

Notes from CTAA-NARC Conference Call

Topic: Coordinated Human Services Public Transit Service Delivery, New Freedom, Job Access and Reverse Commute, and Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Programs.

Date: April 18, 2006 @ 3:00pm

Participants:

- Chris Zeilinger, Community Transportation Association of America
- Fred Abousleman, National Association of Regional Councils
- Approximately 45 participants

Program Minutes:

[Fred Abousleman]

Welcomes participants and introduces the program speaker

[Chris Zeilinger]

Gives description of the CTAA- supported National Consortium on Human Services- Public Transit Delivery. http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/is_coordination.asp

SAFETEA-LU reworks FTA's grant programs. A Federal Register notice (http://www.fta.dot.gov/legal/federal_register/2004/16290_17929_ENG_HTML.htm) summarizes these changes.

By consolidating transportation-disadvantaged programs with social services programs, money is saved and service is improved. This is because vehicles are used more efficiently.

The Federal Transit Administration issued a proposed guidance on March 15 on Coordinated Human Services Public Transit Service Delivery, New Freedom, Job Access and Reverse Commute, and Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Programs. The comment period has been extended through May 22nd. Encourages all participants to enter comments on this guidance.

[Fred Abousleman]

NARC will be submitting comments to the Federal Register on the proposed guidance. He suggests that NARC members should copy alex@narc.org on their comments. NARC will incorporate them into our response.

[Chris Zeilinger]

United We Ride has published the "Framework for Action". This document attempts to provide a template for Coordinated Service Delivery plans. FTA supports this activity and wants as many service providers to use it as possible.

http://www.unitedweride.gov/1_81_ENG_HTML.htm . {also available at www.narc.org}

Issues that CTAA has identified with the recently-published guidance:

- 1) There is no clarification of the linkage between Coordinated Service Delivery plans and MPO Long Range Transportation Plans
- 2) In communities with more than 200,000 people, JARC money is distributed to the agency that receives 5307 funds (Urbanized Area Formula Grants—the major source of transit operations money). Sometimes the agency receiving money is the public transit provider, sometimes it is the MPO/COG. It needs to be clarified who is responsible for planning JARC programs and how to integrate them into the Coordinated Service Delivery program.
- 3) In small communities, the amount of money brought in by these programs will be very small. The guidance needs to be clear on appropriate uses of small amounts.
- 4) It is not clear in the guidance how new programs will integrate with 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula Grant) and 5311 (Rural Formula Grant) funds. This should be clarified in the final guidance.

“Mobility Management” is the planning and coordination of service (examples: ride brokers, call centers, websites). The Federal share of these services is 80%, as opposed to 50% for vehicle operation. Agencies should take advantage of this.

Many states are hesitant to give help and assistance until FTA issues the final guidance. At the same time, FTA wants input from states. This creates a roadblock to information for MPOs.

Every state has a mechanism to provide United We Ride grants. The state’s role should be as a convener of the multiple-agency interests (Medicare, Veterans Affairs, Department of Labor).

Some regions and MPOs have existing JARC plans that could be used as a framework for Coordinated Service Delivery plans.

[Comment from Ft. Collins MPO]

Very few resources from FTA or state DOTs are being dedicated to small MPOs. A small region that has scheduled public transit must now plan for scheduled service and coordinated service delivery without any extra money or technical assistance.

[Comment from Region 9 PDC/Hagerstown MPO]

West Virginia DOT has their own Coordinated Service Delivery Plan, but no assistance is being provided to MPOs/COGs. Region 9 PDC may put out a RFP to hire a consultant to do the plan.

[Comment from Mid-America Regional Council]

MARC has a process for coordinating transportation disadvantaged programs, but currently does not have a unified plan. MARC is concerned over how quickly they can proceed with drafting and adopting a plan.

[Comment from Yakima Valley Council of Governments]

WashDOT has a blueprint for COGs and MPOs to help them draft Coordinated Service Delivery plans. \$500,000 was made available by WashDOT for MPOs to do the work for drafting plans or contract out the job. Note the WashDOT Agency Council on Coordinated Planning: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/acct/>

[Comment from New York Metropolitan Transportation Council]

NYMTC has submitted a comment complaining about the timeframe for adopting Coordinated Service Delivery plans. NYMTC is proposing to use its existing JARC plan as a framework, and add programs like New Freedom, Elderly, etc to it.

[Comment from Southeast Michigan Council of Governments]

SEMCOG is doing the same thing with using JARC plans as the foundation of the Coordinated Service Delivery plans.

[Chris Zeilinger]

CTAA suggests that people note the expansion of JARC plans in their Federal Register comments.

[Comment from Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency]

NOACA has been working on a senior services transportation plan. They will expand this to include JARC, New Freedom, etc.

Also suggested people look at the FHWA ITS Program's Mobility Services for All Americans initiative at: <http://www.its.dot.gov/msaa/>

[Fred Abousleman]

What are some of the rural areas doing?

[Comment from Texas DOT]

TexDOT likes the idea of expanding JARC plans.

TexDOT has an existing framework for selecting 5311 (Rural Formula Grant) recipients. They will likely expand this program to award money from JARC, New Freedom, Elderly, etc.

[Fred Abousleman thanks all participants and Chris Zeilinger. Call concluded.]