similar to the experience of case managers in the HOTCOG region, involved the Individualized Transportation Plan forms. Case managers felt that the forms were a good idea but eventually proved too long and cumbersome to use. In support of the project, the case managers felt that implementing a few suggestions could enhance the project. First and foremost, the case managers felt strongly that the project should be expanded and additional funding secured to better serve their clients' needs. Expanding the program would allow the TSC to devote their attention full-time on problem solving, coalition building, communicating with a variety of entities (political, non-profit agencies, etc.), and targeting underserved individuals.

Next, respondents noted technology (e.g., dedicated website, database of resources, and user-friendly scheduling tools) to help clients access resources should be incorporated into the program.

The technology integrated aspects would enable smooth implementation of the desired program goals. In addition, user-friendly maps/schedules and an 800 informational phone line with language interpreters would also help the program reach a broader audience and encourage all segments of residents in the area to participate.

Finally, ensuring that the program was fully implemented rather than remaining a study, the outcomes of which will be shelved, was important to the focus group participants. They mentioned that remaining proactive with lessons learned from the program is an important task for all who have been exposed to the training.

Should a dedicated, full-time TSC become available for their area, they listed the following desired skill-sets in the TSC:

- Bilingual – with ability to translate materials in required languages
- Forward thinker – to be creative and looking outside of the norm for solutions
- Knowledgeable of existing resources – to be able to seek opportunities to gain partners and secure funding
- Networked in the community – with ability to work with all groups: all ethnicities, literacy levels, and income levels
- Collaborative – able to encourage collaborations with churches, non-profit, and for-profit transportation providers

The key recommendation, as mentioned earlier, was to remain proactive and ensure that the program was fully implemented and did not remain a study that will be shelved. Adequate follow through with viable solutions once issues or barriers were identified surfaced as a critical component to the program. The case managers wanted all the information gathered to be fully utilized to solve their clients' needs.

4.4   TAPS

The Texoma Area Paratransit System, Inc. (TAPS) is a non-profit organization that provides transportation service to Fannin, Grayson, Cooke, Wise, Clay and Montague counties. For this project, Wise County served as the area of interest. TAPS examined ridership information from their

service area, noting that Wise County reports the second largest population but only makes up 5% of TAPS' riders. To understand why ridership is low, TAPS officials applied for the Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) grant funds to study transportation in Wise County. They hoped that partnering with the community advocates in the UWR mobility management pilot project will help them reach the underrepresented riders, i.e. seniors, persons with disabilities, and job seekers. TAPS officials believed that the RTAP study results and the UWR project will tell TAPS what steps are needed to increase ridership in Wise County.

TAPS Transportation Solutions Coordinator Goals

Increasing public awareness of TAPS' services has been a major concern of the Transportation Solutions Coordinator (TSC). Facilitating increased awareness of transportation services was hoped to increase ridership in Wise County. TAPS officials established the following program goals:

- Raise awareness about TAPS operations

- Establish personal relationships with community organizations and area service agencies

- Offer rides to underrepresented populations

Similar to HOTCOG, TAPS wanted to make the public aware that transit options exists in Wise County and inform the public of the availability of various transportation services. TAPS transit serves as an alternative for residents who do not own a car, do not drive, or are unable to drive. Raising awareness was hoped to potentially increase ridership throughout Wise County for this targeted population in need of transportation services.

The second goal, creating personal relationships with community organizations, was designed to help TAPS reestablish lost contacts with community leaders and key stakeholders after TAPS reorganized in the recent past. Earlier, TAPS formed relationships and coordinated with other counties. With the help of the UWR project, TAPS planned to turn its efforts towards potential riders in Wise County.

Finally, a key TAPS goal for the UWR project was to meet the needs of individuals underrepresented in TAPS' ridership numbers (e.g., seniors and persons with disabilities). Building working relationships with stakeholders was thought to help TAPS identify the public service needs and understand who have been encountering unresolved barriers to mobility. In addition, TAPS

hoped to encourage area employees to use transit services to get to work. Eventually, TAPS's TSC hoped that ridership would increase exponentially in the area requiring employment routes to be expanded.

After the CTAA training, the TSC at TAPS wanted to accomplish the following:

- Create a Needs Survey and Automated Individualized Transportation Report (ITR)

- Create a training website

- Conduct two Wise County workshops on mobility management

Considering all the set out goals for the TAPS project, the TSC had identified the following measurable objectives:

- Increased transportation services to more people

- Increase the number of trips

- Increase the customer miles ridden

TAPS Pilot Implementation

Materials for the workshop were developed using the CTAA training modules adapted for the United We Ride project. Several key elements regarding the concept of mobility management emphasized were: 1) identifying the issue of unmet transportation needs, 2) determining specific transportation barriers and unmet needs, 3) creating individual solutions to meet the complex nature of customers' transportation needs, 4) show case managers how to use the information generated in the survey reports, and 5) determine programs that could be funded based on the data gathered from the surveys.

Three workshops were held in Wise County. The first workshop, November 2, 2010 was viewed by the TSC more as a pilot to help identify what works in the community and what does not. Attendees represented a variety of entities including Child Protective Services, Meals on Wheels and Wise Hope Shelter and Crisis Center.

The second workshop occurred on October 28, 2011 when eight stakeholders from local non-profit and governmental agencies (e.g., Wise Area Relief Mission, the United Way, and Voices Advocating for Children) attended, of which two were TAPS Board members. The training presentation tried to adapt the CTAA modules to the local context, though it lacked substantive content and purpose compared to the trainings at the other two pilot projects. It mostly focused on the needs assessment survey for the agencies and talked about the content of the survey.

Facilitated by the TAPS TSC, the training participants discussed the following concerns regarding transportation:

- Better advertising and marketing since public is not aware of the transportation services available in Wise County
- Addressing irregularities, most commonly occurring with students and persons without a permanent address
- Address long transportation wait times for areas that are difficult to reach
- Address the limited transportation access issue for individuals and families living on farmland or in other secluded locations
- Address better transportation assistance for people who need to get to work
- Address the difficulty involving multiple stops/legs in local transportation routes

The third workshop, held on December 12, 2011, was attended by five participants from Wise Choices, the local Health Roundtable and stakeholders from United Way's mailing lists. Based on participant feedback during this second workshop, the TSC noted the following comments:

- Geo-political barriers in the region act as impediments to transportation coordination
- Extramural funding needed to address unmet needs identified during the UWR pilot project (survey, training, workshops)
- Inflexible trip times and late arrival were TAPS' service problems
- Extended evening hours and weekend services were needed
- Rural passengers needed escorts to help with boarding and getting off the vehicles.

After several iterations, the United We Ride Needs Survey and Automated Individualized Transportation Report were posted on the TAPS website (at www.tapsmobility.com) by the TSC. After completing the survey, the case managers or clients were to be given an individualized transportation report.

The Training Website was intended to serve two distinct purposes: 1) offer an in depth explanation of the United We Ride project and 2) provide a tool to gather information on unmet needs in Wise County. The website also featured a transportation costs calculator for driving versus taking public transit and provided helpful hints regarding vanpools and other transportation options.

Despite a very slow start to the project and very small turnout at the training workshops, the TSC felt that the program represented a positive step towards coordinated transportation solutions in Wise County by starting a much needed dialogue about transportation. The UWR Needs Survey that the TSC developed and implemented to understand and assess unmet needs in the county has raised an interest in having a similar project started in other nearby counties.

Evaluation Findings-Data

The evaluation team was provided with data for each demand-response ride from TAPS's six county service area from September 2009 to December 2011.[15] TAPS utilizes Shah Software's Transportation Manager System to document details of each demand-response ride it provides.[16] Common information recorded includes destinations, miles traveled, identification of rider, number of passengers, agency responsible for payment and disability status along with many other data elements.[17]

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[15] Data were also provided for August 2009 and January 2012. However, these "bookend" months contained dramatically lower ridership information and were removed from the analysis to protect against the potential influence of missing data.

[16] Offered by Shah Software, Transportation Manager System is a routing and scheduling tool. The system provides for the management of demand-response requests including the origination, destination and time. The software allows for the collection of other basic information such as odometer readings, disability status and agency responsible for payment. The system is often referred simply as "Shah" by practitioners.

[17] The data included address, city and zip code of the origination and destination. Because the project was targeted at Wise County rather than the general TAPS service area, each ride was

As mentioned earlier, the TAPS transportation Solutions Coordinator's (TSC) key measurable goals for the project were to:

- Increase the number of riders
- Increase the number of rides provided
- Increase the number of passenger-miles traveled

The data analyses presented below focus upon the first two of these measures. At times, odometer readings in the data are not entered regularly, making an analysis of passenger-miles traveled inappropriate. Data from the first four months of FY 2012 are used to project key data for the remainder of the fiscal year. [18] In arriving at the projected levels, the seasonal effects that often occur with monthly data were accounted for. For example, students may be less likely to need travel assistance in the summer and December when classes are not in session. This provides a more confident estimate of ridership levels for the fiscal year.

One important point to consider is that the first Wise County training took place October 28, 2011 and the second training took place December 15, 2011.[19] Given that the data the evaluation team has available ends in December 2011, one should be very cautious in drawing any definitive conclusions from the analyses.

geocoded to identify which county to attribute the ride to. The evaluation team utilized the origination first, and if that was located outside the TAPS service area, the destination address was utilized. For each location, the team first geocoded the address using ArcGIS v9.3. For those locations that were not identified, zip codes were if the zip code did not cross county lines. Last, the city was utilized to identify county. Using this process, the evaluation team was able to identify counties using the origination in 95.8% of cases. The destination address resulted in an additional identification of 60.9% of the remaining 4.2%, bringing the overall identification rate to 98.4%. The unidentified cases were removed from the analyses.

[18] Fiscal Years in Texas range from September 1 to August 31 of the following year with the year value representing the calendar year for August. For instance September 15, 2010 occurs in Fiscal Year 2011, as does February 3, 2011.

[19] A training was held on November 2, 2010. However, this training was viewed as a pilot by the TSC and not considered in the empirical analyses.

Number of Riders

As mentioned above, the first training took place two months into FY 2012. While early in the process, any increases in the number of riders in FY 2012 would provide support for the program helping improve ridership in Wise County. Figure 4.27 indicates that Wise County is on pace for a 15.2% increase in unique riders for FY2012 relative to FY 2011, compared to a one year increase of 11.6% in FY 2011. This number is substantive when one considers that the remainder of the TAPS service area is on pace for a 4.8% increase in unique ridership during FY 2012. However, during the first two months of FY 2012 (before the training), Wise County was on pace for a 23.8% increase in riders.

Figure 4.27: Annual Wise County TAPS Riders
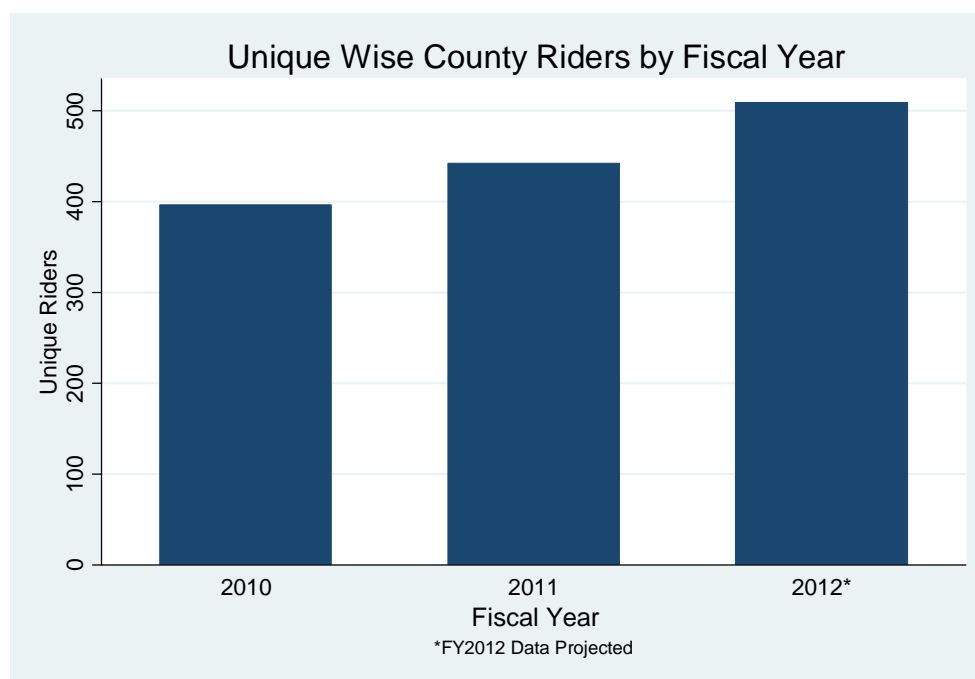
There is little theoretical reason for the training program to actually reduce the growth rate in riders. More likely, the reduction is an artifact of a limited time to track ridership following the training. Relative to the rest of the TAPS region, Wise County residents are increasing their ridership levels at a higher rate.

Number of Rides

The transportation solutions coordinator desired to increase the number of rides provided in Wise County as well. As shown in Figure 4.28, early data from FY 2012 suggest that the number of trips is

increasing. FY 2012 is projected to have a 33.2% increase in total number of trips when compared to FY 2011, up from an increase of 15.2% in FY 2011. By comparison, the rest of the TAPS service area is on pace for a slightly smaller increase of 28.3%. Before the program was put into place, Wise County was on track for an increase in rides of 29.2%.

The results are supportive of the program being associated with increased usage of the TAPS system in Wise County. However, they are based on a small sample of months and, as such, should not be considered definitive.

Figure 4.28: TAPS Rides Provided in Wise County by Year
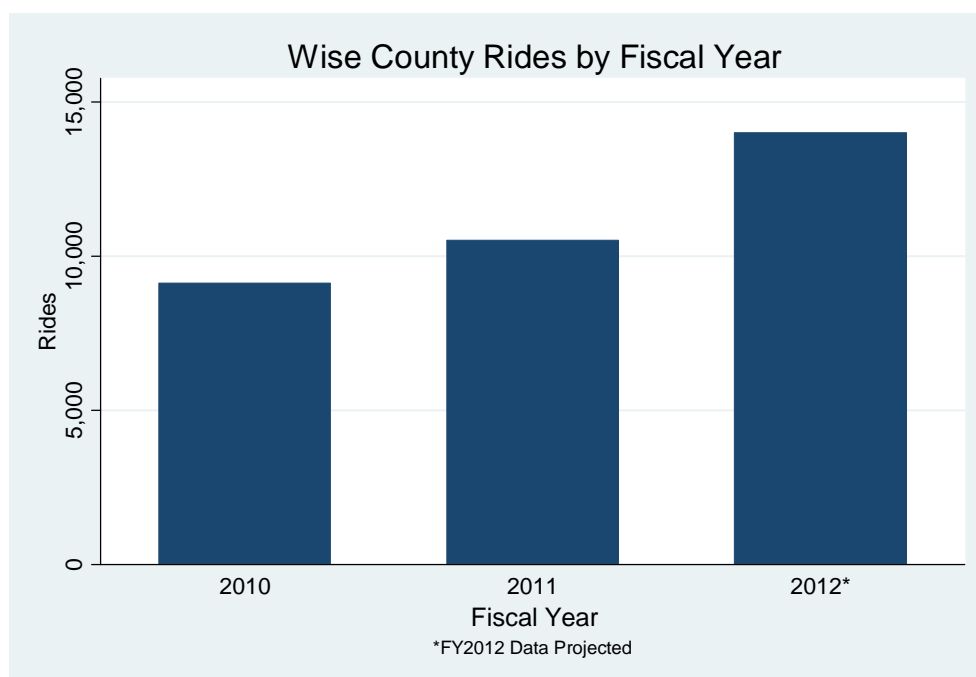
The quantitative analyses are not definitive on whether or not the mobility management training led to increases in public transportation access for Wise County residents. However, as mentioned previously, a longer time frame of data is needed to properly examine the quantitative impacts of the program. As additional data become available, multivariate techniques should be used to isolate the seasonal effects associated with months and other factors to provide a more accurate representation of the true influence of the mobility management training on ridership patterns.

Evaluation Findings-Survey

The level of public transportation knowledge and opinions regarding the importance of transportation access for clients for attendees at the Wise County Mobility Management trainings was assessed with a pre-survey.[20] In the months following the training, participants were invited to complete a web-based survey to assess how the training affected their views and knowledge of transportation.[21] The Wise County trainings were not heavily attended and, as such, the survey results reported here reflect a small number of responses.

Importance of Transportation
One mechanism to lead social workers to alter their practices in regard to linking their clients with transportation is to help them understand the importance that this access has for their clients and how it can help them achieve their service goals. Toward this end, the training sessions emphasized the role transportation access plays in each individual's life, including the attendees' clients. Figure 4.29 indicates that the training was successful at helping trainees change their view of transportation's importance to the lives of their clients. 80% of program participants changed their perception at least somewhat.

Figure 4.29: Training and Importance of Transportation
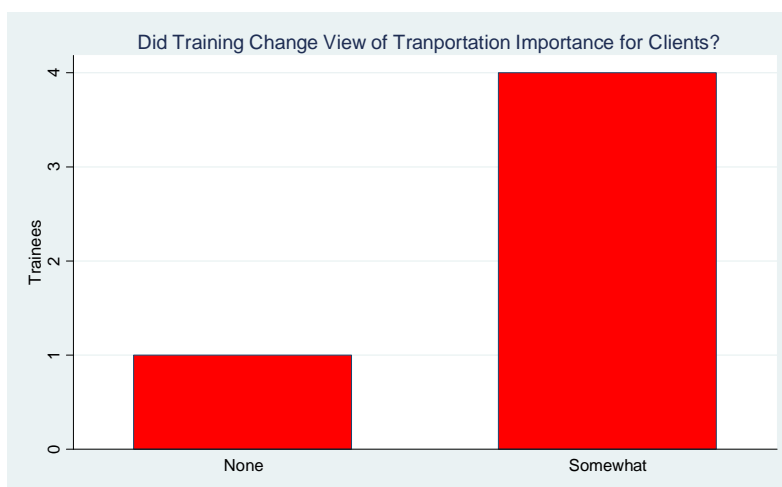
Figure 4.30: Training and Considering Client Transportation Needs
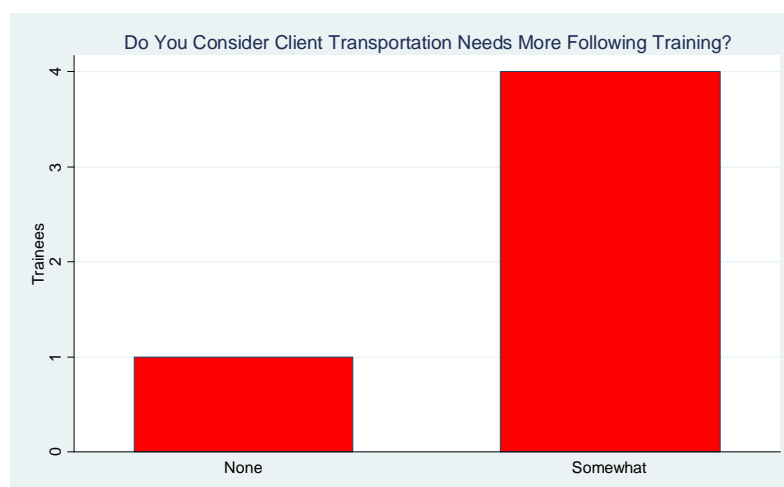
With participants changing their views of transportation access's importance for their clients, one would expect the caseworkers to take the next step and intensify the consideration they give to their clients' transportation needs. Figure 4.30 shows that this is the case with 80% of trainees giving their clients' transportation issues additional consideration.

These two indicators suggest that following the training caseworkers had an elevated appreciation of transportation's importance. Participants seem to be taking this new view of consequence and altering the manner in which they perform their job by giving additional attention to their client's transportation needs.

Difficulty Locating Transportation
Overwhelmingly, participants indicated that they had difficulty finding transportation assistance prior to the training, with one-third feeling that it was very difficult and the remaining two-thirds indicating it was somewhat difficult. As indicated in Figure 4.31 participants felt that the difficulty they faced in locating transportation assistance for their clients remained unchanged following the training.

Figure 4.31: Training and Difficulty Finding Transportation Assistance
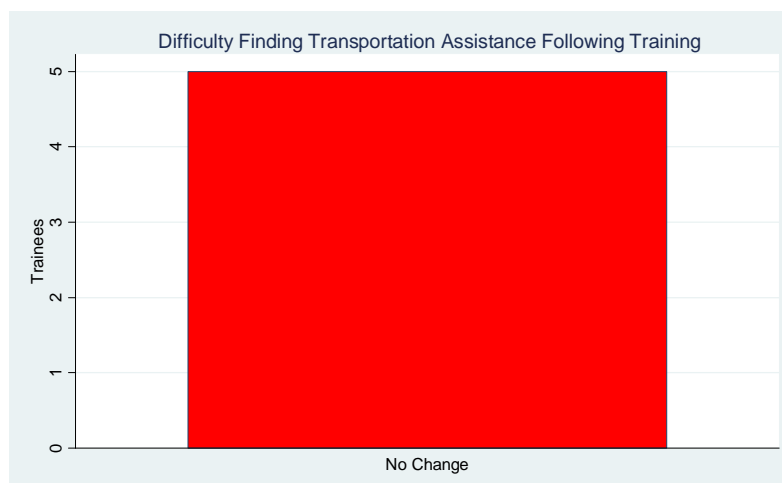
Conversely, Figure 4.32 shows that 40% of respondents felt they had increased confidence that they could offer sufficient information to clients seeking transportation information. Due to the limited sample size, one should hesitate in making conclusions in this area. However, 60% of respondents did indicate that following the training, they were mostly able to offer adequate transportation information to clients.

Figure 4.32: Training and Confidence in Finding Transportation Information
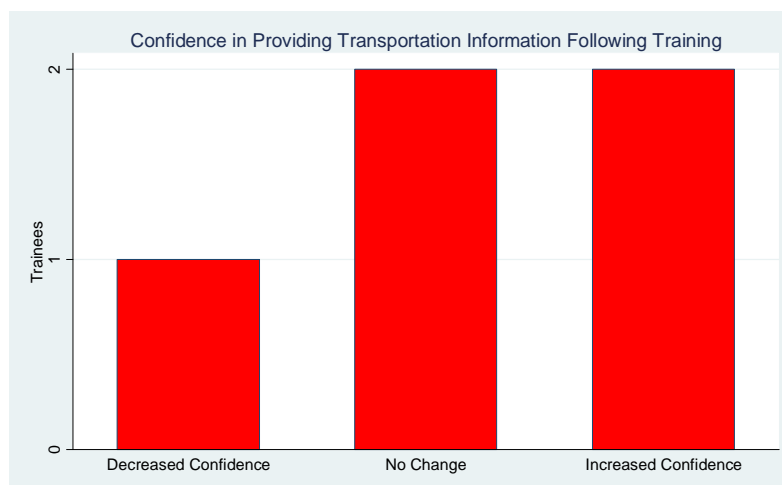
These two indicators tell a conflicting story. Respondents have increased confidence that they can provide adequate transportation information to their clients. However, there was no change in the perceived difficulty in locating transportation assistance.

Knowledge of Transportation Options

In order to link clients with transportation options, caseworkers need accurate knowledge of what services are available. Otherwise, well-intentioned advice will be of little value. Participants were asked to identify the transportation options available in their region on both the pre- and post-surveys. The list of options incudes: vanpools; taxi cabs; dial-a-ride; bus; and target-specific transportation (i.e., students). Respondents could also note other options available in their area.

Figure 4.33: Training and Transportation Options Knowledge
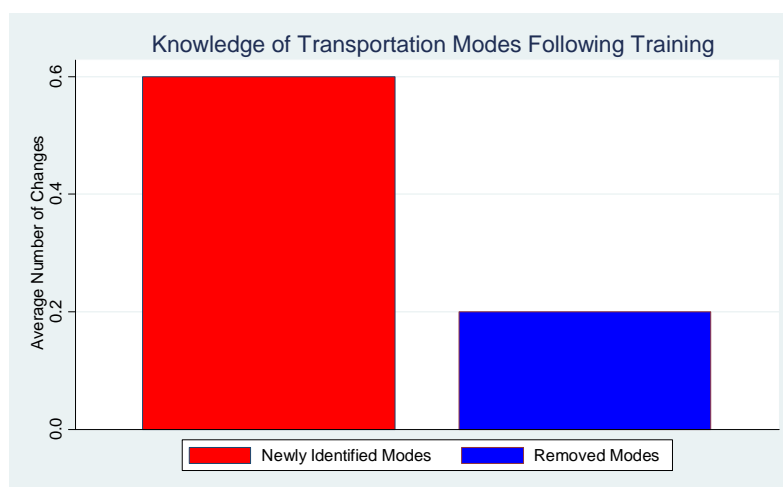
If the training provided participants with accurate information of what travel options are available, we should see changes in their responses concerning what public modes of transportation are available. This should occur in two fashions. First, they should indicate modes of travel that they were previously unaware of. They should also not indicate modes that they previously felt were available, but are not. As shown in Figure 4.33, trainees did alter what options they deemed available in their region. On average, participants were able to identify 0.6 additional modes of travel while eliminating 0.2 modes of transportation. Together, this reflects a net-increase of 0.4 additional modes of travel that case managers are aware of.

The mobility management training was conducted by the TSC for the Wise County area. Ideally, participants would leave the training knowing who the TSC is. However, Figure 4.34 indicates that for those who did not know who the TSC was prior to the training, none were aware of who the TSC was following the training. One potential contributor to this lack of knowledge is that the TSC's official title in the area is Mobility Manager. This variance in classification likely introduced confusion to the respondents.

Figure 4.34: Training and Identifying Transportation Solutions Coordinator
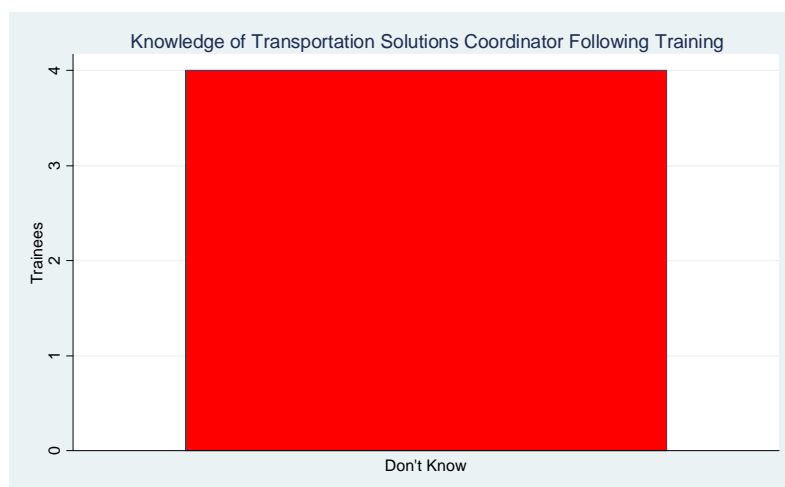
Caseworkers gained new information concerning what types of public transportation are available to their clients. Unfortunately, they did not learn who the TSC for their area is. However, had the survey asked about a mobility manager, the responses would likely have differed.

Broader Transportation Awareness
One of the aims of the program is to make caseworkers more aware of the transportation options in their area. Following a program where individuals where provided with this information, one would expect them to view the information as more available. Figure 4.35 indicates that 80% of respondents felt that transportation information was somewhat available compared to 50% on the pre-survey.[22]

During the training, participants were able to network with other social workers in the area. These relationships could lead to improved inter-agency communication over time. Further, the

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[22] Responses are available for far more respondents on the pre-survey.

Figure 4.36: Training and Perceived Availability of Transportation Information

Perceived Availablity of Transportation Information Following Training
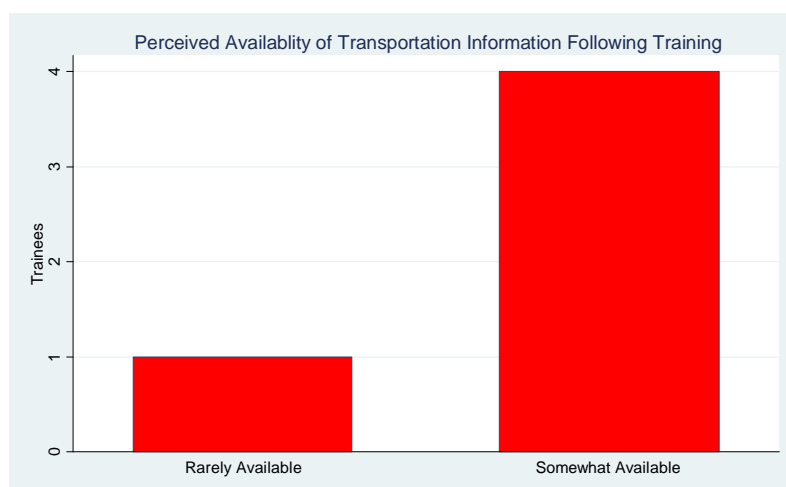
participants were able to meet the TSC for the area, making future contact less difficult. Because of this, one would expect to see improved communication between agencies in regards to transportation. As Figure 4.36 indicates, 40% of respondents felt that transportation-related communication between their agency and other entities improved.

Figure 4.35: Training and Inter-Agency Communication

Perceived Inter-Agency Communication Following Training
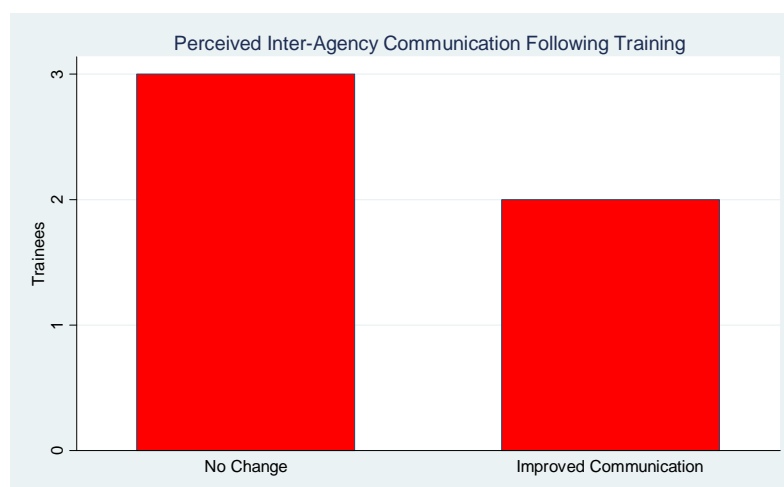
Collectively, these measures provide weak support for an increase in the perceived availability of transportation information following the training. Conversely, the trainings did appear to succeed in nurturing inter-agency communications concerning transportation.

Evaluation Findings-Focus Group

Since the TAPS UWR pilot project was late in implementing the two training workshops and the needs survey and since the TSC reported regular attendance problems in Wise County meetings and workshops, the evaluation team conducted a phone interview of four workshop participants separately instead of running an after-implementation focus group for this site. This change in methodology was supported by TxDOT program staff. The consenting process was administered verbally and discussions were audiotaped for later analysis and consistent note-taking. Key findings from the phone interviews are analyzed here as comparative qualitative information gathered from the participants. As protocol, questions from the same focus group guide were used to collect the qualitative information from the phone interview participants.

Project Goals and Challenges
Only a few were aware of the UWR project goals although almost all the phone interviewees understood the necessity of coordinating transportation services in the region and the role of the TSC from TAPS in such coordination. They mentioned that while understanding unmet needs in the area is a must, it is necessary to know that the TSC does not even have the authority to address unmet needs since the person cannot work outside TAPS' jurisdiction. A lesson for the future is that a lot depends on leadership: "we need the right champion to make this kind of a project successful." Most interviewees talked about the necessity of making the project goals clear for the target population of case workers from various agencies from the beginning and following through with specific milestones. A few were happy, however, that the project made room for an understanding of the transit needs of rural north Texas area and highlighted the need for providing better transportation to people who are underserved, including the elderly population.

They emphasized that in any kind of transportation planning in the region, the elderly fall through the cracks. They also mentioned that the short-term need in the region is traveling between the counties, but no solution has come up on this issue as a result of the UWR project. They said, "Let us do something without talking." They felt that the area agencies could have had the opportunity to access TAPS more often for necessary transportation information if the project goals were made clear to them right from the start. Overall, they felt that the TSC coordinating transportation facilitation is a good idea but no one had a relationship with the TSC that facilitated reaching out to their client population.

Continuing Barriers to Transportation

Of the ongoing barriers to transportation in the area, facilitating coordination strategically and effectively among the surrounding counties with the appropriate MOUs and regulatory changes was mentioned as the key challenge. The discussions brought out the point, however, that a TSC from TAPS can never have the necessary authority to draft and implement such MOUs without the involvement of the appropriate people in the region. As mentioned earlier, appropriate leaders should be involved in drafting these transportation coordination MOUs. Also mentioned was that expanded services during weekdays and weekends will be helpful for the community. A major continuing transportation barrier was highlighted for the elderly population in the county who face serious problems with their own mobility and with transportation to necessary services in the community. A few interviewees mentioned that limitations exist with TAPS on scheduling and timing of rides and trips for clients from social service agencies who need help. Limitations also exist with no consistent transportation available to travel to and from the adjacent counties where people often go for medical and other needs.

Lessons Learned and Suggestions for Change

Overall, relationships among the social agencies in the region did not improve because of the project. The project did not change any networking scenario for the interviewees; most of them did not develop networks that did not exist earlier. Most interviewees mentioned that unmet needs continue to exist in the area despite the project. Since they did not know in details about the parameters of the project, they could not suggest solutions on how to improve it for future replication purposes.

4.5   After-Thoughts from the TSCs

While wrapping up the final evaluation report for the project, the evaluation team members had an interview with the TSCs, teleconferencing with them for an hour with a set of structured questions on Wednesday February 22, 2012. Their perceptions on a list of important issues are summarized here.

Reflecting upon whether they felt they were adequately networked in their region to lead the project, the TSCs felt they were somewhat networked and the project helped improve these networks. The biggest challenge, they all agreed, was in selling the benefits of the project to the target population and making the case workers from the various agencies see the benefits. A fundamental problem

with the project has been, according to them, the shortage of solutions. Starting a much needed dialogue around transportation needs in the region could not serve as a valid benefit in the absence of concrete solutions. So, getting the target agencies in the door was difficult. However, once they participated in the training, word spread and the social service agencies started seeing the long-term benefits. Even then, the project could not fully provide relevance for the caseworkers who simply wanted useful tools to solve transportation problems and move forward quickly.

In terms of the benefits of the project, the HOTCOG TSC thought that it has been largely beneficial for her target population mainly because it helped develop not only an increased awareness of the transportation issues and the unmet needs in the area but also the knowledge that a TSC is available to help social service agencies to help resolve the various transportation issues for their clients. As for the DART TSC, the biggest benefit of the project has been in developing the structure for necessary transportation networks and the fact that the target agencies now know that DART provides mobility management assistance. According to the TSC from TAPS, however, the project has been largely unsuccessful from the standpoint of what it was intended to achieve but still came out beneficial at the end since it created not only a contact base but also some sort of a dialogue on transportation that was much needed in the community.

The weakest component of the UWR project, according to the three TSCs, was the CTAA training in Austin, especially the manner in which it was conducted. The TSCs each emphasized that the content of that first training was not adequately connected in its vision and purpose with the participant population who had a difficult time figuring out the purpose of participating in the training. Only the networking among the agencies during the training proved to be a positive outcome. For future projects, the respondents' recommendation for TxDOT is to first meet with the chosen TSCs and CTAA to develop the content of the program and to then recruit appropriate participants. The outside participants should have limited involvement in the trainings, while the networking aspects of the event should be continued.

Another weak aspect, they agreed, was the absence of an internet forum or a social networking tool which can link mobility managers across the state for connectivity and knowledge sharing purposes. A forum could help distribute lessons learned throughout the state and help foster dialogue among mobility managers.

Their key recommendation is to marry the lessons from the three projects and create a customized strategy for future replication purposes. In any future endeavor, however, they strongly feel that TxDOT should take more of an active role in helping them learn how and where to network since none of them had the budget or the ability to do that on their own. They also suggested shortening the evaluation related surveys given before the pilot site trainings.

5   CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The analyses presented in this report rely on an array of valid social scientific methodologies ranging from qualitative focus groups to quantitative data analyses to evaluate the effectiveness of the three United We Ride pilot projects in Texas. In these analyses, some common themes emerged which are summarized here as concluding observations and recommendations from the evaluation study. Overall, the Texas UWR project showed a great deal of promise. Like any pilot program, however, there is room for improvement.

Allow Leadership to Matter

The evaluation team emphasizes that leadership matters most in these kinds of projects because no project can come to success without it. The evaluation process deepened the evaluation team's view that success of these types of pilot projects has, at its core, solid leadership as a critical success factor. The HOTCOG pilot site has been very well received by the target population. Focus group participants have been unanimous in characterizing the training as useful for them. The survey results also indicated that the trainings were successful at increasing knowledge of transportation options. Additionally, the data analyses indicated increased usage of public transportation in the HOTCOG area. Thus, by all available measures, HOTCOG was successful in reaching its goals. The TSC for HOTCOG was also well regarded by the focus group participants; they all indicated that she has been doing an excellent job. Overall, the evaluation team felt that the HOTCOG TSC placed a high priority on the UWR project and worked extremely hard at designing, promoting and implementing the program. For instance, she held a meeting with CTAA training participants in her region to better understand what training content would be helpful for the caseworkers in her area.

For future replication purposes, the evaluation team recommends interviewing the proposed TSCs from the leading proposal candidates to help ensure that the project has quality leadership. There are indeed several factors to consider in the interview process that the evaluation team gathered based on the focus groups' feedback. First, even highly qualified, energetic leaders are not able to achieve the goals of the project if they do not have adequate time to implement the program. While each of the pilot sites showed some successes, they each could have benefited from some more time from the TSC.

The next factor to consider is the personality of the individual. One common opinion offered in the focus group is that to be successful, a TSC needs to be energetic, organized and disciplined. Due to the nature of the role, the participants felt that TSCs must have a welcoming personality and work well with others, enjoying networking in order to ensure that they have the most complete information of what transportation options are available in the area. Another key factor that should not disqualify a potential TSC, but should be considered a plus, is bilingual ability. The focus groups indicated that the large Spanish speaking populations in Texas would benefit from a bilingual TSC. Finally, the TSCs who serve as leaders for these programs should be given the opportunity to be certified through the transportation trainings they attend. Although this was an important goal for the project, none of the three TSCs were certified through the CTAA training.

Strategize a Meaningful Kick-Off

A project like UWR needs a meaningful, well thought-out kick-off. A well-planned kick-off meeting, even if it is largely a module-based training, sets the tone for a successful project. It is a critical success factor that could have been improved in this project. Miscommunication between TxDOT and its agency advisory committee, last-minute changes in agency representatives, and divergent assumptions about the training created confusion and dissatisfaction among the non-transportation participants. In the absence of a clear road-map, the participants were not clear about why they were participating in the training. In addition, the heavy volume of transportation-related information conveyed during the training, largely unrelated to some participants' local contexts, overwhelmed many participants. As a result, the non-transportation participants were less inclined to support the three local trainings, not being sure of what their role would be and feeling that the projects had little to do with their agency's work. However, participants appreciated some of the useful transportation information provided and liked the presenters and their personalities.

A future recommendation from the evaluation team is to take advantage of this one-time chance to energize the group, set proper expectations, and establish guidelines that will help the pilots complete the project on time and achieve the goals. When they leave the kickoff meeting, everyone on the project teams must be on the same page. Defining the project goals and deliverables will drive the decisions to be made for recruiting the participants, networking with the local social service agencies and developing the local training content and related plans. It is important for TSCs and other participants to be aware of major assumptions that apply to the project. Every participant needs to know what it takes to have a successful UWR project. Taking the time to define in specific

terms each item that will be required for success is important. Validating the components with the project TSCs and participants at the kick-off should serve as a critical success element throughout the duration of the projects.

Localize Tools, Solutions and Networking

Although the TSCs were successful, at various levels, in starting a dialogue on transportation coordination in their regions and developing a network of transportation information, they suffered from not having a concrete localized transportation tool that they could provide their target population of case workers and case managers. The needs assessment forms that all the sites developed proved to be not useful for the case workers because of their complexity and because of adding another layer of unnecessary workload that they preferred to avoid. Some guidance on how to develop local networks and how to stay connected in a digital forum or a social networking platform could also be helpful for dissemination, networking and accountability purposes.

Overall, in the absence of any concrete tools as a part of the UWR projects and the absence of a digital forum serving as a regular connecting platform, the TSCs found the project a hard sell to the social service agencies. Even a most well-designed training curriculum can be of little value in the absence of concrete helpful tools that can be derived from it and in the absence of local support and networking that could enrich it.

A recommendation for the future is for TxDOT to help the individual TSCs to develop memoranda of understanding with various agencies in the area so they are willing to put their own resources behind the program. In addition, interviews and phone meetings with local agency supervisors can help generate local support.

Another item to consider in the local context is what transportation options are available in the proposed service area. If transportation options are limited, the role of the TSC could be one of an advocate. In other cases, where transportation options are simply underutilized, TSCs can step in and make an immediate impact by linking potential riders with the existing resources. Having an adequate appraisal of what transportation options are available in the chosen areas will help TxDOT and the TSCs to better set the project goals and expectations.

A TSC who is somewhat networked in the region from the beginning will likely better perform in a UWR project compared to a TSC whose time is mostly dedicated to developing such networks.

However, every TSC would benefit from networking guidance and help, appropriately suited to their individual local agency context. Providing training on network development could prove advantageous for the programs.

Implement Communication and Comparison Vehicles

Social networking is changing the way today's world is doing everything, from the way people get information to the way people communicate, and most importantly, the way people interact with each other. The importance and relevance of social media outlets are growing stronger with the rapid developments of technology. A communication and dissemination forum could serve as a comparative focal point for mobility managers across the state from which they could gather lessons and compare notes to deal with the challenges, learn from each other and develop sustainability strategies. Although the TSCs had the chance opportunity to interact during unrelated meetings and conferences that they attended, they lamented the absence of learning together along the way in leading their projects. Participants from the three areas were also curious about the larger connection and context of their projects and expressed the interest in staying connected to learn about the various project elements in all the areas and providing feedback to enrich the projects when needed.

A key recommendation for TxDOT to incorporate in the future is building a common web platform or web portal for all mobility managers. This web portal could also serve as a landing page for the TxDOT project management, project milestones, implementing and managing the evaluation tools and other reporting or accountability requirements, as well as a dialogue page for emerging ideas and evidences. The TSCs do not have the budget or time to integrate this component in the project but if technical support is provided from TxDOT, they could utilize the tool as an important comparative vehicle for communication, dissemination and sustainability purposes.

Continue Effective Local Trainings

A final important lesson that emerged from the three UWR pilots is that transportation trainings matter. All the training components in the projects have affected perceptions and knowledge concerning transportation, increased access to transportation information, and developing at least rudimentary dialogues about unmet transportation needs and ways to address these needs for underserved populations. Individuals who participated in the trainings consistently changed their view of how important transportation access is for their clients. In all cases, participants indicated

that they considered the transportation needs of their clients more following the training than they did earlier. What is more encouraging is that following each of the local trainings, participants indicated that they had less difficulty accessing transportation related information and they knew more about the transportation options in their regions.

With case managers indicating that they considered the mobility needs of their clients more, the increased availability of information should have translated into more individuals being made aware of public transportation options. This increased distribution of information should have led to improved access to public transportation, a key goal of the UWR project. In two out of the three pilot sites, training participants felt that they had more transportation related advice to provide their clients than they did before the training.

For the evaluation team, transportation data were only available for one pilot site for an extended time frame following program implementation. The analysis of this data largely supported a link between the mobility management training and overall usage of public transportation. In the months following the training, HOTCOG provided more rides to more people, even after controlling for long-term growth trends and removing the seasonal effects associated with months. The Waco Transit System (WTS) also showed growth in the number of rides provided through both its fixed-route services. The success of the TAPS training in increasing public transportation usage remains to be seen since there simply has not been enough data to adequately evaluate its impact. Still, early indications noted by the evaluation team are promising. Because DART's goals did not center upon measurable outcomes, transportation data were not analyzed for Collin County. Overall, the HOTCOG data has been highly supportive of the idea that the UWR training can certainly work in some areas. In each measurable goal that the HOTCOG TSC set out, there was significant improvement following the training sessions. Thus, HOTCOG indeed serves as a great example of what the role of a TSC can achieve.

A final recommendation for TxDOT in replicating similar programs across Texas is to continue the local UWR trainings following the "train the trainer" model so that there is a snowballing effect in maximizing the successful elements of the programs. While the TSCs could conduct the initial UWR training for a group of agency managers and case workers and later remain linked with them through the web portal, initial training participants from social service agencies could contextualize the programs further to fit each agency's context and enhance participant-centered lessons to feedback

to the TSC through a series of follow-up trainings. These would help strengthen the networks in and among agencies in a specific region and facilitate developing necessary MOUs to further the accomplishments of the UWR programs. An accompanying and complementary suggestion is to sort out the performance and success data elements and data availability from the programs from the beginning. Absence of data to track and monitor the impacts of these programs cannot result in a substantive evidence base that will be helpful for the state in the long run even if the trainings are very effective in their content and purpose.

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APPENDIX I: PRE-SURVEY

UNITED WE RIDE
MOBILITY MANAGEMENT TRAINING PARTICIPANT SURVEY
JULY 2010, AUSTIN

Good Morning! As you heard, you have been selected to participate in this survey since you are taking part in the mobility management program as part of the United We Ride project. The Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University will serve as an evaluator for the United We Ride project. Below is a list of thematically organized survey questions that needs your input as a participant. This survey will take approximately 25 to 30 minutes for you to complete.

Please be assured that your responses will be treated as strictly confidential and you can choose not to respond to any question without any consequence. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects in Research at Texas A&M University. If you have any research related questions about this survey, you can contact Dr. Trey Marchbanks at 979-458-3250 or the IRB at 979-458-4067.

ROLE

1. What county(ies) in Texas do you serve?

    _____

2. By which organization are you employed?

    _____

3. What is your position in the organization?

    _____

4. Are you a full-time employee with this organization?
    a. Yes
    b. No

5. Please mention any secondary or part-time affiliation/designation you might currently possess.

    _____

6. What percentage of your time at work is spent helping individuals address their transportation needs?
    a. Less than 30 percent
    b. More than 30 but less than 50 percent
    c. More than 50 but less than 70 percent
    d. More than 70 but less than 90 percent
    e. More than 90 percent

7. Would you agree that a key goal of your current job is coordination of peoples' transportation needs?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Not sure

8. Are there fellow employees in your organization entrusted with the role of helping individuals address their transportation needs?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Not sure

9. In your role of finding transportation assistance for the population in your region, please describe your involvement with social workers/case managers.
    a. I do not have a role in finding transportation assistance
    b. I work exclusively with the social workers/case managers
    c. I work mostly with the social workers/case managers
    d. I rarely work with the social workers/case managers
    e. I do not work with the social workers/case managers

10. In your role of finding transportation assistance for the population in your region, please describe your involvement with the riders.
    a. I do not have a role in finding transportation assistance
    b. I work exclusively with the riders
    c. I work mostly with the riders
    d. I rarely work with the riders
    e. I do not work with the riders

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND DIFFICULTIES

1. What is the key *unmet transportation need* for the population you serve? (Please select one)
   a. Transportation for social services (Please specify _____)
   b. Transportation for health care or health services (e.g., doctor's office or clinics).
   c. Job access transportation
   d. Post high school education/training access (e.g., college, tech school, career training programs, etc).
   e. Transportation for individuals with disabilities
   f. Rural Area access
   g. Daily Necessities Transportation (accessing day cares, schools, grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.)
   h. Entertainment/social transportation (accessing theater complexes, shopping malls, senior centers, church activities, etc.)
   i. Target specific transportation (for night time student population, safe-rides for women, etc.)   (Please specify: _____)
   j. Other: _____
   k. Do not know

2. Which are the next two biggest *unmet transportation needs* for the population you serve? (Please select two needs from the list below.)
   a. Transportation for social services (Please specify _____)
   b. Transportation for health care or health services (e.g., doctor's office or clinics).
   c. Job access transportation
   d. Post high school education/training access (e.g., college, tech school, career training programs, etc).
   e.
   f. Transportation for individuals with disabilities
   g. Rural Area access
   h. Daily Necessities Transportation (accessing day cares, schools, grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.)
   i. Entertainment/social transportation (accessing theater complexes, shopping malls, senior centers, church activities, etc.)
   j. Target specific transportation (for night time student population, safe-rides for women, etc.)
   k. Other: _____
   l. Do not know

3. How difficult is it for you or your organization to find transportation assistance for your client population?
   a. I/my organization do(es) not need to find transportation assistance for our clients
   b. Very Difficult
   c. Somewhat Difficult
   d. Not-At-All Difficult
   e. Don't know

4. How difficult is it for you or your organization to locate funding sources for providing transportation assistance to your clients?
   a. I/my organization do(es) not need to locate funding sources for providing transportation assistance to our clients
   b. Very Difficult
   c. Somewhat Difficult
   d. Not-At-All Difficult
   e. Don't know

5. Please circle the transportation options available in your region during the day (6 AM – 7 PM) (Please check all that apply).
   a. Bus
   b. Dial-a-ride
   c. Taxi Cab/Chauffer Companies
   d. Vanpools
   e. Target specific transportation (for student population, safe-rides for women, etc.)
   f. Other, please list:_____
   g. None
   h. Don't know

6. Please circle the transportation options available in your region at night time, between 7PM. and 6 AM. (Please check all that apply).
   a. Buses
   b. Dial-a-ride
   c. Taxi Cabs/Chauffer Companies
   d. Vanpools
   e. Target specific transportation (for student population, safe-rides for women, etc.)
   f. Other, please list:_____
   g. None
   h. Don't know

7. If transportation is available in the rural areas within your region, does it cross county lines?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Transportation not available
   d. Don't know

8. Please describe the availability of information regarding the public transportation options in your region.
   a. Information is easily available to everyone
   b. Information is somewhat available
   c. Information is rarely available
   d. Information is not available
   e. Don't know

9. If the information is available, is it available in alternate languages?
   a. Information is not available
   b. Yes. Please specify the language(s): _____
   c. No
   d. Don't Know

10. What are the various formats, that you know of, in which public transportation information is available in your region? (Please check all that apply.)
   a. Pamphlets and brochures
   b. Flyers
   c. Newspaper Inserts
   d. Telephone Book
   e. Websites
   f. Central Point of Contact or a Specific Individual
   g. Bulletin Boards
   h. Newsletters
   i. Other _____
   j. Don't know

11. Which statement best describes awareness of public transportation information in your region amongst social workers/case managers?
   a. Everybody is aware
   b. Most are aware
   c. Few are aware
   d. None are aware
   e. Don't know

12. Which statement best describes awareness of public transportation information in your region amongst riders?
    a. Everybody is aware
    b. Most are aware
    c. Few are aware
    d. None are aware
    e. Don't know

TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIPS

1. In your opinion, how important is the timely input from clients in identifying appropriate transportation solutions for your region?
    a. Very Important
    b. Important
    c. Somewhat Important
    d. Not At All Important
    e. Don't know

2. How would you describe the level of communication on transportation needs between your organization and other relevant agencies and/or transportation providers in your region?
    a. There is absolutely no communication
    b. We rarely communicate with each other
    c. We communicate only when there is a need
    d. We communicate proactively on a regular basis
    e. Don't know

3. Do you think that the various partnerships that your organization has with other relevant agencies and/or providers in your region to work on finding client transportation solutions are helpful?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don't know
    d. We do not have any partnerships

4. How would you describe the level of communication on transportation needs between your organization and the riders from the general population in your region?
    a. There is absolutely no communication
    b. We rarely communicate with the general population
    c. We communicate only when there is a need
    d. We communicate proactively on a regular basis
    e. Don't know

6

DATA USAGE

1. How frequently do you utilize data to guide your transportation related decisions?
    a. Never
    b. Rarely
    c. Sometimes
    d. Often
    e. Everyday
    f. Not sure

2. Has your organization ever surveyed the clients in your region?
    a. Yes, within the last year
    b. Yes, between one and five years ago
    c. Yes, more than five years ago
    d. No
    e. Don't know

3. What are the different types of data concerning transportation needs and/or transportation resources that your organization currently collects?
    a. Our organization doesn't collect any data
    b. Our organization collects the following data (Please list all the applicable types):

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    c. Don't know

FUNDING

1. Does your organization utilize vouchers (also known as tokens or coupons) to provide client access to transportation through private and/or public providers.
    a. Yes, regularly
    b. Yes, rarely
    c. No
    d. Don't know

2. Please list all known funding sources for transportation services that your organization has relied upon over the last five years.

    a. Funding sources:_____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    b. Don't know

SOLUTIONS COORDINATION

1. Does your organization create individualized transportation plans with riders? (Note: *An individualized transportation plan assesses the individual's travel needs and any special considerations they may have and tailors a transportation plan that the individual can afford.*)
   a. Yes
   b. No, but another agency in the area does
   c. No
   d. Don't know

2. Is there a mechanism within your organization for recording *unmet travel needs* of clients?
   a. Yes, and it is widely used
   b. Yes, but it is rarely used
   c. No
   d. Don't know

3. How often does your organization work with the community and/or other relevant partners to explore solutions for transportation issues?
   a. Often
   b. Sometimes
   c. Rarely
   d. Never
   e. Don't know

4. Is there someone in your region who serves as a transportation solutions coordinator?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don't know

    If yes, do you regularly interact with this person?
    a. Yes
    b. Occasionally
    c. No

5. If there is a transportation solutions coordinator in your region, which organization(s) do they represent? Please list the organization(s) below:
    a. They represent the following organization(s):

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

    b. Don't know

6. When clients approach you for information on transportation, how often do you feel you have adequate information to provide them?
    a. Always
    b. Mostly
    c. Sometimes
    d. Rarely
    e. Never
    f. Not Applicable

7. When clients approach you to help them identify funding for their transportation needs, how often do you feel you have adequate information to provide them?
    a. Always
    b. Mostly
    c. Sometimes
    d. Rarely
    e. Never
    f. Not Applicable

☺ *Thank you very much for your time to fill out this survey!* ☺

APPENDIX II: POST-SURVEY

Purpose

You have been asked to participate in a survey that aims to identify what you have learned as a participant in the Mobility Management Training and how your training might have contributed to the desired goals of the project. You were selected because of your status as a designated participant in the mobility management training you recently received. All the training participants have been asked to participate in this survey.

Procedure and Duration

If you agree to participate, you will be asked questions about various aspects of the training. The survey is expected to take approximately 20 minutes, but you do not have to answer any question, and may withdraw from the survey at any time without consequence.

Discomforts, Risks, and Benefits

There are not any foreseeable inconveniences, discomforts, or risks involved with participation. There are no direct benefits to you by participating in the discussion – you will not receive monetary or other compensation for participating in the survey.

Privacy/Confidentiality

The study is confidential, and your identity will be strictly protected. Survey data will be password protected. Upon completion of the project, all data will be destroyed. Only the researchers conducting the project will have access to surveys, and no reports published will identify the names of individual participants. The study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation is voluntary and you are

free to stop participation at any time without prejudice. Sharing your opinion will not affect your future relations with Texas A&M University or the Texas Department of Transportation.

Questions

If you have any questions, they can be answered by Dr. Trey Marchbanks at the Public Policy Research Institute, Texas A&M University, HC Dulie Bell Building, Suite 329, College Station, TX 77843-4476. Dr. Marchbanks can be reached by phone at 979-458-3250 or email at trey@ppri.tamu.edu

The research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board – Human Subjects in Research-- at the Texas A&M University. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study or if you feel that you have been harmed, or for research related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, the Texas A & M Institutional Review Board may be contacted at the Office of the Vice President for Research at (979) 458-4067 or by email at irb@tamu.edu.

By clicking next below, you indicate that you have read and understood the above information, and that you have decided to participate based on the information provided.

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | Load unfinished survey | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

Role

What percentage of your time at work is spent helping individuals address their transportation needs?

Choose one of the following answers

○ Less than 30 percent

○ More than 30 but less than 50 percent

○ More than 50 but less than 70 percent

○ More than 70 but less than 90 percent

○ More than 90 percent

Would you agree that a key goal of your current job is coordination of peoples' transportation needs?

Choose one of the following answers

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not sure

Are there fellow employees in your organization entrusted with the role of helping individuals address their transportation needs?

Choose one of the following answers

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not sure

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

Needs and Difficulties

What is the key unmet transportation need for the population you serve? (Please select one)

- ○ Transportation for social services (Please specify on next question)
- ○ Transportation for health care or health services (e.g., doctor's office or clinics).
- ○ Job access transportation
- ○ Post high school education/training access (e.g., college, tech school, career training programs, etc).
- ○ Transportation for individuals with disabilities
- ○ Rural Area access
- ○ Daily Necessities Transportation (accessing day cares, schools, grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.)
- ○ Entertainment/social transportation (accessing theater complexes, shopping malls, senior centers, church activities, etc.)
- ○ Target specific transportation (for night time student population, safe-rides for women, etc.) (Please specify on next question)
- ○ Do not know
- ○ Other

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | Resume later | << Previous | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

Which are the next two biggest unmet transportation needs for the population you serve? (Please select two needs from the list below.)

☐ Transportation for social services (Please specify on next question)

☐ Transportation for health care or health services (e.g., doctor's office or clinics).

☐ Job access transportation

☐ Post high school education/training access (e.g., college, tech school, career training programs, etc).

☐ Transportation for individuals with disabilities

☐ Rural Area access

☐ Daily Necessities Transportation (accessing day cares, schools, grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.)

☐ Entertainment/social transportation (accessing theater complexes, shopping malls, senior centers, church activities, etc.)

☐ Target specific transportation (for night time student population, safe-rides for women, etc.) (Please specify on next question)

☐ Do not know

☐ Other

**To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.**

| Exit and clear survey | | Resume later | | << Previous | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

Needs and Difficulties 3

How difficult is it for you or your organization to find transportation assistance for your client population?
Choose one of the following answers

- ○ I/my organization do(es) not need to find transportation assistance for our clients
- ○ Very Difficult
- ○ Somewhat Difficult
- ○ Not-At-All Difficult
- ○ Don't know

How difficult is it for you or your organization to locate funding sources for providing transportation assistance to your clients?
Choose one of the following answers

- ○ I/my organization do(es) not need to locate funding sources for providing transportation assistance to our clients
- ○ Very Difficult
- ○ Somewhat Difficult
- ○ Not-At-All Difficult
- ○ Don't know

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | Resume later | << Previous | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

Please note the transportation options available in your region during the day (6 AM – 7 PM) (Please check all that apply).

☐ Bus

☐ Dial-a-ride

☐ Taxi Cab/Chauffer Companies

☐ Vanpools

☐ Target specific transportation (for student population, safe-rides for women, etc.)

☐ None

☐ Don't know

☐ Other:

Please note the transportation options available in your region at night time, between 7PM. and 6 AM. (Please check all that apply).

☐ Bus

☐ Dial-a-ride

☐ Taxi Cab/Chauffer Companies

☐ Vanpools

☐ Target specific transportation (for student population, safe-rides for women, etc.)

☐ None

☐ Don't know

☐ Other:

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

needs and difficulties 5

If transportation is available in the rural areas within your region, does it cross county lines?

Choose one of the following answers

○ Yes

○ No

○ Transportation not available

○ Don't know

Please describe the availability of information regarding the public transportation options in your region.

Choose one of the following answers

○ Information is easily available to everyone

○ Information is somewhat available

○ Information is rarely available

○ Information is not available

○ Don't know

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | Resume later | << Previous | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

What are the various formats, that you know of, in which public transportation information is available in your region? (Please check all that apply.)

☐ Pamphlets and brochures

☐ Flyers

☐ Newspaper Inserts

☐ Telephone Book

☐ Websites

☐ Central Point of Contact or a Specific Individual

☐ Bulletin Boards

☐ Newsletters

☐ Don't know

☐ Other

Which statement best describes awareness of public transportation information in your region amongst social workers/case managers?
Choose one of the following answers

○ Everybody is aware

○ Most are aware

○ Few are aware

○ None are aware

○ Don't know

Which statement best describes awareness of public transportation information in your region amongst riders?

Choose one of the following answers

- ⚪ Everybody is aware
- ⚪ Most are aware
- ⚪ Few are aware
- ⚪ None are aware
- ⚪ Don't know

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | Resume later | << Previous | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

training2

After completing the training, do you find yourself considering the transportation issues of your clients more?
Choose one of the following answers

○ Yes, quite a bit

○ Yes, somewhat

○ No

Please offer any comments you feel would be helpful

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | Resume later | << Previous | Submit |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

Transportation Partnerships 1

In your opinion, how important is the timely input from clients in identifying appropriate transportation solutions for your region?
Choose one of the following answers

○ Very Important

○ Important

○ Somewhat Important

○ Not At All Important

○ Don't know

How would you describe the level of communication on transportation needs between your organization and other relevant agencies and/or transportation providers in your region?
Choose one of the following answers

○ There is absolutely no communication

○ We rarely communicate with each other

○ We communicate only when there is a need

○ We communicate proactively on a regular basis

○ Don't know

**To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.**

| Exit and clear survey | | Resume later | | << Previous | | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

transportation partnerships

Do you think that the various partnerships that your organization has with other relevant agencies and/or providers in your region to work on finding client transportation solutions are helpful?

Choose one of the following answers

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know
- ○ We do not have any partnerships

How would you describe the level of communication on transportation needs between your organization and the riders from the general population in your region?

Choose one of the following answers

- ○ There is absolutely no communication
- ○ We rarely communicate with the general population
- ○ We communicate only when there is a need
- ○ We communicate proactively on a regular basis
- ○ Don't know

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | | Resume later | | << Previous | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

data and funding

What are the different types of data concerning transportation needs and/or transportation resources that your organization currently collects?
Choose one of the following answers

- ○ Our organization doesn't collect any data
- ○ Don't Know
- ○ Our organization collects the following data (Please list all the applicable types)

Does your organization utilize vouchers (also known as tokens or coupons) to provide client access to transportation through private and/or public providers.
Choose one of the following answers

- ○ Yes, regularly
- ○ Yes, rarely
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | | Resume later | | << Previous | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

Solutions coordination 1

Does your organization create individualized transportation plans with riders? (Note: *An individualized transportation plan assesses the individual's travel needs and any special considerations they may have and tailors a transportation plan that the individual can afford*).

Choose one of the following answers

○ Yes

○ No, but another agency in the area does

○ No

○ Don't know

Is there a mechanism within your organization for recording *unmet travel needs* of clients?

Choose one of the following answers

○ Yes, and it is widely used

○ Yes, but it is rarely used

○ No

○ Don't know

How often does your organization work with the community and/or other relevant partners to explore solutions for transportation issues?

Choose one of the following answers

○ Often

○ Sometimes

○ Rarely

○ Never

○ Don't know

solutions coordination 2

Is there someone in your region who serves as a transportation solutions coordinator?
Choose one of the following answers

- ⦿ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know

Do you regularly interact with this person?
Choose one of the following answers

- ○ I am the transportation solutions coordinator
- ○ Yes
- ○ Occasionally
- ○ No

Which organization(s) do(es) the transportation solution coordinator(s) represent? Please list the organization(s) below:

- ○ Don't Know
- ○ They represent the following organization(s):

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | | Resume later | | << Previous | | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

Training 1

Did the United We Ride training change your view of the importance of transportation when serving your clients?
Choose one of the following answers

🔘 Yes, quite a bit

⚪ Yes, somewhat

⚪ No

Please discuss how your views changed.

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | | Resume later | | << Previous | Next >> |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

training2

After completing the training, do you find yourself considering the transportation issues of your clients more?

Choose one of the following answers

- ● Yes, quite a bit
- ○ Yes, somewhat
- ○ No

Please offer any comments you feel would be helpful

To delete all your answers and quit the survey, click the "Exit and clear survey" link.
To save your answers so you can finish the survey later, click the "Resume later" link.

| Exit and clear survey | Resume later | << Previous | Submit |

This survey is not currently active. You will not be able to save your responses.

APPENDIX III: CTAA FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE FOR MOBILITY MANAGEMENT TRAINING SESSION PARTCIPANTS, JULY 2010

Prepared By
Dr. Trey Marchbanks
Dr. Nandita Chaudhuri
Public Policy Research Institute, Texas A&M University
Prepared for United We Ride (UWR) Project, Texas Department of Transportation

SESSION TIME AND PURPOSE

Lead a focus group session from 10:00 to 12:00 a.m. in the morning of 29th July, 2010 to obtain necessary feedback in the form of qualitative data from the CTAA Mobility Management participants. This feedback will be obtained to aid the process and outcome evaluation goals laid out by the Public Policy Research Institute to assess the effectiveness of the UWR objectives.

SESSION LOCATION

Meeting Hall, 200 East Riverside Drive, Austin, TX 78704

SESSION FORMAT

A 4-phase format will be followed in conducting the focus groups. The following are the 4 phases in the whole process of facilitating the focus group discussions from the start to the end.

I.	**INTRODUCTIONS & CONSENT**
II.	**PROCESS & GROUND RULES OVERVIEW**
III.	**FEEDBACK CAPTURE**
IV.	**WRAP UP**

I.   INTRODUCTIONS & CONSENT

> PPRI team will do the introductory greetings, explain IRB approval (minimally, so as to not obstruct the flow) and confidentiality process, explain the purpose of the focus groups, emphasize the importance of the participants' feedback on the whole evaluation process.

II.   PROCESS AND GROUND RULES OVERVIEW

PPRI team will explain the focus group process to the participants and ask them to obey the following ground rules:

- Everybody should not talk at the same time. (If you have a sudden thought while another person in the group is talking, please raise your hand so that we can provide you the opportunity to share your thought shortly.)
- We need to allow everybody in the group to participate in the discussions—no one person should dominate.
- If you think that you are losing your thought while another person is talking, please use the note pads to jot down your thought. Bring it up when it is your turn to talk.

- To facilitate an effective discussion process, we will try to focus on the set of questions we have chalked out for the session and not stray away from these.
- We are very much time constrained—we will try to spend about 25 minutes for each topic area.
- We will note your feedback on these flip charts. Please consider these charts as the external memory wall for the discussions and take the responsibility in making sure that we are capturing your feedback accurately.
- Please use the "Parking Lot" flip-chart to park your additional ideas and thoughts that have not been discussed.

III. FEEDBACK CAPTURE

Using appropriate probe techniques, feedback from the participants will be captured on the following four thematic topic areas:

a. PROJECT GOALS UNDERSTANDING

- *Now that you have gone through the training, how would you define the goals of the UWR project in your own words?*
- *If we try to look at the goals from both a short-term and a long-term angle, which of these would you classify as a long-term and which of these would you classify as a short-term goal?*

b. LEARNINGS

- *What would you say are the two most important lessons you received from the training?*
- *If you were asked to change two things in the training, what would those be?*
- *What are your thoughts on the role of a transport solutions coordinator?*
- *What do you think about the idea of individualized transportation plans for specific populations?*
- *What are the specific populations in your area who would benefit from the roles of a transport solutions coordinator?*

c. TRAINING UTILITY

- *How do you think the training will help this group (all the attendants here this morning)?*
- *How do you think the training will help the target populations you serve?*

d. DATA USAGE AND TRACKING

- *If a role of transportation solutions coordinator is implemented in your organization or transportation region, how do you think this role performance and its impact can be tracked?*
- *What kinds of data tracking happen in your organization and/or region at this time to find out the impact of transportation related improvements?*

3

- *What kinds of transportation data are already available? Are these data useful?*
- *In your opinion, what kind of data should be collected to track and measure whether the role of the transportation solutions coordinators is making a difference?*
- *Can you give us names of contacts that have the best knowledge about transportation data information in your organization/transportation region?*

IV.   WRAP UP

The PPRI team will state that if the participants could not share some of their thoughts since they did not want others present in the room to hear their comments, they should feel free to send their comments to PPRI within the next 7 days with the help of the e-mail addresses listed in the business cards.

Finally, PPRI team will say, "Thanks very much for your time. We really appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to attend this focus group session today. Your thoughts and comments are very important for the United We Ride project. We will conduct a follow-up survey in a few weeks in which we request you all to participate. Thanks much again and have a wonderful day."

SESSION METHODOLOGY

1. On posing the above questions and connecting with the attendees, the PPRI team members will be using standard facilitation techniques. Facilitation makes participatory activities work effectively through proper structure, focus and support. Carefully planned and executed facilitation is an essential prerequisite for any successful participatory mechanisms. Facilitation will ensure that discussions are clearly focused, well structured in relation to the objectives, and organized in a way that will maximize constructive participation by all the attendees.

2. Participant input will be captured with the help of audio-tapes and flip-charts. The session will be audio-recorded for the purposes of details capturing and later thematic analysis of the qualitative data collected following the notes and the recordings.

3. PPRI team will essentially use a nominal group technique (NGT) and open discussion technique (ODT) in facilitating discussions centered on the questions. Nominal group technique is an efficient process for identifying, refining, discussing and then prioritizing issues. It is particularly effective in ensuring that all members of a group have the opportunity for equal participation. As compared to interacting groups, the NGT groups provide opportunity to place more feedback on the table, more balanced participation

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from group members, increased feelings of accomplishment, and greater satisfaction with input/feedback quality and group efficiency.

Open discussion technique, on the other hand, is the most complex facilitating technique and almost all standard facilitation techniques integrate aspects of open discussion. It ensures a complex consideration of ideas through open-ended questions, examples of which have been stated earlier. It serves as a necessary and important supplement to the NGT technique. The open-ended questions can be organized around specific themes to generate more structured consideration of a specific content area or topic.

The PPRI evaluation team members are trained extensively to use these methodologies and techniques to facilitate group discussions and listening sessions to obtain rich qualitative data for purposes of research.

APPENDIX IV: PILOT SITE FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

FOCUS GROUP FACILITATION GUIDE FOR UNITED WE RIDE PROJECT PARTCIPANTS, June 2011

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SESSION TIME AND PURPOSE

Lead a focus group session from 1:00 to 3:00 in the afternoon at the three site locations on decided days to obtain necessary feedback in the form of qualitative data from the United We Ride (UWR) project participants. This feedback will be obtained to aid the process and outcome evaluation goals laid out by the Public Policy Research Institute to assess the effectiveness of the UWR goals and objectives.

SESSION LOCATIONS

To be decided.

SESSION FORMAT

A 4-phase format will be followed in conducting the focus groups. The following are the 4 phases in the whole process of facilitating the focus group discussions from the beginning to the end.

I. **INTRODUCTIONS & CONSENT**
II. **PROCESS & GROUND RULES OVERVIEW**
III. **FEEDBACK CAPTURE**
IV. **WRAP UP**

I. **INTRODUCTIONS & CONSENT**

> PPRI team will do the introductory greetings, explain IRB approval (minimally, so as to not obstruct the flow) and confidentiality process, explain the purpose of the focus groups, emphasize the importance of the participants' feedback on the whole evaluation process, now that the pilots are coming to a completion.

II. **PROCESS AND GROUND RULES OVERVIEW**

> PPRI team will explain the focus group process to the participants and ask them to obey the following ground rules:

- Please avoid talking at the same time. (If you have a sudden thought while another person in the group is talking, please raise your hand so that we can provide you the opportunity to share your thought shortly.)
- We need to allow everybody in the group to participate in the discussions—no one person should dominate.
- If you think that you are losing your thought while another person is talking, please use the note pads to jot down your thought. Bring it up when it is your turn to talk.
- To facilitate an effective discussion process, we will try to focus on the set of questions we have chalked out for the session and not stray away from these.
- We are very much time constrained—we will try to spend about 25 minutes for each topic area.

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- We will note your feedback on these flip charts. Please consider these charts as the external memory wall for the discussions and take the responsibility in making sure that we are capturing your feedback accurately.
- Please use the "Parking Lot" flip-chart to park your additional ideas and thoughts that have not been discussed.

III. FEEDBACK CAPTURE

Using appropriate probing techniques, feedback from the participants will be captured on the following four thematic topic areas:

A. PROJECT GOALS UNDERSTANDING

- *Now that you have gone through the implementation of the UWR project in your region, how would you define the goals of the UWR project in your own words?*
- *How would you define the long-term goals of the project, now that the pilots have come to an end?*

B. PROJECT LEARNINGS

- *What would you say are the two most important lessons you derived from the implementation of the UWR project in your region?*
- *How useful is the idea of individualized transportation plans for the people you serve?*
- *When your clients approach you for information on transportation, do you now feel that you have adequate information to provide them?*
- *How do you now look at the role of a transportation solutions coordinator? Are there parts of the role that you would rather change; if so, what?*

C. PROJECT UTILITY

- *Do you think that the UWR project has helped you? How?*
- *How do you think the project has helped the target populations that you/your organization serve?*
- *Who are the specific populations in your area who might have benefited from the transportation solutions coordinator role?*
- *Did you develop relationships with other agencies and/or providers as a result of UWR? If so, do you think they have been helpful?*
- *As a result of the UWR project, do you think that the level of communication on transportation needs between your organization and the riders from the general population in your region has improved?*
- *What is the biggest strength of the UWR project? Weakness?*

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D. WRAP UP

The PPRI team will state that if the participants could not share some of their thoughts since they did not want others present in the room to hear their comments, they should feel free to send their comments to PPRI within the next 7 days with the help of the e-mail addresses listed in the business cards.

Finally, PPRI team will say, "Thanks very much for your time. We really appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to attend this focus group session today. Your thoughts and comments are very important for the United We Ride project. Thanks much again and have a wonderful day."

SESSION METHODOLOGY

1. On posing the above questions and connecting with the attendees, the PPRI team members will be using standard facilitation techniques. Facilitation makes participatory activities work effectively through proper structure, focus and support. Carefully planned and executed facilitation is an essential prerequisite for any successful participatory mechanisms. Facilitation will ensure that discussions are clearly focused, well structured in relation to the objectives, and organized in a way that will maximize constructive participation by all the attendees.

2. Participant input will be captured with the help of audio-tapes and flip-charts. The session will be audio-recorded for the purposes of details capturing and later thematic analysis of the qualitative data collected following the notes and the recordings.

3. PPRI team will essentially use a nominal group technique (NGT) and open discussion technique (OGT) in facilitating discussions centered on the questions. Nominal group technique is an efficient process for identifying, refining, discussing and then prioritizing issues. It is particularly effective in ensuring that all members of a group have the opportunity for equal participation. As compared to interacting groups, the NGT groups provide opportunity to place more feedback on the table, more balanced participation from group members, increased feelings of accomplishment, and greater satisfaction with input/feedback quality and group efficiency.

   Open discussion technique, on the other hand, is the most complex facilitating technique and almost all standard facilitation techniques integrate aspects of open discussion. It ensures a complex consideration of ideas through open-ended questions, examples of which have been stated earlier. It serves as a necessary and important supplement to the NGT technique. The open-ended questions can be organized around specific themes to generate more structured consideration of a specific content area or topic.

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APPENDIX V: WISE COUNTY PHONE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Phone Interview Script

Hello, my I speak to _____? Hi, my name is _____ with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M. We are part of the evaluation team for TxDOT's United We Ride project. _____ months ago, you participated in a workshop at _____ County hosted by _____ and we would like to ask you some questions regarding that experience. Is now a good time?

If no:
- When would you be a good time?

If yes:
    We would like to provide you with an overview of the process:
- The interview is voluntary, you can stop participation at any time and you are free to not answer any questions without any negative outcomes from Texas A&M or TxDOT.
- The call is expected to take approximately 20 minutes
- Unless you object, the discussion will be recorded to facilitate note-taking
- Audio tapes will be kept in a locked file cabinet, and computer files will be password protected. Upon completion of the project, all audio tapes will be erased. Only the researchers conducting the project will have access to audio tapes, and no reports published will identify the names of individual participants. The study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University.
- There are not any foreseeable inconveniences, discomforts, or risks involved with participation.
- There are no direct benefits to you by participating in the discussion – you will not receive monetary or other compensation for participating in the project.
- Do you have any questions?

Questions:

A. PROJECT GOALS UNDERSTANDING

- *Now that you have gone through the implementation of the UWR project in your region, how would you define the goals of the UWR project in your own words?*
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- *What would you say are the two most important lessons you derived from the implementation of the UWR project in your region?*
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- *What is the biggest strength of the UWR project? Weakness?*

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you very much for your participation. Would you like to placed on a list to receive a final report?
If yes:
- What is your email address?
If no:
- Thank you for your time.