

Executive Summary

Transportation Resources in the Region

The Coordinated Public Transit-Health and Human Services Transportation Plan, for the ten counties in the Capital region, is currently being completed and updated for publication in 2011. This technical memorandum describes the transportation services and other resources currently available in the region. In this technical memorandum the service area gaps will be illustrated as well.

Public Transportation Providers

Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro) is the regional public transit system for the greater metropolitan Austin area. Capital Metro provides fixed route bus, commuter rail, paratransit, University of Texas shuttle and ride share services in the area surrounding Austin. Capital Metro conducts numerous planning efforts, including market analyses for specific service areas, rail station and transit oriented development planning, feasibility studies, and intermodal facilities development.

Capital Area Rural Transportation System, or CARTS, is a Rural Transit District that includes all of Bastrop, Burnet, Blanco, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays and Lee counties and the non-urbanized areas of Travis and Williamson counties. CARTS provides fixed route service in Bastrop and San Marcos, fixed schedule, commuter and demand response as necessary and contract services with the city of Round Rock and Capital Metro. In addition to annual planning activities related to budget development, CARTS engages in planning for specific service areas and facility development.

Texas State University Bobcat Tram Interurban Service provides “Campus Routes” and “City Routes” for Texas State students, faculty, staff, and visitors that are designed to alleviate campus parking demand and traffic congestion. Service is

available based on the university schedule. Bobcat also operates commuter service from North Austin to San Marcos. This commuter service is open to the public.

Hill Country Transit District operates demand response services in Llano County. In addition under contract to CARTS, HCT operates the Medicaid transportation program in Llano. HCT also operates in 8 other counties outside of the RTCC Plan area.

The City of Round Rock currently operates three small buses in demand response service through a contract with CARTS. It should be emphasized that this is not a CARTS service as it is controlled by the City. Commuter and reverse commuter services are planned.

The Lone Star Rail District (LSTAR) was formed to develop rail service between Georgetown and San Antonio. This service is currently in the planning phase.

There are four private intercity transit providers in the region (Amtrak, Greyhound, Arrow Trailways and Kerrville Bus Company).

Human Service Transportation

The region is also served by over 30 “client focused” transportation providers or those transportation services that are limited to clients of human services, residents of particular communities, or specific demographic groups (based on age, for example). These services have been grouped into the following categories:

- Non-Emergency Medical Transportation - by far the largest human service transportation is currently operated by CARTS
- Workforce Transportation and Transportation Targeted to Low-Income Transit Dependent
- Services Targeted to Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities - including volunteer programs
- Services targeted to students

Planning Organizations

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has funding oversight over state rural public transportation funding through the Public Transportation Division (PTN). PTN, through its Public Transit Coordinators, work closely with area transit systems.

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson Counties. The purpose of CAMPO is to coordinate regional transportation planning with counties, cities, Capital Metro, CARTS, TxDOT and others and to approve the use of federal transportation funds within the region.

The Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) was organized in 1970 to serve local governments in the ten-county region. The primary focus of CAPCOG is to serve as advocate, planner and coordinator of initiatives that, when undertaken on a regional basis, can be more effective and efficient.

The Capital Area Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CARTPO) serves as a forum for elected officials within the CAPCOG area to come together on transportation issues to recommend changes in policy and practice, advocate for legislation, recommend regional priorities, direct certain planning and data initiatives, oversee the federally-prescribed local consultation process, and collaborate with CAMPO.

The Capital Area Regional Transit Coordination Committee (RTCC) was formed as a result of a state requirement for statewide coordination of public transportation services between rural, suburban, and metro areas. The goal of this committee is to achieve a seamless public transportation system that results in efficiency, eliminates duplication, increases coordination, and addresses service gaps.

Summary: Transportation Resources

It should be noted that both CARTS and Capital Metro provide a very high level of service, based on ridership per capita, for comparable systems. There are, however, a number of gaps in the availability of public transit. These gaps are all centered around Austin and are comprised of those areas outside of the Capital Metro area, yet urbanized, and therefore not part of CARTS service area.

