



# **Strengthening Inclusive Coordinated Transportation Partnerships to Promote Community Living**

## **Inclusive Planning Projects — Brief Descriptions**

**September 2013**

**Lead Agency:** Area Agency on Aging 1-B, Southfield, MI

**Project Name:** Mobility Outreach Project

**Geographic Service Area:** The geographic areas targeted are the Southeast Michigan counties of Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne (includes Detroit). This area covers approximately 2,800 square miles. These counties include seven of Michigan's most populous counties and a wide variety of small urban, suburban and rural areas.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** The Regional Elder Mobility Alliance (REMA) whose members include representatives Centers for Independent Living, AARP, Detroit Area Agency on Aging, Detroit Department of Transportation, Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan Office of Services to the Aging, and Transportation Riders United.

**Participants:** Seniors and adults with disabilities are the focus.

**Description of the Project:** The Regional Mobility Alliance (REMA), co-founded by the lead agency, the Area Agency on Aging 1-B, has already implemented a Mobility Outreach Program. The overall purpose of this Mobility Outreach Program is to educate and engage seniors and adults with disabilities in transportation policy decision making in Southeast Michigan. This Project will allow REMA to build upon and expand this program, by implementing a market plan designed to enhance communications messaging about the value of transit that will make it easier to increase support for a regional transportation system, and to coordinate and support participants' involvement in the transportation planning and implementation processes. Its specific activities will include: Identify and support participants on the Citizen's Advisory Committee on the newly formed Regional Transportation Authority (RTA); develop a brand look for the campaign to take transit; develop a web site so participants and other community members can access and provide feedback on local transportation issues; and launch an 800 number staffed by a volunteer or mobility specialist to answer questions about regional transit.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** The Project's measurable outcomes will include: older adults and persons with disabilities are active members of the Regional Transportation Authority's Advisory Group; older adults will be satisfied with the brand/graphics developed to support the Take Transit Anywhere Campaign; the visibility of the campaign is increased by the public relations cam-

aign. The REMA coalition membership is the basis for project sustainability, and the public relations activities are anticipated to generate additional champions. The efforts of this coalition will continue beyond this Project. Further, the establishment of the RTA and its Advisory Group will also ensure that older adults and persons with disabilities are involved in future transit planning activities.

**Innovations:** The Regional Elderly Mobility Alliance (REMA) is distinctive in having representatives from a variety of organizations that are not customarily gathered around the same table. REMA's Mobility Outreach has been unique in that after it gathered data from its surveys and forums, it brought together the participants to share the results, and to get their help in developing strategies to engage civic leaders in discussions about meeting the transportation need of the participants.

**Lead Agency:** Community Action Commission (CAC) of Fayette County, Ohio

**Project Name:** Fayette County Ohio Transportation Coordination Project

**Geographic Service Area:** Fayette County is a small rural county (407 square miles) with a population of 29,030 located in the southwest quadrant of Ohio. Approximately half the population lives in Washington Court House, the only city in the county and its county seat. The County is not contiguous to any metropolitan area. Washington Court House, located in the central part of the county, is 40 miles from Columbus, 60 miles from Dayton, and 75 miles from Cincinnati. Ross and Highland, two of the bordering counties, are part of Appalachia.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Agencies - Fayette County Commission on Aging, Fayette Progressive Industries (Board of Developmental Disabilities), Goodwill Industries; Senior Housing Providers - Seton Hall (HUD 202) and Heritage Green Apartments (Tax Credit housing); Jobs and Family Services (the "welfare" department), the local hospital, several nursing homes, and individuals representing older adults and persons with disabilities.

**Participants:** Children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, children with physical disabilities, adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, adults with physical disabilities, older adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, older adults, African-Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Caucasians, Hispanics, Non-English Speaking, and Low Income.

**Description of the Project:** This grant will be used to involve seniors and persons with disabilities in planning the addition of routes to the local transit system which now offers only demand-response service. System routes will enable passengers to make impulse trips, and it will free up the drivers time for demand trips to specific locations such as medical facilities and employment sites. The Transit Advisory Committee is now doing a feasibility study on adding one or more routes. The Project Manager for CAC, the lead agency, will be the lead in encouraging current and potential passengers to participate in the Transit Advisory Committee's planning for the routes... The Project will especially seek the input of its targeted participants to learn their preferences for pick-up points, destinations, and frequency of trips. The Project will also use surveys to get input from agencies, businesses, and current and potential passengers who are unable to participate at meetings.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** Some of the expected outcomes are: One fixed route developed and tested to be added to the transit system; ten percent increase in public transit trips by older adults and persons with disabilities; 90% percent participation in planning by nursing homes, apartment communities, and assisted living, and by agencies providing services to persons with disabilities. The lead agency will continue to have a Mobility Manager as long as funding is available. If the planning activities do result in a route, it will be sustained by FTA funding and fare revenue.

**Innovations:** A fixed transit route may not sound particularly creative, but it is new to Fayette County. The local newspaper has a Facebook page on which its posts articles from the paper, and they generally draw a lot of comments. The Mobility Manager will set up a transportation planning Facebook page to publicize the Project's ideas and to request comments and ideas for the duration of the Project.

**Lead Agency:** Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC)

**Project Name:** Knox Inclusive Planning for Transportation

**Geographic Service Area:** Knox County covers over 500 miles segmented by a river and mountain ridges that require special routing to provide coordinated transportation. The County includes the City of Knoxville (178,874 population), a large suburban population (206,147), and a sparsely populated rural area (47,205 pop.) The County has three public transportation programs in the County: Knox County CAC Transit, Knoxville Area Transit (KAT),

and East Tennessee Human Resource Agency (ETHRA) which coordinates transportation for all parts of the County.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** The Project's local partners and key stakeholders include: Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization, University of Tennessee Department of Industrial and Information Engineering, Mayor's Council on Disability Issues, East Tennessee Area Agency on Aging, Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities, Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability; and all three transportation providers for Knox County.

**Participants:** Children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, children with physical disabilities, youth in transition, adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, adults with physical disabilities, older adults, older adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, African Americans, Caucasians, and low income persons.

**Description of the Project:** The Knox Inclusive Planning for Transportation project is a crucial piece of the ongoing process to achieve a coordinated and more effective transportation system for Knox County. The project plan provides opportunities for input from seniors and persons with disabilities to involve themselves actively with making transportation more accessible. After the first meeting of the Project's expanded Steering Committee, the first of at least fifteen small group planning meetings will be held, using the "Meeting in a Box" concept that was the major outreach effort of PlanET, a four-year Regional Partnership of East Tennessee Communities. The Project plans to involve 500 persons in these small meetings. A large community meeting will be held in the Project's fourth month; and the data from this meeting and the small meetings will be reviewed and analyzed in the final month. Social media will be used throughout the grant to provide information to the general public and to seek input.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** The Project will use a Weighted Criteria Matrix to identify the highest priority projects from the reports of the small meetings. This approach, commonly referred to as *Plan-Do-Check-Act*, will ensure the identification of barriers per the inclusive views of the broadest range of participants and will establish a plan to remove barriers and set targets.

**Innovations:** Several of the Project's innovative elements are the large number of small meetings that ensure that hard-to-reach disability groups, such as those with intellectual and developmental disabilities are included in the planning process. The partnership with

the University of Tennessee Department of Industrial and Information Engineering will provide a unique approach to analysis of the data from the multiple planning meetings as well as technical support for the implementation portion of the project.

**Lead Agency: The Helena Area Transit Service (HATS) in Lewis and Clark County, Montana**

**Project Name:** Helena Area Transit System Inclusive Coalition Building

**Geographic Service Area:** The area, called the Helena Valley, which includes the city of Helena, capital city of Montana, and the rural area just north of the city which is designated as an urban services area because of the near-city like densities (although rural by national standards). Urban sprawl has been a significant issue for many years. There is a shortage of affordable housing in the city so low income people tend to live outside of the city where transportation services are sparse or non-existent.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Helena Industries (employer of people with disabilities), Rocky Mountain Developmental Council, Montana Independent Living Project, and the Veterans Administration.

**Participants:** The project specifically targets children with physical disabilities, youth in transition, adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, adults with physical disabilities, older adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, older adults, Caucasians, and low income persons.

**Description of the Project:** One of the main goals of the project is to form a coalition to determine specifically what the best service models for the area. By forming a HATS Inclusive Coalition they will be able to identify what service delivery improvements need to be implemented as part of a longer term solution. There is widespread support for the improvement of the current transit service and the support includes responding to the identified needs of the older population and people with disabilities. The Project will continue to gather information about the transportation needs of its target populations through its analysis of information gathered through outreach and surveys they will conduct during the drafting of its HATS Transit Development Plan; and it will retain a consultant experienced in transit planning to identify successful models that may apply to meeting these identified transportation needs.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** An inclusive coalition (an

organization of organizations) will be created which will have adopted a mission statement and rules of procedure; and a memorandum of understanding that shows how these entities will work together to use best its resources (agencies have own buses) to serve people in the community, especially the Project's targeted populations.

**Innovations:** Although they relied on technology for their preliminary surveys and interviews (November 2012-February 2013), they have determined that the best method to use in getting quality information from their key groups is to go back to the basics: they will go directly to members of every user group so that no one is left out of the planning process. They will go to where senior lunches are served, and the work sites of employed persons with disabilities; and they will deliver questions personally to other stakeholders. They believe these efforts will broaden the scope of their past methods of gathering information.

**Lead Agency: Montgomery County, Maryland through its Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Disability Services**

**Project Name:** Getting All Around the County, Montgomery County, Maryland

**Geographic Service Area:** Montgomery County, just to the north of Washington, D.C., and southwest of Baltimore, is part of both the Washington Metropolitan Area and the Baltimore-Washington Metropolitan Area. Most of its residents live in unincorporated locales, the most populous of which are Silver Spring, Germantown, and Bethesda, though the incorporated cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg are also populous. The Project will focus on Gaithersburg and Germantown, an urban/suburban area which, despite its population, has limited transportation for seniors and people with disabilities.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Jewish Council on Aging, Senior Connection (volunteer driver program), Commission on Aging, and Commission on People with Disabilities: members of the Advisory Board for the Project who reflect the diversity of the County.

**Participants:** The Project will focus on adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, adults with physical disabilities, older adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, older adults, African Americans, and Asian/Pacific Islanders.

**Description of the Project:** Montgomery County will build on its record of citizen advisory groups and its existing approach to addressing the transportation

concerns of seniors and people with disabilities (Participants). The Project has three goals: to increase the County's understanding of Participants' transportation and mobility needs; to include the Participants more in the planning process designed to meet these needs; and to gather additional data that will contribute to coordinated transportation planning. To accomplish these goals the Project will create an Advisory Panel, conduct various outreach efforts, e.g., focus groups; electronic and written surveys; presentation on Seniors Today, a monthly cable program; and then will present the analysis of their data to the Advisory Panel. Finally, the Project will develop an inclusive transportation coordination partnership that can be sustained in the County.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** The inclusive transportation coordination partnership created by the project will include organizations engaged in transportation and/or transportation planning - County departments, community-based organizations and businesses. This partnership will create a broad and even more diverse Advisory Panel charged with developing a plan to provide needed coordination services. And this Advisory Panel will be formally linked to the Providers' Roundtable (the ongoing group of more than 30 providers), creating a sustainable model for ongoing engagement of Participants in the design and operations of transportation services in the County.

**Innovations:** The Project focuses on traditional as well as emerging communication. It will host a community meeting that is "recorded" by a graphic artist, creating a visual report accessible to those for whom the written word is challenging. Planning will begin a unique intergenerational engagement by using high school students to help spread the word about the inclusive planning project.

**Lead Agency: Ride Connection, Portland, Oregon**

**Project Name:** Inclusive Coordinated Transportation Partnership Project

**Geographic Service Area:** The geographic area for the Project will be localized within Ride Connection's three-county service area. We are focusing on a specific site so that the limited planning funds can be used to carry out an intensive inclusive planning process. However, the project findings will inform decision making processes affecting the entire three-county Portland metropolitan region and potentially others in Oregon. In particular, the planning process will be carried out in parallel with a statewide transition of the Medicaid program.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Two Oregon Health Plan recipients, Health Share of Oregon, Upstream Public Health, Portland State University School of Urban Studies and Planning, and Tri-Met.

**Participants:** The Project specifically targets people with disabilities, seniors, and low-income individuals living in the Portland metropolitan region who have limited access to medical transportation services.

**Description of the Project:** The overall approach of this Project is to leverage the ACL inclusive planning grant to carry out an intensive participatory planning process aimed at improving medical access transportation, and to amplify the inclusiveness of Ride Connection's work. Prior to receiving the ACL grant, Ride Connection was already working with community representatives, public health agencies, and hospitals to study and plan for improvements to medical transportation. They will involve their diverse partnership for this ACL project to contribute actively to the service design. (This is a standard Ride Connection approach.) Ride Connection will use the ACL grant to provide resources to conduct a targeted outreach effort to gain significant input and involvement from community members who use coordinated transportation to access medical care.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** Ride Connection hopes to use the ACL funds to identify solutions that lead to improvements in customer satisfaction for both transportation and healthcare related activities. Specific transportation-related outcomes for the project include a reduction in the number of late cancellations and missed appointments for medical trips. Health-specific outcomes include a reduction in missed appointments, preventable hospitalizations, and emergency room visits and improvements in health outcomes. Ride Connection's handling of project outcomes and evaluation for this project will center upon a logic model that links the decisions they hope to involve their partners in making with the outcomes they hope to include. This ongoing collaboration in implementing the project will be a strong foundation for its sustainability.

**Innovations:** Prior coordinated transportation planning in the Portland region has generally been very broad. While these efforts have helped to build a robust network of coordinated transportation providers, Ride Connection and its partners lack a detailed understanding of the challenging "edge cases" common to medical trips. ("Edge cases" are infrequent use cases that are often overlooked during broad planning processes, but which tend to consume the majority of resources for customizing a solution to meet the full range of cases.)

Ride Connection intends to gain significant information about these “edge cases” through the targeted outreach effort of this project.

**Lead Agency: Area Agency on Aging of Tarrant County, an operating division of United Way**

**Project Name:** Tarrant Connects

**Geographic Service Area:** Tarrant County has a population of 1.5 million living in 863 square miles. About 55% of the county’s residents live in Fort Worth with the remaining residing in one of the counties 39 other cities.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** The Senior Citizens Services of Tarrant County, Mid-Cities Care Corps. Senior Transportation Services, the Intellectual and Development Disabilities Needs Coalition; Coconveners of Tarrant Riders Network: Judge B. Glen Whitley, the County’s chief elected official, and Tim McKinney, CEO of United Way of Tarrant County.

**Participants:** This Project will engage older adults and persons with disabilities who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the County with an over-representation of lower and limited income residents. Project leaders anticipate that approximately three-hundred and seventy-five older participants, largely female, age 70 and older, and lower-income will participate; and that approximately half of these older participants will be African-American, Vietnamese, and/or Latino. The leaders anticipate that approximately 200 persons with disabilities, largely of working age (16-64) with lower- and limited income will participate. Approximately one third of these participants are expected to be African American and/or Latino. Project Leaders expect an equal mix of individuals with physical/mental disabilities and persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**Description of the Project:** The purpose of Tarrant Connects is to engage older adults and persons with disabilities, and the faith community in a planning and design process to make volunteer transportation a reality for older adults and persons with disabilities. To achieve this purpose they will convene an advisory committee of local key stakeholders and key partners which have been actively working to develop coordinated transportation services. They will use listening sessions, surveys, and public meetings as tools for Tarrant Connects will focus on three primary objectives: 1) Gather input from older adults and persons with disabilities, and the faith community to develop a volunteer program; 2) Convene its Advisory Committee to review the data from the

listening sessions, to plan final public presentations for gathering community input during the upcoming public meetings; and 3) Convene the public meetings to review work and next steps. Then they will prepare a report, Tarrant Connects, A Model for Inclusive Planning, based primarily on findings from the listening sessions and public meetings,

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** Tarrant Connects builds on the support for people with disabilities and older adults who have been assigned to volunteer drivers in previous planning efforts led by the project’s partners. In 2009-2010, through a Job Access planning grant, the opinions of 4,900 working age residents were gathered. They ranked volunteer drivers as the “last mile” that connects persons in outlying areas to transit options needed for employment. Volunteer transportation ranked 3 most preferred from a list of 12 strategies. Fifty advocates and their allies, now known as Tarrant Riders Network, at a two-day planning event sponsored by Easter Seals, prioritized “creating a formal structure to leverage information and resources including locally funded efforts, such as volunteers.” Senior Transportation Service, a current volunteer program, grew out of an effort to combat senior isolation organized by Tarrant Connects’ lead agency, the Area Agency of Tarrant County/United Way of Tarrant County.

**Innovations:** Tarrant Connects is both inclusive and creative. To broaden participation, this project will specifically convene three listening sessions to engage the county’s ethnic and culturally diverse older adults and persons with disabilities. To understand better motivation and volunteerism, this project will convene six listening sessions to interview existing volunteer drivers, their clients, and families. The faith community will be the primary audience of three listening sessions, as well as participants attending the Intellectual and Developmental Disability Needs Symposium to understand their interests, needs, and preferences. Tarrant Connects also builds on existing inclusion activities, such as the Senior Synergy Expo and the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Needs Faith Coalition, engaging individuals it might not otherwise reach.

**Lead Agency: Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG)**

**Project Name:** Toledo Area Partnership Project

**Geographic Service Area:** The Project area is Lucas County, Ohio. Toledo, the county seat, has a medium sized population of 440,000. It is mostly urban surrounded by growing suburbs, with rural areas on the

fringes. It has a diverse population: 13% age 65+, 19% African-Americans, 0.4% Native Americans, 2% Asians, 6% of Hispanic origin, and 72% white persons of non-Hispanic origin. It is largely a blue collar community where many have worked in auto-related job, an industry that has seen significant decline. The median household income is \$41,900 with a per capita income of only \$23,000. Nearly 20% live below the poverty rate compared with the Ohio state average of 14.8%.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Ohio, Inc., Ability Center of Greater Toledo (a non-profit that assists persons with disabilities, and the home base for Consumer Advocates for Transportation Rights), the Lucas County Board of Developmental Disabilities, the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority, and Black and White Transportation.

**Participants:** Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, adults with physical disabilities, older adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, older adults, African-Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Caucasians, Hispanics, Non-English Speaking, and Low income.

**Description of the Project:** The Project has three goals: 1) To explore better options with consumers and transportation providers for getting seniors and persons with disabilities to congregate meal sites. 2) to work with consumers and providers to plan how best to create a “no-wrong-door” approach for consumer calls to any transportation provider. This short-term approach is a precursor to the long-term solution of creating a one-call center. 3) To provide overall guidance in implementing the Toledo Urbanized Area Coordinated Public and Human Service Transportation Plan Update (“Coordination Plan”) (December 2012). The Project will use three strategies – Focus Groups, Community Forums, and establishing a consumer-led Transportation Advisory Board – to reach its goals.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** The Project will build on previous consumer and agency involvement, e.g., The Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio used its assessment of senior transportation needs based on its random survey of 600 Lucas County seniors to guide use of levy funds and to develop a five-year plan to address other senior needs. The Project expects to achieve its three goals: expanded and more cost-effective transportation to senior center congregate meal sites; a set of protocols for “no-wrong-door” response to consumer calls to transportation providers; and to reach participant and stakeholder consensus on a key Coordination

Plan goal: hiring a Mobility Manager. Innovations: This Project is broadly inclusive as it will bring together providers, oversight agencies and senior and persons with disabilities for the first time in a meaningful way to plan together for transportation coordination. An innovative element will be the use of the Internet, such as Facebook or an online forum to conduct a virtual focus group; and also to establish an ongoing blog or interactive page for continued input from consumers.

**Lead Agency: Alaska Mobility Coalition, Anchorage, AK**

**Project Name:** Fairbanks Transportation Partnership Project

**Geographic Service Area:** The Borough covers 7,361 square miles of the Tanana River Valley of the interior region of Alaska with a population of 97,970. Two first-class cities are located within the Borough’s boundaries: North Pole with 2,183 residents and Fairbanks with a population of 34,540. There are also two large military installations within the Borough: Fort Wainwright Army Post and Eielson Air Force Base.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Senior Citizens’ Advisory Commission; Fairbanks and North Pole Senior Centers; Fairbanks Native Association; State of Alaska; City of Fairbanks; Fairbanks Downtown Association; Alaska Housing Finance Corporation; Love, INC.; Raven Landing; Wallbusters Advocacy Group; FNSB Public Transportation Advisory Commission; Alaska Commission on Aging; Alaska Governor’s Council on Disability and Special Education; Access Alaska, the Fairbanks independent living center; Fairbanks Resource Agency, a local disability non-profit agency; and Tanana Chiefs Conference.

**Participants:** Youth in Transition (ages 16-24, Adults (ages 21 to 64) with intellectual and developmental, as well as physical disabilities, older adults (ages 65 and older), including those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Alaska Native adults (ages 21 and older) and low income adults (over 21 years of age) who are living below poverty level.

**Description of the Project:** The first goal will be for AMC to identify, solicit, and award a six-month contract for a Mobility Manager Consultant, by the end of the first month. The second goal will be to ensure that coordinated transportation planning will be implemented by an inclusive group of transportation users, in addition to stakeholders. AMC and the Mobility Manager Consultant

will recruit members for the FTPG, as recommended by the Planning Committee, and they will hold their first meeting by the end of the second month of the funding period. The third goal will be for the Mobility Manager Consultant to work with AMC and the FTPG on the following objectives during months two through six of the ICTP funding: Hold monthly meetings; analyze and adopt the current Mobility Management Plan (MMP); begin implementation of strategies from the MMP that do not require funding; identify funding sources to sustain the Mobility Manager contract beyond the first six months of grant funding available; prepare FTPG advocates to carry out advocacy efforts to local, state and federal funders, beyond the end of the first six months; secure funding to make the Mobility Manager position sustainable permanently; and provide a report that will encompass a synopsis of accomplishments to date, a solid plan of action for FTPG members to continue implementation of the MMP, and a schedule of advocacy efforts to be carried out by FTPG members and AMC.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** The Alaska Mobility Coalition will award a contract to a private contractor to deliver the mobility management services. FTPG will be comprised of representatives from at least 50% of the local governmental, private and non-profit agencies that provide transportation, and representatives from the focus populations. All FTPG meetings will be available to FTPG members and the general public. The FTPG will hold at least one in-person and five teleconference public meetings. Throughout the public comment periods offered during each meeting of the FTPG, the number of persons providing public comment will increase by 50%. Of the FTPG participants and public responders who participated, at least 40% will enter responses into the online survey that will be made available by AMC.

**Innovations:** By making transportation available through human service agencies to public meetings, and through the use of teleconferences, those without Internet access will have an enhanced opportunity to provide public comment concerning the effectiveness of the process. For those with Internet access, online surveys and webinars will also provide an avenue for input.

**Lead Agency:** Columbia County Health and Human Services, Portage, WI

**Project Name:** The Ride Improvement Project (TRIP) of Columbia County

**Geographic Service Area:** Columbia County Health & Human Services is located in Portage, Wisconsin and is categorized as a rural county according to the U.S.

Census Bureau. The entire population of Columbia County is 56,833, it is 773 square miles, has approximately 1500 miles of roadway, includes 35 municipalities, and expands across two area codes. The majority of the population lives in or around a municipality of 2000 people or less, and away from most forms of public transportation.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Community Momentum, ABC Connections, Access to Independence, Aspen Family Counseling, Dimensions, and Columbia County Aging & Disability Resource Center.

**Participants:** Everyone who lives in Columbia County, in particular the elderly (63% of participants) and disabled populations (37% of participants).

**Description of the Project:** The project intends to build awareness of all transportation resources in Columbia County for participants, stakeholders and providers through education and communication. It will re-establish a transportation council that includes participants, stakeholders, and providers groups, including coordinating with the 85.21 grant efforts to provide continuous feedback about transportation needs and gaps in Columbia County, and to provide input for solutions that are unique to the needs within the County. The project will establish a voucher system for participants to increase access to transportation in their immediate community and to make transportation more affordable. And lastly, it will establish a Mobility Manager position to focus on a coordinated community wide transportation service network of existing and potential transportation providers.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** Re-establish and sustain a transportation council in Columbia County; create, distribute and gather the results of an in depth survey of providers and their inventory; conduct at least 3 community forums in the most rural portions of Columbia County to obtain direct input from those participants most in need and living in the most rural setting; research, then create a job description and duties for a Mobility Manager in Columbia County; and organize and share information about the transportation council, the data gathered from the community forums, and data gathered from the providers' inventory surveys with the community through multiple communication tools/outlets.

**Innovations:** A voucher system, allowing an individual immediate, on-demand access to transportation through the assistance of a neighbor, friend, or family member in their immediate. Incorporated into the voucher system

is the ability to receive data and/or input from the users of the system. As data is collected, adjustments can be made to the "living" system and features can be added or removed, as is dictated by the participant. A Mobility Manager takes the innovation of a transportation voucher system to the next level by evaluating and interpreting the data collected from the users of the system and uses that data to enhance the system, attract new participants, new stakeholders, new vendors.

**Lead Agency:** Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Authority, Des Moines, IA

**Project Name:** Coordinated Systems Transportation Planning Study

**Geographic Service Area:** Region 11 of the Iowa DOT and Iowa Workforce Development departments and aligns with the Central Iowa Regional Planning Transportation Alliance (CIRPTA) boundary. This area covers Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Marion, Madison, Polk, Story and Warren counties in central Iowa. This area is urban, suburban, and rural.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Central Iowa Center for Independent Living, Central Iowa Shelter and Services, Aging Resources of Central Iowa, Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority, Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency, United Way of Central Iowa, Des Moines Area Community College, The Central Iowa Workforce Investment Board, Link Associates (Adults with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities), Polk County, and the Iowa Bureau of Refugee Services.

**Participants:** Individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, youth in transition, seniors, low-income and homeless individuals, refugees, and non-English speaking populations.

**Description of the Project:** The project will develop the Coordinated Systems Transportation Planning Study. The current transportation system in central Iowa cannot fully meet the needs of participant groups and the agencies that serve them. To address this issue, an in-depth analysis of the existing system as well as a plan for action must be developed. With this funding, the MPO will provide a more comprehensive analysis of the transportation system and opportunities for improvement through coordination. The MPO is proposing a study that would take an inventory of existing resources, identify opportunities for agency and resource coordination, conduct an analysis of existing barriers, and outline recommendations for the coordination of transporta-

tion services. This study would propose necessary steps for improving access to transportation for populations that include individuals with disabilities, seniors, low-income and homeless, refugees, youth in transition, and non-English speaking individuals. During this process the TAG will develop a model of participant involvement that engages those individuals in the planning process.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** Outcomes associated with the overall project will include: The number of projects or initiatives undertaken that promote or fulfill the recommendations of the final report; an estimate of the number of participants affected by the successful completion of these projects or initiatives, and how they are affected (access to jobs, job training, medical appointments, number of trips); a follow-up survey gauging stakeholder and participant satisfaction with and inclusion in the planning process; a follow-up survey with recipients of the transportation resource list gauging satisfaction and usefulness of the final product. Outputs associated with the project include: Three deliverables: Transportation Resource List, Final Report with recommendations and the Guideline for Participant Engagement; focus groups held with each of the targeted participant groups and three separate focus groups held with case management and service coordination agencies operating in the project area; a survey developed for and sent to transit riders, social service agencies, volunteer and service groups, transit/transportation providers, and individuals represented in the target participant groups, with a 30-40% response rate.

**Innovations:** As part of "The Tomorrow Plan," the MPO and its consultant Sasaki created an interactive website, social media, and interactive planning tools to organize and sustain public input. The MPO and TAG plan on using similar public engagement tools to solicit input from participants. This includes using the MPO and stakeholder websites, twitter accounts, and social media presence to actively engage participants in the study. The TAG will create a Facebook page where participants can post input, like the page, and ask questions about the study.

**Lead Agency:** Indian Nations Council of Governments – Area Agency on Aging, Tulsa, OK

**Project Name:** Project C.O.R.E (Connecting Oklahomans in Rural Environments)

**Geographic Service Area:** Osage County is the largest county in the state of Oklahoma with over 2251 square miles and is one of the most sparsely populated. A large portion of the 47,472 population is concentrated along the county lines thereby isolating small communities

within the county. A lack of roadway infrastructure further isolates rural seniors. A majority of the population within both Osage and Creek Counties live within five miles of the Tulsa County line. It is a rural/frontier area.

**Lead Partners & Key Stakeholders:** INCOG Transportation; Ability Resources Center for Independent Living; Cimarron Public Transit; Fairfax Medical Facilities, Inc.; Osage County Council on Aging; Creek County Council on Aging; Skiatook Coalition; Cimarron Transportation Advisory Council; rural dialysis centers; Veteran's Administration; Osage County Tobacco Cessation Coalition; and Osage County Housing Authority.

**Participants:** Older adults, veterans, and people with disabilities in Creek and Osage Counties. Older adults 65+ comprise 15% of the populations of Creek and Osage Counties. Both Creek and Osage Counties have large percentages of the 65+ population with sensory, mental, and/physical disabilities (44.1% and 43.2% respectively). Veterans account for 8.8% of Creek and Osage County populations. In addition, both Counties have high rates of poverty among aging and disability populations.

**Description of the Project:** Project C.O.R.E. (Connecting Oklahomans in Rural Environments) will build upon the transportation coordination system implemented in Creek County in 2012. In order to evaluate transportation strengths and gaps in service, Project C.O.R.E. will conduct 300 surveys in Creek and Osage Counties followed by three focus groups in Creek County and three in Osage County. Project C.O.R.E. will also mail out 300 surveys in each county to be completed by the target population through nutrition site outreach, senior centers, health centers, Housing Authority sites, and local churches with at least half the survey participants being home bound elderly and disabled people. After the surveys and focus groups have been completed, each County will hold a town hall meeting to summarize the suggestions and ideas obtained from the surveys and focus groups. During these meetings, community members, policy makers and elected officials will be given the opportunity to voice their opinions, ideas, and concerns and to assist in generating ideas for how to move forward in creating a more inclusive, consumer-friendly community transportation model.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** A specific outcome is to expand the Cimarron Transit Advisory Council by including individuals active in Project C.O.R.E. with the goal of adopting participants' innovative transportation strategy ideas. Project C.O.R.E. output measures include: 6 focus groups, 2 town hall meetings, and 300 survey mailings. Project C.O.R.E. would give IAAA the

unique opportunity to build on past successes to analyze community needs, empower the community to find 14 innovative solutions to meet those needs, while avoiding service duplication and working through existing community coalitions.

**Innovations:** One innovative approach for Creek and Osage County transportation is to engage and empower community members to participate in filling service gaps by establishing a volunteer-based program for transportation programs. As the Creek County transportation system is assessed through Project C.O.R.E., the team will conduct the planning and volunteer recruitment necessary to determine the feasibility of a rural bus buddies program. Bus Buddies could be an important tool for growing ridership in Creek County, where a coordinated transportation system is newly operating.

**Lead Agency:** LifeStream Services, Inc., Yorktown, IN

**Project Name:** East Central Indiana Strengthening Inclusive Transportation Coordination

**Geographic Service Area:** LifeStream Services, Inc. (LifeStream) is a 501c3 nonprofit, Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) serving seven counties (Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Henry, Jay, Madison, and Randolph) in East Central Indiana. Additionally, LifeStream is the rural public transportation provider (directly through Federal 5311 FTA/DOT or contracting with a 5311 recipient) for 6 of the seven counties.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Future Choices (a local Center for Independent Living), Jay Randolph Developmental Services, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at Indiana University

**Participants:** LifeStream targets older adults age 60 and more, adults age 18 and more with physical disabilities (including blind and visually impaired), and adults age 18 and more with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their caregivers. LifeStream will target individuals who are at, or below 300% of the Federal Poverty guidelines, but will allow participation by the targeted participants if they are above this income criteria. The partnership with the local Center for Independent Living will allow for access to the deaf community.

**Description of the Project:** LifeStream will conduct five local voluntary, focus groups during the months of July and August in five different counties in East Central Indiana. The approach will be a "traveling advisory/

focus group opportunity" that will be directed not only to existing advisory members, but to targeted/invited individuals in the older adult and disability population in those local areas. LifeStream has partnered with the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC) to allow an outside, unbiased evaluation and perspective on the inclusive efforts taken to date, and opportunities for expansion in those efforts in the future. During the meetings, LifeStream will have IIDC conduct a survey to evaluate the meeting attendees' perception and satisfaction of how LifeStream integrates feedback from the older adult and disability community in transportation planning, design, and systems. LifeStream will actively share the results of this survey and focus group process with various transportation providers (like city public transportation systems) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** Shared results with outside providers will assist with required planning steps they must take for their areas, to reduce duplicative efforts, and to strengthen their inclusive coordinated planning. Improved and increased ridership among transportation providers is an intended outcome of ongoing efforts. As a result of this project, systems will be in place for LifeStream to potentially reach out to other funders to support ongoing planning efforts of a similar sort.

**Innovations:** This approach offers five local opportunities for individuals with disabilities and older adults to provide feedback when they might not have had the opportunity previously. Service hours will be extended for transportation service for meetings where it is determined the meetings are better suited in the evening. LifeStream will be using web-based survey methods to seek feedback from individuals who may not be able to attend a planned meeting. LifeStream will use Facebook to promote meetings and individuals can use the Facebook page to leave comments on what can be done to improve inclusive transportation coordination.

**Lead Agency:** Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc., Big Stone Gap, VA

**Project Name:** Planning Process Improvement in Planning District I

**Geographic Service Area:** Wise, Lee, Scott counties and City of Norton, Virginia. The area is in the heart of rural Appalachia and borders Tennessee and Kentucky. It is 1400 square miles of mountainous, forested terrain, and three of the localities are classified by the Appalachian Regional Commission as being distressed. It is a rural/

frontier area.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** LENOWISCO Planning District Commission; Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. Transit Department; Junction Center for Independent Living, Inc.; Frontier Health; Regional Children's Advocacy Center; Veterans' Administration Rural Clinic; and Creative Family Solutions, Inc.

**Participants:** Persons with disabilities and older adults, their families, regional stakeholders, and veterans – all in an area with a poverty rate of 24%.

**Description of the Project:** The project has several distinct goals, including: use an expanded planning body (which will include persons with disabilities and older individuals) to plan service enhancements and new/changed services for public and human services transportation. It will also develop and outreach plan for under- and un-served areas of the region. It will create a plan for the evaluation of the efficiency of the existing transportation network and plan for the expansion of private provider services. The project will use social media to interactively engage users with their transportation service. And lastly, it will develop a One-Call system that connects all modes of transportation through one point of contact. The project will use surveys and six focus group meetings to collect information and feedback from participants.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** One outcome will be an inventory of existing transportation resources and an evaluation instrument to measure the extent of coordination as a percentage of total trips. Another outcome will be the dissemination of surveys, an anticipated 375 responses, collection of data from those responses, and the formulation of recommendations based on the data.

**Innovations:** The creation of the One-Call system to connect all transportation modes by working with the partners and stakeholders on a common path. Also, educating riders about the system and how to use it.

**Lead Agency:** The Arc Connecticut, Hartford, CT

**Project Name:** Mobil-Able

**Geographic Service Area:** The state of Connecticut.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** The Arc Connecticut; Commission on Aging and DDS; The Arc's Self Advocacy Advisory Panel; and People First of Connecticut.

**Participants:** The project will include individuals of all

ages, races and socioeconomic backgrounds. Their common ground will be having issues with transportation due to advancing age, an intellectual or developmental disability or a family member with an intellectual or developmental disability. It will also include aging parents or family member caregivers of individuals with I/DD whose family member is on the waiting list for residential placement.

**Description of the Project:** The Arc will develop Mobil-Able, a series of videoconference focus groups and community meetings that identify and develop solutions to obstacles that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) and people who are aging face when trying to access transportation. The result of the videoconference focus groups will be a work plan that identifies “next steps” for the creation of a Mobility Manager system that can be accessed by people with IDD and older adults and which results in more inclusive transportation systems for all. The project includes: twelve video conference/focus groups with individuals with ID/DD, families and guardians of individuals with ID/DD and with members of the aging community will be held throughout the State of Connecticut; two community meetings with transportation providers, agencies serving individuals with ID/DD and advocacy agencies to review the results of the focus groups. Evaluations of the videoconferencing strategy will be collected and analyzed.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** The anticipated outcomes from this project are: a minimum of 50% of transportation agencies in Connecticut will actively participate in the project. Data will be compiled to create a centralized Mobility Management system in the State of Connecticut. Ridership on public transportation by individuals with I/DD will increase up to 35% in the first year. Transportation expenses among local community-based agencies will decrease by 10% due to an increasing number of individuals with I/DD taking public transportation. Families of individuals with I/DD surveyed will report decreased transportation costs due to increased use of public transportation.

**Innovations:** Innovative strategies like the development of a centralized Mobility Manager that will take the form of a smart phone and web application, or a person coordinated call center will be discussed. The focus groups will evaluate the widespread “usability” of a smart phone application, the costs and ease of use and strategies for those unable to access smart phones, and the feasibility of a person staffed centralized mobility system that instructs individuals how to travel from one point to another utilizing existing transportation structures.

**Lead Agency: National Participant Network, Taos, NM**

**Project Name:** Greasing the Wheels of Participant Engagement

**Geographic Service Area:** Taos County, primarily the town of Taos. The area is rural/frontier – much of it is unpaved.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** The Town of Taos Transportation Services “Chili Line,” Non Metro Area Agency on Aging, and the Developmental Disabilities Services Division of Taos.

**Participants:** People with mental health and intellectual disabilities; those with physical disabilities and traumatic brain injuries; those who are medically fragile; and elders. The majority of these participants live at or below poverty level.

**Description of the Project:** The project will host six focused discussions with disability specific groups – such as veterans with disabilities – in collaboration with key stakeholders. These discussions will serve to identify areas for transit improvement, and educate the groups on the skills needed for successful collaboration. All meeting rooms will be accessible for people with disabilities, including low vision, impaired hearing, and environmental sensitivities. Results from these meetings will be recommendations to decision-makers as decided by the participants. An advisory panel to oversee the carrying out of the recommendations is likely. Participants will be expected to network with other communities to learn best practices that might be applied to Taos. They will also be able to share their expertise beyond this project, connecting with other interested parties on the subject of engaging in transportation design and implementation. Local recognition (through local news media) will be given to all participants for developing and completing a plan.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** National Participant Network intends to promote a spirit of collaboration, leading to identifiable goals and the objective steps and timeline to be followed. By actively including the users of the system, proving them to be experts at the transit they use, it will foster a continued use of the collaborative planning techniques.

**Innovations:** The innovative part of this project is the fact that it is completely driven by the participants. They develop the needs, what should be addressed, the plan for getting the recommendations accomplished, and reaching out to other communities for advice and guidance. It is a very user-driven process, which is an

innovation in itself in Taos.

**Lead Agency: Marin County Transit District (Marin Transit), San Rafael, CA**

**Project Name:** Vietnamese & Spanish Speakers Inclusion Project

**Geographic Service Area:** Marin County has two broadly defined geographic areas: the urbanized Hwy.101 corridor on the eastern side of the county; and West Marin, the low-density rural area on the western side of the county. This project will specifically target residents of two sub-areas of the Hwy. 101 corridor, the Canal area within the City of San Rafael, which has the highest density of both Vietnamese speaking and Spanish speaking residents; and the southern part of the City of Novato, which also has a large community of Spanish speakers.

**Local Partners and Key Stakeholders:** Asian Advocacy Project of Community Action Marin, Marin Health and Human Services, Marin Center for Independent Living, Episcopal Senior Services, Marin Senior Coordinating Council

**Participants:** This Project will be focused on seniors and persons with disabilities from Marin’s two largest non-English speaking populations: Hispanics and Vietnamese. Project leaders anticipate that the most inclusion and benefit from the Project will be to the senior members of these populations, but outreach and inclusion efforts will target those of all ages and disabilities. The communities where the highest concentrations of these non-English speakers reside are among the highest density and lowest income areas of the county, so it is anticipated that most if not all of the targeted populations will be low-income.

**Description of the Project:** The purpose of Marin Transit’s Inclusive Coordinated Transportation Partnership Project is to document and build upon Marin Transit’s already successful techniques for including participants and stakeholders in planning mobility management and transit services. The base for this project will be the very successful Marin Mobility Consortium, which was formed in 2010 to increase the involvement and input of Marin’s senior and disabled individuals and stakeholders into the planning of Marin Transit’s mobility management and coordination efforts. The project will increase the focus on including and involving limited English and non-English speaking Hispanic and Vietnamese seniors and persons with disabilities into these planning processes. This will be accomplished through the hiring and training of bilingual Spanish and Vietnamese speak-

ing staff and volunteers to take the lead in outreaching to these senior and disabled communities to facilitate their involvement in planning and evaluating services and in informing them about current mobility programs for seniors and persons with disabilities.

**Outcomes and Sustainability:** Within Marin County there has been a number of transportation planning efforts that have sought the involvement of seniors and persons with disabilities. Most have had success in getting input from English speaking populations. Encouraging the involvement of the non-English speaking populations has been less successful. As in any group, there are key individuals who recognize the importance of their involvement in community life and decision making. Identifying them and facilitating their involvement both individually and as “ambassadors” to involve others from their communities is one of the key outcomes of this Project. If this Project is successful in its goal of more fully including and involving Vietnamese and Spanish speaking seniors and persons with disabilities in transportation planning, then the outcome will be a documented successful process that can be used with monolingual non-English speakers in other communities. Other outcomes, specific to Marin include: new insights and directions in our transportation planning, greater satisfaction with the planning processes from the target populations, and greater usage of the community’s transportation services by these groups.

**Innovations:** This Project will use and expand upon the techniques that have been successful in involving English speaking seniors and persons with disabilities in Marin’s transportation planning efforts now apply them to the target non-English speaking communities. These include personal contact, involvement on advisory and project committees and focus groups, the encouragement of feedback in evaluating transportation services, etc. This will be a learning effort for project leaders as well as for the participants. The project team hopes to learn what methods, techniques and forms of media are most effective in reaching these populations, and as important, what channels of communication are best for them to reach the project. To facilitate cross-language personal contact and group presentations/communication, the project will be exploring as an adjunct to this Project, new translation technologies. In addition, the team hopes to learn how to communicate with these populations in culturally appropriate ways. The entire focus of the Project is the inclusion and involvement of populations that have a major additional barrier, that of language. Through the Project, the goal is to both include them in planning efforts and to help them more fully utilize local transportation services.