

# **CRITICAL FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSIT SYSTEMS IN RURAL ARIZONA**

FINAL REPORT 530

**Prepared by:**

David Moise  
P.O. Box 3765  
Page, AZ 86040

&

Kip Kelly  
9897 Heritage Drive  
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

**NOVEMBER 2005**

**Prepared for:**

Arizona Department of Transportation  
206 South 17th Avenue  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007  
in cooperation with  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

The contents of the report reflect the views of the authors who are responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Arizona Department of Transportation or the Federal Highway Administration. This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation. Trade or manufacturers' names that may appear herein are cited only because they are considered essential to the objectives of the report. The U.S. Government and The State of Arizona do not endorse products or manufacturers.

## Technical Report Documentation Page

1. Report No. FHWA-AZ-05- 530	2. Government Accession No.	3. Recipient's Catalog No.	
4. Title and Subtitle  <b>CRITICAL FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSIT SYSTEMS                  IN RURAL ARIZONA</b>		5. Report Date November 2005	
		6. Performing Organization Code	
7. Authors David Moise and Kip Kelly		8. Performing Organization Report No.	
9. Performing Organization Name and Address David Moise                      Kip Kelly P.O. Box 3765                      9897 Heritage Drive Page, AZ 86040                      Flagstaff, AZ 86004		10. Work Unit No.	
		11. Contract or Grant No. SPR-PL-1-(59) 530	
12. Sponsoring Agency Name and Address  ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION 206 S. 17TH AVENUE PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007  Project Manager: John Semmens		13. Type of Report & Period Covered	
		14. Sponsoring Agency Code	
15. Supplementary Notes  Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration			
16. Abstract  The report's findings indicate seven factors that influence rural public transit systems. The factors that were reported by the survey recipients match relatively closely with the predominant literature:  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Showing need and demand is the most important factor in creating a rural public transit system.</li> <li>2. Funding is the major barrier.</li> <li>3. Citizen participation and support is very important to the process, along with....</li> <li>4. Political and/or city council support.</li> <li>5. Expert or technical help was necessary, as was...</li> <li>6. Fare box recovery rate</li> <li>7. And finally, the ability to connect with other modes of transportation.</li> </ol> <p>Within the literature, the study found that there were many other barriers to an effective rural public transit system. Coordination almost always seems inadequate, although difficult because of the inherent needs of the rider, such as a special needs rider that cannot be accommodated by a regular van provided by a transit partner. Also, many times there has been mention of the "true costs" of establishing a system or the difficulties of obtaining funding or working with a local department of transportation. Especially interesting was the inherent difficulties experienced by the Indian tribes in providing service on the reservations and meeting the requirements to obtain funding.</p>			
17. Key Words rural transit, small city transit		18. Distribution statement Document is available to the U.S. public through the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia, 22161	23. Registrant's Seal
19. Security Classification  Unclassified	20. Security Classification  Unclassified	21. No. of Pages  83	22. Price

## SI\* (MODERN METRIC) CONVERSION FACTORS

APPROXIMATE CONVERSIONS TO SI UNITS					APPROXIMATE CONVERSIONS FROM SI UNITS				
Symbol	When You Know	Multiply By	To Find	Symbol	Symbol	When You Know	Multiply By	To Find	Symbol
<b><u>LENGTH</u></b>					<b><u>LENGTH</u></b>				
in	inches	25.4	millimeters	mm	mm	millimeters	0.039	inches	in
ft	feet	0.305	meters	m	m	meters	3.28	feet	ft
yd	yards	0.914	meters	m	m	meters	1.09	yards	yd
mi	miles	1.61	kilometers	km	km	kilometers	0.621	miles	mi
<b><u>AREA</u></b>					<b><u>AREA</u></b>				
in <sup>2</sup>	square inches	645.2	square millimeters	mm <sup>2</sup>	mm <sup>2</sup>	Square millimeters	0.0016	square inches	in <sup>2</sup>
ft <sup>2</sup>	square feet	0.093	square meters	m <sup>2</sup>	m <sup>2</sup>	Square meters	10.764	square feet	ft <sup>2</sup>
yd <sup>2</sup>	square yards	0.836	square meters	m <sup>2</sup>	m <sup>2</sup>	Square meters	1.195	square yards	yd <sup>2</sup>
ac	acres	0.405	hectares	ha	ha	hectares	2.47	acres	ac
mi <sup>2</sup>	square miles	2.59	square kilometers	km <sup>2</sup>	km <sup>2</sup>	Square kilometers	0.386	square miles	mi <sup>2</sup>
<b><u>VOLUME</u></b>					<b><u>VOLUME</u></b>				
fl oz	fluid ounces	29.57	milliliters	mL	mL	milliliters	0.034	fluid ounces	fl oz
gal	gallons	3.785	liters	L	L	liters	0.264	gallons	gal
ft <sup>3</sup>	cubic feet	0.028	cubic meters	m <sup>3</sup>	m <sup>3</sup>	Cubic meters	35.315	cubic feet	ft <sup>3</sup>
yd <sup>3</sup>	cubic yards	0.765	cubic meters	m <sup>3</sup>	m <sup>3</sup>	Cubic meters	1.308	cubic yards	yd <sup>3</sup>
NOTE: Volumes greater than 1000L shall be shown in m <sup>3</sup> .									
<b><u>MASS</u></b>					<b><u>MASS</u></b>				
oz	ounces	28.35	grams	g	g	grams	0.035	ounces	oz
lb	pounds	0.454	kilograms	kg	kg	kilograms	2.205	pounds	lb
T	short tons (2000lb)	0.907	megagrams (or "metric ton")	mg (or "t")	Mg	megagrams (or "metric ton")	1.102	short tons (2000lb)	T
<b><u>TEMPERATURE (exact)</u></b>					<b><u>TEMPERATURE (exact)</u></b>				
°F	Fahrenheit temperature	5(F-32)/9 or (F-32)/1.8	Celsius temperature	°C	°C	Celsius temperature	1.8C + 32	Fahrenheit temperature	°F
<b><u>ILLUMINATION</u></b>					<b><u>ILLUMINATION</u></b>				
fc	foot candles	10.76	lux	lx	lx	lux	0.0929	foot-candles	fc
fl	foot-Lamberts	3.426	candela/m <sup>2</sup>	cd/m <sup>2</sup>	cd/m <sup>2</sup>	candela/m <sup>2</sup>	0.2919	foot-Lamberts	fl
<b><u>FORCE AND PRESSURE OR STRESS</u></b>					<b><u>FORCE AND PRESSURE OR STRESS</u></b>				
lbf	poundforce	4.45	newtons	N	N	newtons	0.225	poundforce	lbf
lbf/in <sup>2</sup>	poundforce per square inch	6.89	kilopascals	kPa	kPa	kilopascals	0.145	poundforce per square inch	lbf/in <sup>2</sup>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
INTRODUCTION	3
PART I	
A REVIEW OF THE EXISTING LITERATURE	5
ARIZONA'S CURRENT RURAL TRANSIT STATUS	7
FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES FOR RURAL TRANSIT SYSTEMS	11
FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES FOR TRIBAL RURAL TRANSIT SYSTEMS	14
BEST PRACTICES	16
PART II	
REVIEWING THE SURVEY RESULTS	21
THE IMPORTANCE OF IDENTIFYING NEED: THE TRANSIT DEPENDENT POPULATION	22
FUNDING	26
CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS	31
PART III	
INFORMATION AND WHERE TO GET IT	35
BIBLIOGRAPHY	39
APPENDIX I: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE	43
APPENDIX II: ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ASKED OF INTERVIEWEES	49
APPENDIX III: CURRENT RURAL TRANSIT PROVIDERS	50
APPENDIX IV: CITY OF COOLIDGE SAMPLE APPLICATIONS	51
APPENDIX V: FINAL GUIDELINES FOR 5311 PROGRAMS	77

## LIST OF TABLES

		<b>Page</b>
Table 1	Current Listing of Providers of Rural Public Transit	10
Table 2	Longitudinal Data	19
Table 3	Important Factors to the Creation of a Rural Transit System	25
Table 4	Stakeholder Contribution to the Creation of a Rural Transit System	25
Table 5	Top Barriers to the Creation of a Rural Transit System	26

## LIST OF FIGURES

		<b>Page</b>
Figure 1	Longevity of Transit System	21
Figure 2	Publicity and Marketing	21
Figure 3	Most Important Factor	23
Figure 4	Greatest Impact	24
Figure 5	Least Impact	24
Figure 6	Main Obstacle to Funding	28
Figure 7	Other Issue Preventing Pursuit of Funding	28
Figure 8	Other Partnerships that Might be Helpful	29
Figure 9	Community Having a Planning Department	29
Figure 10	Unsuccessfully Pursued Other Funding	30
Figure 11	Plan to Pursue Transit Funding in the Future	31
Figure 12	Provide Support on how to Obtain Funding in the Future	31

## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

5310 – special needs transportation program  
5311 – rural public transit program  
ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act  
ADOT – Arizona Department of Transportation  
APA – Arizona Planning Association  
APTA – American Public Transportation Association  
ARS – Arizona Revised Statutes  
AzTA – Arizona Transit Association  
BIA – Bureau of Indian Affairs  
CAAG – Central Arizona Association of Governments  
COG – Council of Governments  
CTAA – Community Transportation Association of America  
DPS – Department of Public Service  
FHWA – Federal Highway Administration  
FTA – Federal Transit Administration  
FY – Fiscal Year  
HB2565 – House Bill 2565 (see also SB1556)  
HURF – Highway User Revenue Fund  
HPMS – Highway Performance Measurements System  
IRR – Indian Reservation Roads program  
ISTEA – Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act  
ITS – Intelligent Transit Systems  
LTAF – Local Transportation Assistance Fund  
LTAF II - Local Transportation Assistance Fund II  
MAG – Maricopa Association of Governments  
MPO- Metropolitan Planning Organization  
NACOG – Northern Arizona Council of Governments  
PAG – Pima Association of Governments  
PPP – Priority Programming Processes  
PTD – Public Transportation Division  
RPTA – Regional Planning Transportation Association  
RTAC – Rural Transportation Advocacy Council  
RTS – Rural Transit System  
SB1556 – Amendment to HB2565  
SEAGO – Southeastern Arizona Government Organization  
STIP – State Transportation Improvement Program  
TAC – Transportation Advisory Committee  
TANF – Temporary Assistance to Needy Families  
TEA – Transportation Equity Act  
TIP – Transportation Improvement Programs  
VLT – Vehicle License Tax  
WACOG – Western Arizona Council of Governments  
YMPO – Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This particular study asked, “What are the critical factors in the development of a public rural transit system?”

This question was answered using a variety of methods. An examination of the existing literature on rural public transit, telephone interviews with transit officials and vendors, and a survey are presented. Essentially, there are two primary parts, the literature review and an explanation of the findings based on interviews and the survey. To make the study more functional, this document includes some helpful information, samples, and listings toward the end. It is hoped that this “handbook” can assist planners and city officials that are interested in creating a transit system for their community.

The study’s findings indicate seven factors that influence rural public transit systems. The factors that were reported by the survey recipients match relatively closely with the literature:

1. Need and demand is the most important factor in creating a rural public transit system.
2. Funding is the major problem.
3. Citizen participation and support is very important to the process.
4. Political and/or city council support are also important.
5. Expert or technical help was necessary.
6. Fare box recovery rate is an issue.
7. The ability to connect with other modes of transportation is a factor.

But these are essentially some of the findings of the survey. The literature search found that there were many other barriers to an effective rural public transit system. Coordination between public transportation providers seems inadequate, although difficult because of the inherent needs of the rider, such as a special needs rider that cannot be accommodated by a regular van provided by a transit partner. Also, many times there has been mention of the “true costs” of establishing a system or the difficulties of obtaining funding or working with the Arizona Department of Transportation’s Transportation Planning Division (TPD). Especially interesting were the inherent difficulties experienced by some tribal governments in providing service on the reservations and meeting the requirements to obtain funding.

Therefore, examples of “best practices” and some hard data were added to bring to light some ideas and perspectives from other rural transit providers. Keeping good records and following critical data helps keep abreast of what’s going on with the transit system. Setting realistic goals and providing an agency with a mission that reflects the actual need as well as addresses the demand is vital. This requires research and a well documented needs assessment. Finally, all the variables that make operating a transit system challenging need to be nearly perfected; such as well trained drivers, the right software for operating needs, coordinating with nearby transit providers or any other agency that can help, understanding the true costs associated with the operation, understanding the planning process, garnering political and citizen support, and finally, knowing how to obtain funding.



## INTRODUCTION

Understanding the process involved in the development of a public rural transportation system is the foremost goal of those who desire to start such a system, or require the justification to its contrary. The research compiled in this study is dedicated to those searching for solutions to the transportation questions in their communities.

This research project starts with an overview of the relevant literature, then performs field interviews with existing rural transit staff and asks their views on specific questions. Throughout the literature, and from current professionals in the field, there are common themes and similarities that bring to light the complexities of rural transit and the inherent problems in their development.

This study begins with an overview of the status of rural transit systems (RTS) in Arizona today, and as it has been in the last few years. Next, the report discusses the fundamental problems of rural transit, the major players involved, such as government entities and the public, and of course, funding.

To begin with, it is necessary to understand what is meant by rural, and a few other key terms, such as need and demand. There is a list of acronyms and abbreviations to assist with the verbiage.

The definitions for rural and demand were borrowed from another workbook written on rural passenger transportation. It defined rural as “those places outside of an urbanized area.” In general, places meeting this definition are:

- Outside a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)(i.e., not suburbs of a major city), and
- Have a population density of less than 1,000 persons per square mile (386 persons per square kilometer).<sup>1</sup>

Demand is defined as the number of passenger trips that will be taken when a given level of passenger transportation service is available. Passenger trips are *one-way* trips, that is, trips on a vehicle from one point to another. Round trips (e.g., from home to shopping and return to home) are counted as two one-way trips.<sup>2</sup>

Two other noteworthy points are necessary. “Demand is not the same as need. The need to travel, however defined, exists whether or not passenger transportation is available.”<sup>3</sup> Another way of putting it: demand is more recognized, while need is more of an unknown factor in a community.

Finally, the authors wish to clarify that “passenger transportation” is not the same as public transportation. Public transportation is defined as a service open to any individual who

---

<sup>1</sup> “Workbook for Estimating Demand for Rural Passenger Transportation,” TCRP Report 3, Transportation Research Board, p.5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

requests service and is willing to pay the fare that is charged. Passenger transportation includes both public transportation and services that limit ridership to members of a specific group (e.g., persons enrolled in a program for the developmentally disabled) or that limit ridership to persons meeting set criteria (e.g., persons 60 years of age or older).<sup>4</sup>

Essentially, for the purposes of this study and further clarification, passenger transportation shall be reserved for when discussing a special-needs transportation program (the federal designation is the Section 5310, Elderly & Persons with Disabilities Transportation Program<sup>5</sup>). However, this study will focus mainly on rural public transportation (federal designation is the Section 5311, Rural Public Transportation Program<sup>6</sup>).

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.azdot.gov/PTD/Section5310.asp> (accessed November 10, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.azdot.gov/PTD/Section5311.asp> (accessed November 10, 2005).

## **PART I: A REVIEW OF THE EXISTING LITERATURE**

Starting a transit system in rural Arizona requires the participation of many parties, such as the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the local government's planning department. There must also be adequate funding and public input — not to mention how sensitive and highly politicized the issue can be. This research, including the survey and findings associated with this study, will help municipalities in rural Arizona to determine some of the obstacles and understand the principal necessities to begin their own RTS.

Usually, most communities manage to acquire a van or two to address the perceived immediate needs, especially for special needs transportation. In order to develop an efficient system that can transport the elderly to a senior center or support dial-a-ride, communities aiming to address their transit needs must know the intricate details of such an enterprise and should be able to turn to someone for assistance.

Public transportation in rural communities across Arizona is limited. There are a limited number of rural communities in the state that operate rural transit systems.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, the cost of owning a private vehicle for many residents in rural communities is challenging. As a result, transportation is an issue that remains constant and is considered a high priority in many communities. The lack of public transportation services also affects other issues, such as employment, shopping, medical appointments, and educational trips making public transportation critical to residents in rural communities.

In fact, for the purpose of a comprehensive community assessment conducted in northern Arizona, a telephone survey performed by the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona University found that over 90 percent of Northern Arizona residents cited driving as their major form of transportation. Twelve percent of residents stated that a lack of public transportation affected their access to employment. This number increased to 17 percent when asked of low-income and minority residents of the region. This community assessment also included “town halls” in the predominantly rural counties of Apache, Coconino, Navajo and Yavapai. Transportation consistently emerged as the leading issue of concern at all four town halls.<sup>8</sup> Developing effective mass transit systems was also one of the top 10 planning issues for the Arizona Planning Association in 1998.

Indeed, transportation is a nationwide concern. The cost of fuel, vehicles, and maintenance, along with the current population growth and growing concerns about air pollution, make certain that the search for efficient and effective transportation solutions will remain a major topic of discussion in both urban and rural communities. At the local level in rural settings, this issue translates into a need to find creative methods for moving people with transportation needs from one place to another. Unfortunately, rural transit faces issues unlike urban and metropolitan areas.

---

<sup>7</sup> American Public Transportation Association

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 28

In Arizona, Native American reservations must contend with the disadvantages inherent to rural areas and undeveloped roadways, and perhaps at a more intense scale. “In general, both freight and passenger carriers exhibit economies of utilization (or economies of density in the transportation vernacular); that is, the cost per ton-mile or per passenger-mile for a given movement decreases as the volume of freight or passenger increases. The size of a community as measured by population and economic output (e.g., manufactured or agricultural products) thus affects transportation costs.... If small towns in general have transportation problems, small towns in rural areas are even more disadvantaged.”<sup>9</sup>

Additionally, many communities that do not operate public transportation have some type of special-needs transportation system in place for some sections of the populace. Special-needs transportation, however, is uneconomical. “From a pure supply or production perspective, special needs transportation modes are inherently less efficient than are conventional transit modes; that is, the potential productivity of conventional transit modes (assuming sufficient demand materializes) is significantly greater than that of paratransit modes.”<sup>10</sup>

In some of the rural communities in Arizona, the development of a rural transit system seems to be in its infancy. In other communities, rural transit efforts are nonexistent. By examining how successful rural transit systems have overcome the barriers inherent to the development of a transit system, this report may help facilitate the development of systems in other communities. Furthermore, communities that are interested in beginning the planning process for a rural transit system will also benefit from the negative experiences of communities that have not yet developed rural transit systems. These communities will also benefit from a discussion of the challenges inherent to the development of a system including: understanding a community’s transit needs, probable demand, garnering city council support, finding available sources of funding (such as local matching funds), and researching applicable laws.

Much of the growth in Arizona has been in the rural areas. Many of these residents are of retirement age and many of the families in these areas have reported owning one or no vehicles. Regional assessments reveal the need for transportation services in many of the non-incorporated areas of the state. Moreover, the splintered nature of existing rural transit and paratransit systems have not as yet addressed the need to coordinate services.

The nature of the rural transportation problem may be reduced to three basic elements:

1. Funding
2. Logistics/coordination
3. Political support/information.

Although there are other factors such as low-ridership, a lack of leadership support, insufficient staff and drivers, inaccessible roads, a lack of coordinated services, and facility challenges, the initial three items may represent the most significant barriers to most rural communities.

---

<sup>9</sup> Due, Allen, Kihl, Crum, *Transportation Service to Small Rural Communities*, p. 4

<sup>10</sup> Transportation Research Board Special Report 186 Paratransit: 1979

Much of the literature indicates that although 5311 funding exists from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) through ADOT, it remains uncertain as to how this funding will be administered or if it will be maintained at current levels in the near future - most likely because of TEA-21 funding complications. Furthermore, local transit providers and/or the arrangement of delivery of transportation services cannot currently be combined to provide such services to regions, instead of to the immediate community. Guidance and information is needed to address this particular topic, particularly from public officials.

### *Arizona's Current Rural Transit Status*

Rural transit systems that are operational in Arizona can be described as scattered at best. Approximately, 70 percent of Arizona's mileage is traveled on rural roadways; Arizona also has the second highest percentage of federal or Native American controlled land in the country. As a result, land-use restrictions complicate transportation planning and coordination efforts. Furthermore, the geography and environmental variations in Arizona ensure that the provision of transportation services is a costly and, at times, risky operation.<sup>11</sup> Because of these adverse conditions, many rural transportation systems are set up as dial-a-ride or deviated fix route to address the many miles and scattered directions that must be covered as opposed to a "fixed" route system.

Most rural transit systems in Arizona operate by demand-response. Although this is a discussion of rural transit, or namely, the 5311 program, it may be useful to briefly mention the other type of transportation in Arizona—commonly termed special-needs transportation (5310 program). These systems typically serve the elderly and/or individuals with special needs. Many of the special-needs transportation programs have not coordinated their efforts to increase funding sources or decrease operation costs. Much of the responses from transit officials suggest that there is a general lack of understanding regarding the true costs of operating a public transit system. In turn, transit does not make money for a community, so it requires a strong commitment from the communities to make the investment.

A Transportation Research Board report entitled *Paratransit 1979*<sup>12</sup> also indicated coordination as a major issue. The goal of many 5310 programs should be to use coordination of transportation services to:

1. Eliminate overlap and duplication of service (to the same population groups in the same geographic area).
2. Fill gaps in the service.
3. Save money.
4. Improve and expand the service.

This finding calling for transit systems to coordinate their efforts dates back to 1979, and many of the Arizona programs have still not done so. As of 2002, 14 different agencies

---

<sup>11</sup> ITS Architecture Development Process, p.2

<sup>12</sup> Transportation Research Board, Special Report 186, *Para-transit: 1979, Proceedings of a Workshop*, 1979

applied for 5310 funding through the Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG). However, during the application process, not one agency discussed coordinating with other entities. In addition, most of them knew of other programs operating a van for a particular population group. Many of these programs attempt to provide services to the elderly and disabled, and in fact, overlap territories in which they operate. However, it should be noted that overlap exists in some cases because some riders cannot be serviced by the coverage available. For example, if a community operates only passenger vans and a wheelchair accessible van is required, a nearby community may be the only alternative.

In order to develop a picture of the current status of rural transit in Arizona, interviews with public officials, current and former, were necessary. Although there is minimal information summarizing this topic, those involved in the execution of the 5311 program provided the best feedback concerning the actual state of rural transit in Arizona—from a number of perspectives. Officials from ADOT, rural transit systems, former coordinators, council of government administrators, and planners were approached to gain their perspectives. The questions were tailored to their specific areas.

Finally, there is always the ever-present philosophy of doing more with less. Rural transit has historically experienced diminishing funding while ridership demand has increased. As the report summarizes what could be described as inherent barriers to setting up and maintaining a rural transit system, a minimal analysis of current operations was included. The authors have attempted to classify rural public transportation systems in Arizona as either small, medium, or large, however, keeping in mind these are rural systems and not urban. Three key factors are used to determine the size of the RTS, population of the community, operational costs per year, and amount of one-way trips per year. For purposes of this study, a matrix is included that shows how the 3 factors listed above could correlate with how an RTS is categorized in terms of size.

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Operational Cost/year</u>	<u>One-way Trips/year</u>
SMALL:	less than 10,000	less than \$50,000	less than 10,000
MEDIUM:	10,001- 25,000	50,001 – 100,000	10,001 – 25,000
LARGE:	25,000 – 50,000	100,000 +	25,000 +

Variables that should be considered when for the aforementioned data is a community can be small, (less than 10,000 persons) but cost as much as a medium or large RTS because of the type of service (e.g. door-to-door, or demand-response versus a fixed or deviated route). Additionally, these are estimations to assist a potential municipality decide the costs associated with an RTS start-up depending on the size of their community and types of services dictated upon need and demand.

Another example for comparison is the town of Payson, Arizona. A study conducted for the City determined town funding (local match) requirements for operations and capital of approximately \$63,000 for the first six months of service in 2006 with almost 15,000 riders.



The second year (2007) would require approximately \$111,000 with no capital for 44,000 riders, a third year (2008) costs of approximately \$114,000 including capital costs of a vehicle for 74,000 riders and similar costs for the fourth year.<sup>13</sup> The study assumes that the town of Payson (pop. 14,300) best compares with other similar sized towns of Show Low and Kingman (see matrix). The totals for operations and administration are \$284,160 (\$236,800 for 7,400 service hours at \$32.00/hour) of which the FTA would contribute \$136,160. The cost to the Town of Payson would be \$107,744 not including fare-box recovery.

---

<sup>13</sup> Town of Payson: Transit Implementation Study Work Session , Feb. 2, 2005, figures provided by Ostrander Consulting

<b>Table 1: Current Listing of Providers of Rural Public Transit</b>					
<b>Town</b>	<b>Service Name</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Expense/year</b>	<b>Trips</b>	<b>Cost/Trip</b>
Bisbee	Bisbee Bus Service (BBS)	6,090	\$134,644	31,000	\$4.34
Bullhead City	Bullhead Area Transit System (BATS)	33,769	408,246	42,432	\$9.62
Coolidge	Cotton Express	7,274	79,476	24,856	\$3.20
Cottonwood	Cottonwood Area Transit System (CATS)	52,777	210,100	31,310	\$6.71
Hopi Community	Hopi Senom Transit System (HSTS)	8,852	108,886	7,000	\$ 15.56
Kingman	Kingman Area Regional Transit (KART)	40,000	263,379	38,000	\$6.93
Lake Havasu City	City Transit Services (CTS Public Transit)	44,922	1,250,113	128,358	\$9.74
Miami	Cobre Valley Community Transit – (CVCT)	12,991	74,730	12,879	\$5.80
Pima County DOT	Pima County Rural Transit	NA	524,061	53,665	\$9.77
Navajo Nation	Navajo Transit System (NTS)	180,765	856,190	81,415	\$ 10.52
Show Low, Pinetop, Lakeside	Four Seasons Connection Public Transit System (FSCPTS)	13,845	252,113	75,460	\$3.34
Sierra Vista	Sierra Vista Public Transit System (SVPTS)	37,000	546,244	115,902	\$4.71
Salt River Pima-Maricopa	Salt River-Pima Maricopa Transit- (SRTS)	6,405	367,324	40,083	\$9.16
Pima County	Pima County Transit System	NA	524,061	53,665	\$9.77
Sedona	Sedona Roadrunner	NA	NA	NA	NA
Community of Sunsites	Sunsites Transportation	2,726	113,425	2,021	\$ 56.12
Gila Bend – Phoenix	Valley Metro/Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Payson Area Public Transit Feasibility Study, p.7, Lima and Associates 2004					

## *Fundamental Issues for Rural Transit Systems*

Funding, coordination, and the lack of city council support seem to rank the highest as barriers to developing effective rural transit systems in Arizona and in other states. Although there is an established need for services in most communities, the demand often does not reflect the true need. As many towns and communities experience an increase in their elderly population, in turn, they confront an increased need for services—typically with minimal political support. Notably, many communities also lack the local resources and planning capabilities to create new transportation modes.

As for the planning issue, a report prepared for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) summarizes planning issues pertinent to Arizona’s rural areas. The *Rural Transportation Planning Workshops* report<sup>14</sup> discusses the following obstacles:

Funding – Federal transit funding, specifically 5311 funds, can be used for operating and capital expenditures, but as a condition of its use, each project is required to be part of a three-year transit plan. Since many Arizona [communities] (why only counties?) don’t have transit systems, much less transit plans, this money often goes to highways. ADOT has been trying unsuccessfully to generate more county interest in operating transit services. Numerous roadways are poorly or improperly classified; therefore limiting the amount and flexibility of transportation funding a region receives.

Additionally, nearly all the literature reviewed summarizes funding as the major barrier for setting up and maintaining effective RTS’s. The 1995 Statewide Transportation Needs Assessment indicated unfunded transportation needs of approximately \$9 billion covering Fiscal Years (FY) 1996-2005.<sup>15</sup> Their report concludes that funding is likely to decline or that the responsibility for funding may transfer to state and local governments – while there is no current “formal” movement within the state legislature to provide a “dedicated” state-funding source. Also, many communities qualify only for transportation enhancement funds (LTAF II), due to poor road classifications and the inability to make the local match required for use of federal funds. Further complicated by the difficulty for most regional governments to plan well for growth.

The Rural Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC) which was created to advocate for the transportation interests of small and rural areas, issued a report to the Arizona Legislature entitled *Rural Arizona’s State Legislative Priorities for Transportation*.<sup>16</sup> This report identified issues and outlines the RTAC’s efforts to address transportation. The RTAC addressed four key issues relative to public and rural transit:

1. Assessments that have been conducted by ADOT, the Governor’s Transportation Vision 21 Task Force and others have “resulted in the identification of needs far in excess of forecast in revenues for the next 10 to 20 years. The most recent estimate of needed revenues for transportation for the next 20 years is approximately \$20 billion in constant

---

<sup>14</sup> Rural & Small Community Transportation Planning, <http://www.planning.dot.gov/rural.asp> (accessed November 10, 2005).

<sup>15</sup> Interim Report of the Transportation Vision 21 Task Force, December 15, 1999, p. 16

<sup>16</sup> Rural Transportation Advocacy Council, <http://www.rtac.net/> (accessed November 10, 2005).

2000 dollars. The RTAC's response supported additional revenue streams and the implementation of new revenue sources. The council also commented: "rural communities and counties should not bear disproportionate impacts of any new revenue generating program."

2. RTAC recognized the earlier mentioned challenge of increased ridership and decreasing funding and acknowledged LTAF II (Local Transportation Assistance Funds) is the only state-provided and resourced financial support for transit operators. LTAF II received continued support from the RTAC and encouraged other programs to be identified.
3. Performance based planning and programming should be used to make the best use of limited transportation funds. The RTAC supported such a process and felt it would be of particular benefit to the development of an ADOT Long-Range Transportation Plan.
4. Another issue identified by these assessments was the need for data collection to be consistent and comparable throughout the state—especially if it is to assist the Performance Based Planning and Programming process. Again, RTAC supported efforts to collect and report transportation needs. It also supported the "use of existing organizations, such as councils of government and metropolitan planning organizations to collect and report this data to the state."

Rural transportation is funded primarily through federal funds, state funds that include lottery, local option excise taxes, and a few other funding sources. Not only is funding a major barrier, but current statutes and regulations also challenge rural transit systems. Transit funding comes with degrees of responsibility. For example, TEA-21<sup>17</sup> includes a requirement to coordinate services with others that also receive federal funding, at least to the extent possible. Moreover, some transportation funding is distributed according to population; thus, smaller communities receive little or no funding as compared to larger entities. Other funds are distributed competitively. At times, smaller towns receive an amount insufficient to effectively be used for transit. ADOT distributes roughly \$3.4 million per year for transit.

After the development of a system, there are also dozens of other expectations. Liability and risk must be analyzed. Safety materials and insurance must be provided. Customer expectations, demand for ridership, passenger amenities, and service quality must be considered. Public and leadership support must be gained. Financial costs beginning with identifying funding must be determined along with such other factors as fare box recovery, capital expenditures, and initial buy-in by the public.

Furthermore, there is the need to consult, cooperate, and coordinate with other local officials. Not only do municipalities work directly with ADOT since the agency is responsible for the 5311 program, but Arizona also has "four Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) including 2 TMA's, four rural Council of Governments (COG's), ten ADOT Engineering Districts, and six transportation board districts. ADOT allocates state funds to the COG's annually to fund development of Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP's), data

---

<sup>17</sup> Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

collection, and other transportation planning duties. For rural transportation planning, COG's serve as liaison between local governments and ADOT."<sup>18</sup>

A Transit Cooperative Research Program report entitled *Users' Manual for Assessing Service Delivery Systems for Rural Passenger Transportation*<sup>19</sup> summarized factors affecting rural transit: "The service models and planning methodologies that have been developed for transportation systems in urban areas do not apply to rural areas. The differences between successful rural and small urban transportation systems and their counterparts in large urban areas are enormous. What works well in large urban areas will not work well in rural or small urban areas because of:

- The geographical dispersion of origins and destinations,
- The overall low density of demand,
- The different characteristics of the transportation disadvantaged (or transit dependent),
- The nature of the trips demanded, and
- The lifestyles and characteristics of rural and small-urban residents.

Proportionally, rural areas include more persons who are aged, disabled, and low income than urban areas.<sup>20</sup> Despite the obvious need, no detailed methodology has ever been produced to assess service-delivery systems for rural passenger transportation systems.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, the actual operations of a rural transit system—personnel hiring and training, management, administrative and human resources requirements, vehicle maintenance and repair, facilities, duplication of services, resistance of and resistance to private operators, the logistics of running routes, and inconspicuous daily problems such as transportation software and traffic intricacies—must be considered.

The ADOT 5311 program administrator discussed some of his viewpoints on transit operations. "About half of the transit systems in our program appear to have a problem with low ridership, however when we take a look at the reasons, the answers are usually due to no or marginal marketing of their system." Furthermore, in terms of systems sharing resources, "I don't believe that there is a significant amount of overlap between the two programs (5310 and 5311). I do believe that there is a reluctance to share services, but mostly because of liability issues and vehicle ownership, and sometimes because of scheduling problems. Some employees end up pulling double shifts or responsibilities. Managers sometimes have to drive or dispatch."<sup>22</sup>

Jim Balda was the transportation coordinator for Coconino County Community Services for over 20 years when Flagstaff was still considered rural. He also guided the system during its

---

<sup>18</sup> National Association of Developmental Organizations, NADO Research Foundation Regional Transportation Online Resource Center, online article, 12/17/2002, at <http://www.nado.org/rtoc/library/az.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 6 *Users' Manual for Assessing Service-Delivery Systems for Rural Passenger Transportation*, 1995.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Sam Chavez, 2002

transition from a rural system to an urban system. In 1991, the Flagstaff system was recognized by ADOT as one of the top five transit systems of its size. ADOT also determined Flagstaff's RTS as *the* pilot project. During an interview with Mr. Balda, much of the developmental and operational challenges were confirmed. His contention is that in small communities there is little or no governmental support, either in terms of money or accepting liability. Ridership was apparent, but there was more need rather than demand. Mr. Balda's observation is that many people in Flagstaff were not aware of the existence of a public transit system. Improvements in the system were scarce when the system was under the 5311 program, and during the application for funding competition was high while the availability for funds was low. Also, at times, the application process seemed burdensome.

The transit system in Flagstaff fared differently however, during the transition to urban status. There was more money and more city involvement. People seemed to know more about its existence and the demand for better quality and quantity of service increased.

### *Fundamental Issues for Tribal Rural Transit Systems*

Most of the tribes have completed transportation plans and are at differing levels of progress in identifying transit needs. Their ability to develop and implement these plans begins with the affordability of manpower to effectively carry out the "transit processes." According to Donald Sneed, senior planner/tribal coordinator with ADOT-TPD, the Navajo Nation, the Salt River Indian Community, and the Gila River Indian Community have developed and established a department of transportation. Some of these tribes are already operating transit systems (see the current systems matrix listed previously). Others are put together staff to manage these programs.

As with many RTS's, participation, coordination, and barriers that are inherent with operating these systems are experienced by the tribes in Arizona as well; with the addition of a few other complexities. For example, knowledge of transit programs and funding is limited. Furthermore, funding programs, either state or federal may not explicitly state that "tribal governments' are eligible entities since they are not categorized as local governments, but instead are sovereign nations. In addition, some tribes may feel that programs could adversely affect tribal sovereignty. Currently, and according to Mr. Sneed, tribes have increased their efforts to tap into federal, state and additional resources through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). However, the amounts earmarked for transit specifically are limited. Moreover, Mr. Sneed has experienced from the tribes that they feel that they are not received their share of state services even though they contribute to the state tax base. It seems that is worth the extra effort to pursue funding through non-tribal programs.

Another concern is that state transit policies and programs should emphasize government-to-government relationships that acknowledge tribal sovereignty and the "diversity of tribal needs." Also, how each tribe operates (since they are sovereign) should also be considered to carry out coordination. Tribal interaction with MPO's and COG's is limited due to their voting requirements and inter-jurisdictional issues. Much of the time, this is a requirement as part of the process to receive funding. A surprising issue that is probably very simple, but frequently overlooked is that some tribal governments are not even provided ample notice of

state and federal announcements or deadlines. Some of these tribes are located in remote regions of the state and face additional expenses in travel, especially for project implementation and planning for consultants. Tribes also experience high turnover rates with their own staff, and while the Navajo, Gila River and Salt River have established DOT's of their own, others must use BIA staff.

Perhaps the most glaring setback that the reservations face is the necessity to upgrade their roads before effective transit can take place. Not only is there large amounts of area to cover and homes are generally isolated, but wear and tear on transit vehicles and road maintenance on deteriorated roads is a barrier. Funding from the BIA's Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) program is limited and roads are not properly maintained and therefore, tribes tend to re-direct their efforts towards this priority before transit.

Finally, these issues must hit home to the members of the community. Unless it affects people directly, there is little public involvement, or it ranges widely from tribe to tribe, issue to issue, and of course, personal preferences.

ADOT is working effectively with the tribes to improved many facets of collaboration. Mr. Sneed points evidence of this with the passage of TEA-21 and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991. "Specifically, there are 10 strategies developed and initiated by ADOT-TPD to improve planning and coordination and to increase tribal communication between the Arizona Indian tribes and department officials. These strategies take into consideration transit and all other modes of transportation."

On January 17, 2002, a briefing paper by the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. issued a statement and recommendations concerning the need for more access to Local Transportation Assistance Funds (LTAF), specifically, LTAF II program funds. This would assist in planning, start up and operations of transit in Indian communities. The paper recommended that state laws should be amended to provide the Tribes with options to apply for LTAF II funding directly and furthermore, for the purpose of initiating and maintaining transit systems on tribal lands. The paper's explanation of LTAF I and LTAF II shows the difficulties the tribes face and are listed below:<sup>23</sup>

#### LTAF I

LTAF, funded from the state lottery, provided cities and towns, based on population, up to \$23 million, for public transportation and transportation purposes. ADOT was not authorized to administer the funds.

#### LTAF II

In 1998, House Bill 2565 passed to provide incorporated cities and towns, as well as counties, additional statewide transit and transportation funding from the lottery, instant bingo game and vehicle license tax monies. ADOT was authorized to administer the funds.

---

<sup>23</sup> Briefing Paper, Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc., January 17, 2002

In 2000, State Bill 1556 amended LTAF II to require that cities, towns, and counties that receive \$2500 or more of LTAF II funds annually must use the funding for public transportation, and cities, towns, counties, and metropolitan planning organizations were provided the option to enter into intergovernmental agreements with Native American tribal governments to fund existing public transportation provided by tribal governments.

The design of the current LTAF II program does not sufficiently address the mobility needs identified by the tribal governments. Three of 21 tribes have existing public transportation systems, and operational monies are needed to sustain current transit services. However, the majority of tribal governments do not have existing public transportation systems to provide members access to services on or near the reservation. These tribes rely heavily on individual tribal programs to create mobility solutions for specific service populations.

The challenge of providing transit options for rural and tribal community members is enormous due to a variety of social and economic issues. The start-up and maintenance costs for transit systems in isolated areas are expensive, yet transportation is a basic necessity for rural citizens. Transit funding, such as LTAF is needed by tribes to complete transit-planning studies and develop grants to establish public transit systems on tribal lands.

### *Best Practices*

To help summarize the literature review earlier, it would be helpful to add what the prevailing literature has to say about some of the best practices in the field. Operating a rural transit system requires adherence to proven applications such as these.

Before beginning to devise a program that is right for a community, the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) recommends defining agency goals and objectives.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, a needs assessment must be conducted and the services defined. Try to determine what transportation needs are not being met. Determine what kind of routes should be used, such as fixed, deviated, or demand response, including the type of vehicle that would be most suitable for operations. They suggest calling the RTAP Transit Hotline at (800) 527-8279 for more information on common types of transit vehicles and on writing vehicle specifications. This number can also be used to access the TransNet peer network, which offers peer assistance in a variety of areas.

Next, research what kind and what level of service the community will be able to afford. The article<sup>25</sup> summarizes some of the factors influencing these costs:

- Prevailing wages in a community, and the extent to which full-time, part-time or volunteer personnel are utilized.
- Service mode, such as fixed-route vs. demand-response.
- The distances system vehicles will have to travel.

---

<sup>24</sup> “Rural Transit Service Design and Scheduling,” Technical Assistance Brief 12, by Anna M. Nalevenko

<sup>25</sup> Ibid



- The costs of purchasing and maintaining these vehicles.
- Insurance.
- The number of days and hours of operation each week.
- Local support or commitment.

It is at this point during the calculation of determining types of routes that coordination will play a key factor. Furthermore, determine possible partners such as taxi companies, other transit or special needs transportation providers, private contractors, volunteer and human services organizations, carpooling, vanpooling, local community colleges and/or universities, etc. Determine who can help.

Lastly, the type of service chosen will dictate when the vehicle will operate and essentially the type of scheduling software to be used. The options range from manual scheduling to a sophisticated computerized system that provides billing and automatic trip scheduling options. One of the measurements of a system's success is the cost per passenger mile. The goal of cost-effectiveness is best reached by keeping administrative and operating costs down and by the efficient use of all available vehicles when scheduling services.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps one of the best ways to address cost effectiveness is to proactively engage in the coordination of transit services with other providers. However, coordination has often been perceived as an ineffective strategy for a variety of reasons depending on the community, or even simply perceived as "prohibited." The fact is that much research has been done on making coordination work. Furthermore, "it is now clear that many coordination efforts have been slowed or halted by perceived rather than actual barriers."<sup>27</sup> Many of these barriers stemmed from the "categorical nature" of federal programs and have either been perceived as a barrier to coordination, or have already been removed after substantial investigation of the issues— "all of these hindrances or challenges have been addressed and resolved in one community or another."<sup>28</sup> Again, research the literature in the area of coordination to address particular concerns when it comes to coordination and how to clear the incompatibility. This study contains several references to articles, books, and Transportation Research Board/TCRP reports that address the best practices for coordination specifically from the FTA.

The FTA financial assistance may be used for capital and administrative expenses, with a federal share of 80 percent, and for operating expenses, with a federal share of 50 percent. The state may use up to 15 percent of its apportionment for program administration, planning and technical assistance, with no local match required. Coordination with other federally assisted transportation services is encouraged, and income received through purchase of service contracts with human service agencies may be used as local match."<sup>29</sup>

In another brief published by the American Indian Disability Technical Assistance Center, one of the suggestions was to insist that tribes make a concerted effort to make coordination

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

<sup>27</sup> "Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services," TCRP Report 101, Transit Cooperative Research Program

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

<sup>29</sup> FTA.org Non-urbanized Area Formula Program (49 U.S.C. § 5311)

mandatory when “creating fleet options or public transit systems in their communities. An example of such coordination would be a nonprofit tribal organization that repairs and maintains automobiles, and also runs a taxi service from rural homes to health clinics or stores.”<sup>30</sup> This article also noted that perceived issues “keep people and agencies from joining forces.” It noted that “many program personnel believe that their equipment or funding can only be used for their clients. This is rarely true (Community Transportation Association, 1995).”<sup>31</sup>

Another CTAA brief recommends that agencies set goals that are easily definable and quantifiable. Set a mission or purpose into place that essentially summarizes the intent of the agency. Its services should be towards a specific goal – and with this set in place, it is easier to take on the next step: selecting proper performance measures. Rural transit system’s will want to know how the service is performing; “the how many, when, to whom, at what cost, why and where.”<sup>32</sup> There will be much data to gather in order to interpret the results and the best resources for this are drivers’ logs or trip sheets. Some of the system performances that should be measured are:

1. Cost per operating hour.
2. Cost per passenger.
3. Cost per passenger mile.
4. Cost per operating mile.
5. Cost per vehicle.
6. Average passengers per operating hour.
7. Average miles per operating hour.
8. Average miles per vehicle.
9. Average miles per passenger.
10. Average miles per gallon.

---

<sup>30</sup> “Tribal Transportation: Barriers and Solutions,” Brief #5, American Indian Disability Technical Assistance Center, Dec. 2002

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> “Performance Evaluation for Rural Transit Systems,” Brief#5, Scott Kosky, Community Transportation Association

In terms of operating a transit system, below is a sample provided by the survey respondents. These are data collected by the RTS for the month of August 2003 and will assist in providing an example to better a system's performance.

	<u>August 2003</u>
Passenger Trips	1,951
Revenue Miles	4,847
Deadhead Miles	317
Total Miles	5,164
Vehicle Service Hrs.	405
Cost/Passenger Trip	\$ 3.62
Cost/Revenue Mile	\$ 1.46
Cost/Service Hr.	\$ 7.43
Passengers/Revenue Mile	0.4

In 2003, the ridership of this agency was 34,692 trips with net operating costs of approximately \$212,000. Fuel, oil, tires, parts, and maintenance alone accounted for a little more than \$45,000; the balance was spent on salaries and benefits, administrative expenses, insurance and equipment. As mentioned earlier, if administrative costs are kept down, and the costs associated with the operation of the route, which is at least somewhat of a controllable cost, then the chances of operating much more efficiently are greater.

Another example:

	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>% Change 96 to 01</b>
<b>Passenger Trips</b>	9,525	13,583	19,244	24,856	26,001	29,322	208%
<b>Total Project Miles</b>	24,166	31,123	41,741	37,148	31,638	54,373	125%
<b>Vehicle Service Hours</b>	1,788	2,633	3,700	3,032	3,247	3,517	97%
<b>Cost/Passenger Trip</b>	4.37	5.16	4.00	3.22	3.42	3.90	-12%
<b>Passenger/Population</b>	0.62	0.88	1.25	1.61	1.68	1.90	206%

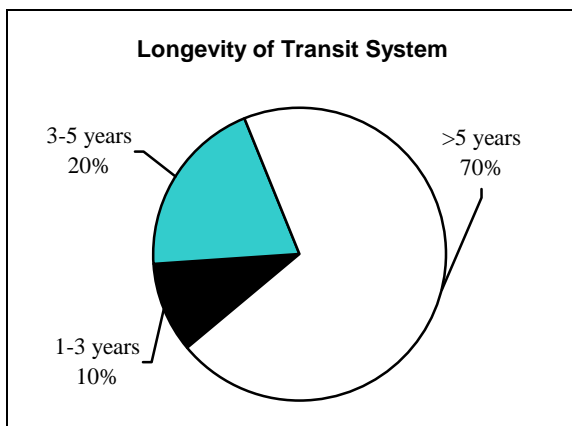
Here is documentation showing the increase in ridership on an annual basis, the amount of projected miles that agency vehicles must cover, and service time. In addition, notice that the cost/passenger trip varies, but an argument can be made that it is dropping. Considering that most of the respondents of the survey continued to show concern about increasing ridership while experiencing decreasing funding, the need for obtaining solid and accurate data to manage RTS is critical.



## PART II: REVIEWING THE SURVEY RESULTS

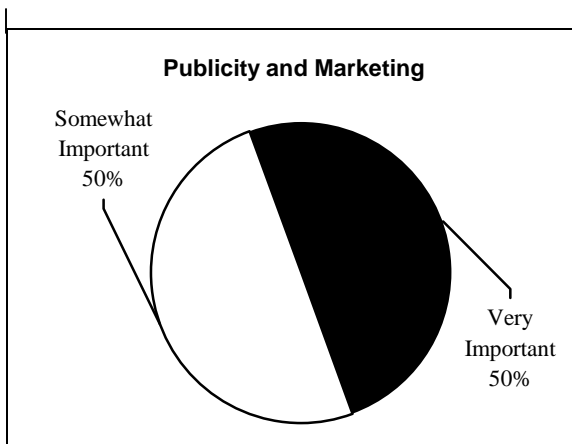
The survey begins by asking how long the respondents had a transit system in place (a copy of the original survey has been provided in Appendix I). All respondents replied that they had some type of system in place for at least one year — almost three-quarters of those surveyed had a system for more than five years. The survey was written to reflect answers of those that never had a system, were in the process of creating one, or that do not have one currently, but did at one time.

To begin, figure 1, below, shows that the majority of respondents from the survey were from a transit system more than five years old. Only one system participating in the survey was less than one year old. As a result, the participating agencies are experienced in the nuances of the changing needs of a rural transit system.



**Figure 1.**

In conducting the survey, we want to know the most important factors that contributed to the development of an RTS, and those factors that were not. On a few occasions, the authors were surprised by the results of a particular question, such as 100 percent of the respondents rating that publicity and marketing are very or somewhat important, 70 percent and 30 percent respectively. Most of the time, however, the results matched directly with the current knowledge within the field.



**Figure 2.**

As part of the analysis from the findings of the survey, two critical factors were chosen for discussion: need and demand. Two particular subjects, however, need and funding continued to be the most prevalent or underlying theme to all of the participants — they are the most pressing issues affecting how their community operated transit.

### *The Importance of Identifying Need: The Transit Dependent Population*

The survey sent to rural transit providers indicated that the two most influential factors that had or would have the greatest impact in the development a transit system are the public and available money. The public was necessary in that it required the service, and in most cases, this was evident by the demand generated within the community. The highest rated factor for the creation of an RTS is the requirement of having a transit dependent population. A less inferred proposition is that the need has always been there, and is finally realized at its fullest after the service is in place and transit operators demonstrate and report the benefit to the public.

The survey also asked, “What was or would be the most important factor in developing your community’s transit system?” Respondents answered 40 percent for public need and 50 percent for both need and demand. Political interests scored a mere 10 percent. These were two separate questions that revealed that when it came time to start a transit system, the public, its perceived need or stated demand, and funding were the driving factors to developing an RTS.

As suggested by the literature review earlier, there is a distinct difference between need and demand. But how are each perceived? In the survey, the two differentiated between, and as a result, the respondents were asked to elaborate on each even after they completed specific questions regarding both need and demand. On question 20, need was defined as: “an estimate of transit trips needed annually and is typically based on demographic characteristics regardless of actual service levels. Transit needs are present whether or not passenger transportation is offered.” On the next question, 21, transit demand was defined as: “the number of trips that will be taken when a given capacity of passenger transportation is presented.”

One of the RTS providers reported that they can see the need for transit in their area: “Our riders are the people who have no vehicle, can no longer drive due to health reasons, or just don’t or haven’t driven. Our residents need transportation to grocery shop, visit doctors, pharmacies or to enjoy recreation. We keep passenger logs that show us where they need to go and how many we transport every year.”

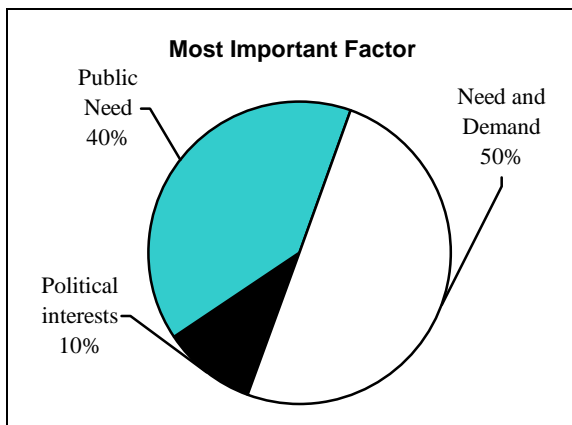
Providers of transit recognize firsthand how need is the driving force in providing transportation for riders that require it. Herein lies the distinction between need and demand, as another provider’s insight details, “[T]ransit need is measured in the volume of unfulfilled transit requests. Requests are unfulfilled due to: limitations of vehicle passenger capacity/wheelchair capacity; limitations of route service and service hours; inability to meet customer demands, i.e. charter limitations; city limits boundaries, and hours of operation.”

Furthermore, some providers stated that demand for their service was increased as people moved into their community, for the reason that public transportation was being offered. One of the logistical problems with providing transportation to the public is that boundaries of service must be drawn at some particular point. However, in providing service in rural or outlying areas, the need is spread throughout, making efficient routes unattainable. Furthermore, an operation will be continually criticized for not providing service outside the determined boundaries.

Transit for those in need was also further complicated by the mandate of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This is one of those mandates that contributed heavily to the inefficiency of transit. The ADA affected vehicle plans and routes, and more importantly, the need did not always translate into projected ridership or frequency of service. This became increasingly frustrating for officials or transit proponents who attempted to begin an RTS in their community, but found it could not be justified.

In providing service to those that really need it, one must consider who the actual customers are, and tailor the service to fulfill those needs. The reality is, most of customers are elderly or disabled to the point that they cannot operate a vehicle safely, no matter how much they desire to. These same customers neither want to give up their independence nor desire to remain secluded within their homes. Therefore the service must be tailored to meet their needs, such as door-to-door pick-up instead of curbside cooperation.

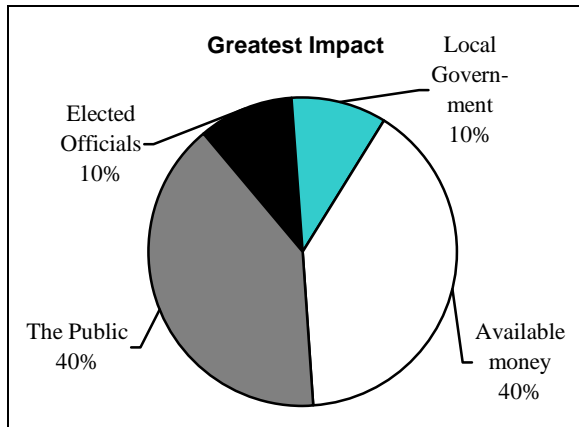
Perhaps one of the persuasive arguments against the development of a new system is to borrow and modify from the old adage: “If we build it, will they use it?”



**Figure 3.**

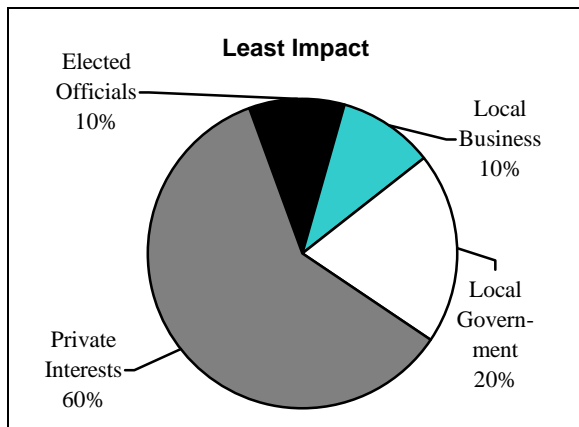
When asked about the most important factor in developing their transit system, half responded that both need and demand were the most important factors. Additionally, four respondents said that need alone was the most important fact in developing their system. Clearly, the need for a rural transit system is an important factor when an agency considers whether or not to develop a transit system.

The survey also asked respondents about what group or factor had the greatest impact on the development of their system. The two groups or factor that had the greatest impact were the public and the availability of money or state funding. Elected officials and local government were also cited by one agency apiece as having had an impact.



**Figure 4.**

As a follow up to the previous question, respondents were asked to give their opinion on the group or factor with the least impact on the development of their transit system. Figure 5 shows that a majority of respondents felt that private interests had the least impact. Other respondents cited local government, local business, or elected officials as having had the least impact.



**Figure 5.**

When asked about the importance of publicity and marketing in the development and/or the maintenance of their system, all agencies said that it was important. Half of the respondents felt that publicity and marketing was “very important to the development or maintenance of their rural transit system.”

Respondents were also asked to rate the importance of seven factors in the creation of their community transit system. According to the respondents to this survey, the most important factor was the transit-dependent population and their projected demand or need for service.



The ability to receive funding from ADOT and citizen participation/support were a close second and third, respectively. The ability to connect with other modes of transportation received much less support than the other factors respondents were asked to rank.

**Table 3. Important Factors to the creation of a Rural Transit System**

Rank	Factor
1.	Transit dependent population
2.	Ability to receive funding from ADOT
3.	Citizen participation/support
4.	Political support
5.	Expert or technical help
6.	Fare box recovery rate
7.	Ability to connect with other modes of transportation

*Farebox Recovery*

When asked to rank the importance of fare box recovery, another surprising fact arose. Twenty percent listed this particular funding source as most important in comparison to receiving funding from ADOT or political support (see question six). This may very well document the importance of accumulating some kind of revenue instead of assuming rural transit to be entirely subsidized (for the most part, transit, and especially paratransit is heavily subsidized). Another 30 percent of respondents also rated fare box recovery as somewhat important or somewhat unimportant.

Table 4, below, was compiled from survey questions 7 through 11. In this series of questions, the participating agencies rated a series of stakeholders for their cooperation and contribution to the creation of rural transit in their community. The responses were compiled to reveal their overall rating. The contribution or cooperation of public officials, public participation, and ADOT all received ratings of “very important.” Expert assistance was rated as “somewhat important” to the process. The contribution and cooperation of employers or businesses was considered to be “somewhat unimportant” to the process of creating a rural transit system.

**Table 4. Stakeholder contribution to the creation of a transit system**

Rank	Rating	Service
1.	Very Important	Public officials
2.	Very Important	Public participation
3.	Very Important	ADOT
4.	Somewhat Important	Expert assistance
5.	Somewhat Unimportant	Employers or business

In order to ensure that respondents had the opportunity to provide answers that may not have been included in answer sets that were provided for them, the survey included opportunities for survey respondents to answer questions in their own words. Table 5, below, shows that, in the view of survey respondents, funding is the top barrier to achieving and/or maintaining

a functional and effective transit system. While political support emerged as the second barrier, it was a distant second. Other issues that were mentioned included: fares in economically impoverished communities, fare box recover rate, intergovernmental boundaries and their effect on routes, driver issues, infrastructure, climate, and public involvement.

Rank	Factor
1.	Funding
2.	Political support

## FUNDING

Funding was an equally explosive issue with any endeavor; public or private, funding is always at the center of what could be ailing any situation. But in this study, it was known that funding would be an issue — it has always been, and it is common knowledge within the industry. In fact, in speaking with a private vendor, he stated that the keys to rural public transportation were twofold: there is an absence of leadership for transit at the state level and there is an absence of a permanent funding source. As part of the research, the authors also wanted to provide information concerning how funding, and lack of funding affected the enterprise of transit—indirectly. For example, how does the pursuit of funding affect the planning of transportation services? Or more precisely, how does one operate a system on a day-to-day basis without knowing where or if money will be available in the next fiscal year? Therefore, some of the questions were written to gain the most amount of information concerning funding and respondents were given an opportunity to expand with their own comments. These comments were extremely helpful to gain more of an understanding of how small rural transit systems in Arizona operated, what they experienced, and how they managed to get by.

Ninety percent of the survey respondents that operated a transit system for more than three years stated that the factors that had the greatest impact on the development of their transit system were public need and available funding (40 percent each). Sixty percent said private interests had the least impact on the development. Public need and demand was tied with funding as the most important or “critical” factor in the development of a community’s transit system. Although this is no small surprise, funding as a critical factor is spread among several key issues.

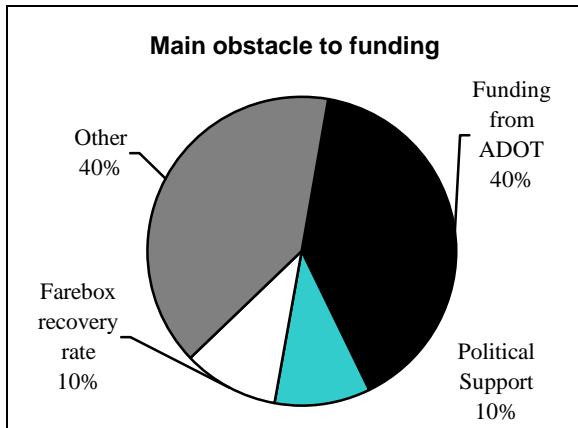
### *Funding and ADOT*

The hardest part of developing or operating a rural transit system is dealing with ADOT. At least, that is the perception of all the respondents, local officials, and private vendors the researchers have spoken to. From the application process to actually putting the money to use, if any is received. Obtaining money from ADOT could be the most unattractive piece to being in the business of transportation. One respondent wrote that they would continue to pursue 5311 grant funding (rural transit), county funding, as well as ADOT funding if it ever became available.

The ability to receive funding from ADOT accounted for 50 percent and 21 percent of the most important and somewhat important factors, respectively, in the creation or potential creation of a transit system. Perhaps a more telling sign—20 percent listed it as the least important. Every provider looks to ADOT for expertise, advice, and compliance in nearly any transit related question they may have. But when it came to funding, all expressed in one way or another that attaining or applying for funds from ADOT was difficult to say the least. As more people become familiar with the transit system, there is increased demand without an increase in funding. Many of the respondents of the survey generally felt that funding is a real problem. Budgets are continually being cut at the local/regional level while their communities continue to grow without transit growing.

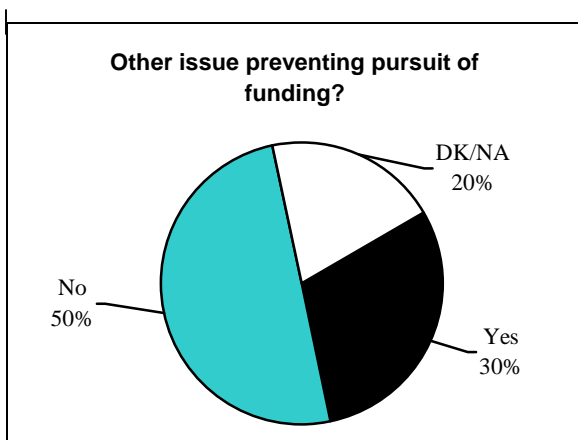
ADOT as a source for those that operate rural transit, or are interested in more information to develop one, is the basis for great information and frustration. The frustration is rooted in proper funding: “The Bullhead City Area Transit System’s capacity issues exceeded the demand. As a result, the passengers feel that BATS is not able to provide transportation in a timely and efficient manner. When ADOT plans an additional rural transit system area, ADOT should try to fund the rural transit agency as close to demand as possible. It has been a struggle to provide timely transit with the limited funding received during the first three years of operation. The Bullhead Area Transit System has a fiscally constrained budget trying to keep up with demand for transportation services.”

In speaking with many of those that work directly in the transit field, especially vendors, the reality of such limited funding for so many potential RTS’s did not add up. Essentially, \$2 million to go around was not enough, and is perhaps the most detrimental factor for communities to not begin such a project. It is easier for citizens to be told that there isn’t enough money for such an expensive proposition, rather than to become involved in a money-losing situation. And since ADOT with federal funding is the primary source for funding and expert information, the evidence is clear that developing a rural transit system in this particular town is out of the question. This is especially true since there aren’t many other contributors. On question seven, the survey asked, “How important has the cooperation and or contribution of major employers or businesses in you community been to the creation or push for a transit system? (for example: Walmart, Target, etc.)” The answers were as diverse as there are small towns in Arizona. Ten percent listed this answer as very important, 30 percent as somewhat important, another 30 percent as somewhat unimportant, 20 percent as not at all important, and 10 percent as didn’t know or were unsure.



**Figure 6.**

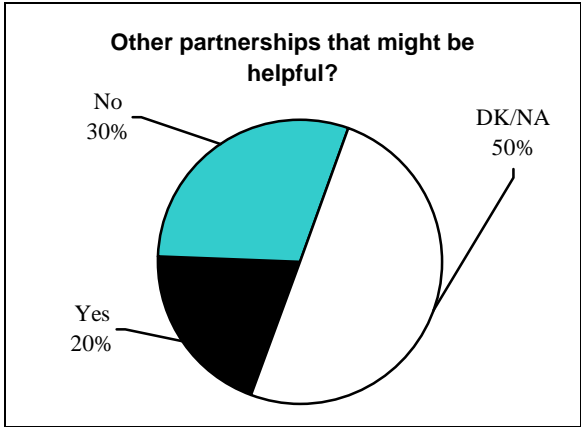
The survey also addressed the main obstacle to funding in communities where need for transit still exists. The most cited obstacle to funding was the ability to receive funding from ADOT. Political support and the fare box recovery rate were also mentioned as obstacles. One agency cited the strains that were being put on their transit system as demand was growing faster than the availability of funding. Another agency cited a lack of a tax base as an obstacle to funding. The availability of grant match monies was also mentioned.



**Figure 7.**

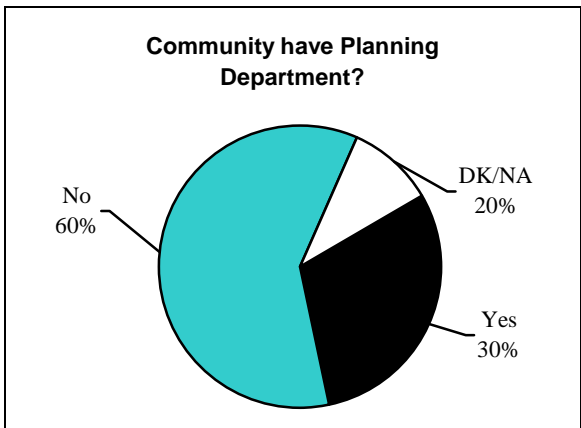
The survey reported also about other issues that prevent communities from pursuing transit system funding. Three respondents stated that there were other issues. Two respondents cited difficulty with finding grant match monies. The third agency discussed difficulties with finding funding sources in unincorporated regions.

When asked whether there were any partnerships that might help their community to pursue funding or to combine resources, the majority of agencies either answered “no” or “don’t know.” The two agencies that did answer “yes,” did not provide any specific examples.



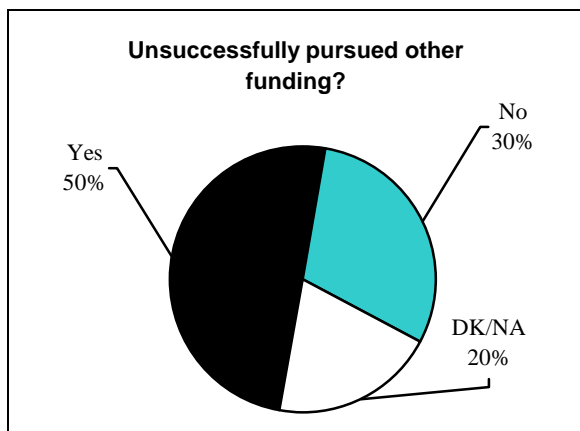
**Figure 8.**

Because planning is so important to the creation and maintenance of a transit system, agencies were asked whether their community had a planning department and what role planning played in the development of their system. Of the two departments that have planning capabilities, the planning was done by a separate division.



**Figure 9.**

Half the agencies surveyed had pursued other funding unsuccessfully. These agencies had pursued funding with cities, counties, local businesses, and at the congressional level.



**Figure 10.**

### *Availability of Funding*

One hundred percent of respondents stated they would continue to pursue transit in the future. In the next question, when asked if they would be able to provide information concerning how to obtain transit funding or support (informational), only 60 percent stated yes, 20 percent stated no, and the remainder spread evenly among responses of didn't know, not applicable or no answer.

Fifty percent said that they had pursued other sources of funding unsuccessfully.

The limited amount of available funding is a major deterrent when a community decides to pursue funding. As mentioned in the literature, there are sources that can be used for funding transit, primarily from federal highway funds; but these funds are competitive and limited. Furthermore, even though Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds can be flexed for transit, as ADOT has done in the past, other categories of funding cannot be used for transit.

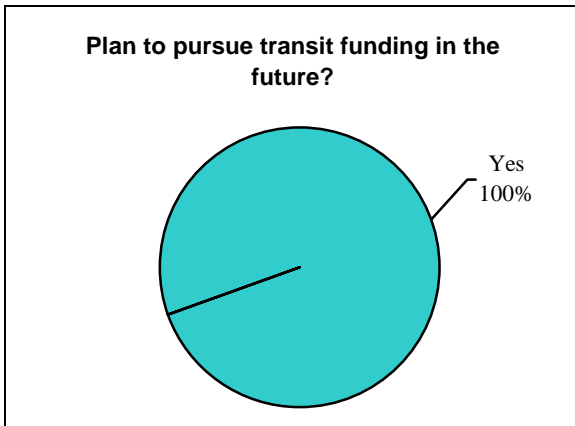
### *Matching Funds*

Some of the most important responses revolved around the quantity of funds. Many providers experienced increased demand while they say funding become harder to attain. With budgets being continually cut at all levels, many RTS's have to do more with less. Several providers discussed matching funds, with one provider stating, "even if state or federal funding is available, it is often difficult to come up with a local match."

When asked on the survey, "are there any existing partnerships or other transit systems that might help your community pursue funding or combine resources?" only 20 percent responded with a "yes," 30 percent said "no," and 40 percent said "don't know" or were unsure. While operating such a heavily subsidized program, more than 70 percent were going it alone, "[E]ven if state or federal funding is available, it is often difficult to come up with a local match." During three years of observations, interviews, and inquiries, nearly all of Arizona's rural transit providers seemed "unconnected." As part of the survey, question 13 asked if there were other issues that prevented their community from pursuing transit system

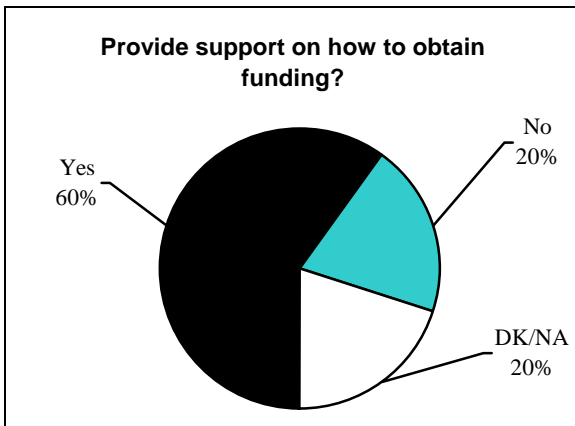
funding. Thirty percent replied yes, with comments attributed to the difficulty of matching funds or detachment; “since we are not incorporated, the only places available to us are ADOT and Cochise County.” Some private individuals tried to begin their own local routes, only to close up later.

When asked whether the agency had plans to pursue transit funding in the future, all of the agencies answered “yes.” One agency commented that it would continue to pursue 5311 funding, county funding, and ADOT funding if it ever became available.



**Figure 11.**

Respondents were also asked whether they would provide others with information on how to obtain transit funding or support. A majority of agencies answered “yes,” but one added the caveat that it would be “within the limits of their experience.”



**Figure 12.**

### *Conclusions and Findings*

Public participation, knowledge of need and demand, funding and sharing costs, and the support from local officials and experts such as ADOT officials are the key elements required for a successful RTS. Much of this is easier said than done. But if a community is seriously considering the creation of a rural transit system, a needs assessment is essential.

Determining the actual need can predict what the service levels will be, and provide sound justification for such an undertaking. The likelihood is that there is a tremendous need, even if there is no evidence of demand. Secondly, the size and scope of the operation can be as small or as large as necessary to meet the demand. For example, as in the case of Page, Arizona, there is only one special needs van to transport the elderly at the senior center. When there is more demand, and a needs assessment is completed, this may change. However, each situation is different, and each community has a personality of its own. The underlying reality factor is: any developed or undeveloped area cannot depend on the automobile alone. Judging by the rate of an aging population and the trend of rising petroleum and other costs, there will always be a need for some level of transit service. Even if it may be a declining industry, technology and unforeseen demand may sustain transit through uncertain times.

In terms of funding, having an actual understanding of the true costs in operating a rural transit system is the greatest rectifiable detriment to development of and sustainability of an effective operation. Transit, in general, especially rural transit, is heavily subsidized. In all reality, ADOT can only distribute about \$2 million annually for transit. Since funding distribution is based on population, the smaller the town, the less it will receive. In effect, it is impossible to begin developing a rural transit system on just a few hundred or even thousand dollars. Transit does not make money and therefore it requires a substantial subsidy from taxpayers. Part of knowing how to keep costs low is to coordinate with other adjacent RTS's. Interestingly enough, 50 percent of respondents rated the ability to connect with other modes of transportation as least important. The other 50 percent were evenly divided across the spectrum, from least important to most — about 10 percent each. More disturbingly, after speaking with many operators of transit, especially in densely populated regions of the state such as the Verde Valley, most of the feedback concerning partnering with neighboring agencies is that it simply hasn't been done; and there was no drive or momentum to do so. As discussed earlier, this may be due to scheduling problems, ownership of vehicles or liability, or simply, that it is easier to go at it alone than to coordinate with others. However, considering the complexities and heavy cost of transit, effort should be put forth to offset many of these difficulties by partnering with another RTS. In today's society, there are hardly any limits on how we can communicate. Therefore, there are hardly any justifications for not coordinating transit with fellow neighbors.

As part of the costs associated with transit, one must also consider insurance liabilities and the added cost of equipment required for those with disabilities, such as wheelchair accessible vehicles. This requires more training for staff as well and more available routes that are more accessible to this kind of clientele. In speaking with many officials familiar with transit, most if not all said that the costs associated with transit and special needs transit were underestimated. Its unfortunate that measuring success depends partly on measuring the cost per passenger mile — but that is a realistic and necessary objective in order to operate continuously and as efficiently as possible.

There were also issues with planning. Given the following factors: rapid population growth and increase in aging population, the increased demand for transit or other transportation services, limited or nonexistent growth in funding, and limited local resources, all lead to an



environment of competitive interests for the same limited amount of funds. This makes rural transit an uninviting project not seemingly worth the trouble. Given that most of the literature in the field and the perception from transit providers is that transit funding will continue to decline, it comes as no surprise that many feel that transit is a temporary fix at best. Although, at the same time, the awareness is that transit is a viable solution.



### **PART III: INFORMATION AND WHERE TO GET IT**

Besides ADOT or other states' Department of Transportation, most people do not know where to get information if they are interested in creating a transit system. There is also a wealth of information available through the U.S. Department of Transportation and other agencies such as the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) that administers the 5310 and 5311 programs, and the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) that mostly conducts research and writes reports. There is more information and more resources are now available, especially with the advent of the Internet.

Perhaps one of the best places to start is contacting the nearest town that is operating a rural transit system. They are a great source of information and initial contacts. In fact, they may become partners in providing transportation in neighboring areas. Its unfortunate however, that partnering with another agency or an adjacent town is not done more often. As the survey showed, fifty percent of the respondents rated the ability to connect with other modes of transportation as least important. What must be kept in mind is that the ability to reach out and share information and resources is especially critical for not only established transit operations, but those looking to begin the development of any kind of transportation business – if even as an initial investigation.

Aside from contacting neighboring communities, there are many agencies that have researched transit and can provide competent information. Listed below are just a few of the agencies, articles, or regulations governing transit that were helpful in completing this study. In addition, we have had the good fortune of being supplied material directly related to the operation of a rural transit system. Attached to this study is information concerning applications and other issues supplied by the city of Coolidge's Cotton Express transit system that should help the reader understand the day-to-day workings of an RTS. Also provided by ADOT is how to get information on application requirements for a 5311 program.

#### *More Places to Look*

The Community Transportation Association of America is a non-profit policy research organization that had the most accessible information on transit development and finance. The CTAA can also provide technical assistance to smaller RTS's and rural communities that seek to improve or develop a system. There is a very good introductory article that provides primary information for those unfamiliar with types of rural systems such as fixed route, route-deviation, and demand response. The technical assistance article also discusses how to design and effective system, the ingredients of a needs assessment, vehicles, financial considerations, scheduling, and is computerization necessary. This article can be found at <http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/rtap/pubs/ta/service.shtml>

The *Transportation Research Record* is a journal published by the Transportation Research Board. Record number 1791<sup>33</sup> provides information on estimating fare-paying customers and annual net operating revenue and other vital data on pages 74,75, 76, and 77. Another good

---

<sup>33</sup> Lenahan O'Connell, Bruce Siria, and Ted Grossardt, "Bringing Fixed-Route Transit Service to Small Cities and Towns," *Transportation Research Record* 1791.

resource for understanding transit costs is provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Urban Mass Transportation Administration in a handbook called *Fully Allocated Cost Analysis – Guidelines for Public Transit Providers*<sup>34</sup>. It covers subjects from a hypothetical transit organizational structure, to calculating unit costs and a multi-use facility for the transit system.

For coordination improvement, *A Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services – Final Report October 1991*<sup>35</sup> can be found at a library as prepared for the Ohio Department of Transportation and published by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Another report was written in June of 1990 titled *Coordination of Rural Public Transportation services in Three Southeastern States*<sup>36</sup> provides a review of the literature and several case studies. Another good resource is “Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services,” TCRP Report 101, Transit Cooperative Research Program.<sup>37</sup>

Another article, “Performance Evaluation for Rural Transit Systems,” by Scott Kosky can be found at <http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/rtap/pubs/ta/perform>, has helpful information on goal setting and performance measures to analyze how a transit system is operating.

#### *Other Articles/References:*

“Demand Forecasting for Rural Transit,” Kenneth L. Casavant, Ph.D., Kathleen M. Painter, Ph.D., <http://ntl.bts.gov/docs/ruraldemand.html>

“Rural Transit Assistance Program at Work,” Federal Transit Administration, <http://www.fta.dot.gov/library/reference/rtap/rtapaw.htm>

You can also find some of ISTEA success stories and funding opportunities at <http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/rtap/pubs/ib/istea-ib.html>

Rural Transportation Planning Workshop, Colorado Workshop Article, Federal Highway Administration, Dye Management Group, Inc., <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep10/state/co.pdf>

AzTA - The Arizona Transit Association tracks transit systems and awards the most successful systems operating in the state, <http://www.azta.org/>

The authors recommend the *The Montana Statewide Transit Survey*, <http://www.lscs.com/projects/MDT/webSSsurvey.doc> ; the ITS Architecture Development

---

<sup>34</sup> *Fully Allocated Cost Analysis – Guidelines for Public Transit Providers*, U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Urban Mass Transportation Administration, [1987].

<sup>35</sup> *A Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services*, ODOT, Oct. 1991, <http://cfprod.imt.uwm.edu/sce/resources/CTED/publications/PlanningandCoordination.doc> (accessed November 10, 2005).

<sup>36</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, *Coordination of Rural Public Transportation Services in Three Southeastern States*, Final Report, June 1990.

<sup>37</sup> [http://trb.org/news/blurb\\_detail.asp?id=4042](http://trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=4042)

Process, [www.itsdocs.fhwa.dot.gov/JPODOCS/REPTS\\_TE/its3.htm](http://www.itsdocs.fhwa.dot.gov/JPODOCS/REPTS_TE/its3.htm) , and the Arizona Planning Association, <http://www.azplanning.org/>

Other transit related regulations that were useful for this project and for future reference:

- Federal Transit laws, 49 U.S.C. 5301 *et seq.* (Also, 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53).
- Federal Highway and Surface Transportation Laws, Title 23, United States Code
- Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Pub.L.No. 105-178 (1988\_
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, Pub. No. 102-240 (1991).
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, 42 U.S.C 12101 *et seq.*
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 794
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000d
- Clean Air Act, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 7401 *et seq.* and scattered sections of 29 U.S.C.
- Lobbying Restrictions, 31 U.S.C. 1352
- Congressional Declaration Policy Respecting Insular Areas, 48 U.S.C. 1469A.
- Executive Order No. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity,” as amended by “Executive Order no. 11375, Amending Executive Order 11246 relating to Equal Employment Opportunity,” 42 U.S.C. 2000 (e).
- U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, “Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments,” 49 C.F.R. Part 18
- U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Non-profit Organizations,” 49 C.F.R. Part 19
- U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, “New Restrictions on Lobbying,: 49 C.F.R. Part 290, modified as necessary by section 10(b) of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (which amends 31 U.S.C. 1352).
- U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, “Participation of Minority Business Enterprises in Department of Transportation Programs,” 49 C.F.R. Part 23.
- U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, “Nondiscrimination on the basis of Handicap in Programs and Activities Receiving or Benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance,” 49 C.F.R. Part 27.
- U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, “Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (Grants),” 49 C.F.R. Part 29, subpart F.
- U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, “Transportation Services for Individuals with Disabilities (ADA) 49 D.F.R. Part 37).
- U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, “Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Accessibility Specifications for Transportation Vehicles,” 49 C.F.R. Part 38.
- FTA regulations, “Capital Leases,” 40 C.F.R. Part 639.
- FTA regulations, “Buy America Requirements,” 49 C.F.R. Part 661
- FTA regulations, “Pre-Award and Post-Delivery Audits of Rolling Stock Purchases,: 49 C.F.R. Part 663
- FTA regulations, “Bus Testing,” 49 C.F.R. Part 665.
- Joint Federal Highway Administration/ FTA regulations, “Planning Assistance and Standards, 23 C.F.R. Part 450 and 49 C.F.R. Part 613

- Department of Treasury regulations, “Rules and Procedures for Fund Transfers,” 31 C.F.R. Part 205.
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87, “Cost Principles for State and Local Governments.”
- OMB Circular A-122, Revised, “Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations.”
- OMB Circular A-133, Revised, “Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.”
- Governments Services Administration (GSA), “Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.”
- FTA Circular 4220.1D, “Third Party Contracting Requirements,” dated 4/15/1996
- FTA Circular 5010.B, “Grant Management Guidelines,” dated 10/01/1998.
- FTA “Best Practices Procurement Manual,” 10/25/1996
- GSA, “Lists of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs.”

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Advanced Rural Transportation Systems (ARTS)*, Strategic Plan, FHWA, August 1997

Arizona Department of Transportation, *Strategic Plan for Statewide Deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems in Arizona*, Final Report prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Henry Wall, and Andrew Kolcz, December 1998

Arizona Department of Transportation, *What are the "Best Practices" of Rural Subarea Planning?* Final Report prepared by David King, October 1998

*Conservatives and Mass Transit: Is It Time For A New Look?* Free Congress Foundation, Paul M. Weyrich and William S. Lind

Due, John F., Allen, Benjamin J., Kihl, Mary K., Crum, Michael R., *Transportation Service to Small Rural Communities*, Iowa State University Press, 1990

*Ensuring a Livable Future: Transportation and a Strategic Vision For the Greater Sedona Community, Planning the Sedona Shuttle System*, Community Transportation Association of America, David Raphael, October 1998

*Intercity Bus Analysis*, Arizona Department of Transportation, The Transit Expert, Inc. and Isaacs & Associates, June 1995

Kosky, Scott, "Performance Evaluation for Rural Transit Systems, *Technical Assistance Brief #5*, CTAA

*Montana Statewide Rural Passenger Needs Study*, Final Report, "Chapter II: Definition of Transit Needs"

Nalevanko, Anna M. "Rural Transit Service Design and Scheduling," *Technical Assistance Brief 12*, CTAA, 2001

*Northern Arizona Transit Development Plan*, RAE Consultants Inc. September 1995

National Association of Development Organizations, *1998 Rural Transportation Survey Results: Regional Development Organizations and State DOTs Establishing Collaborative Processes for Developing rural Transportation Plans*, August 1998

Radow, Laurel J., Winters, Chris, "Rural Transit Performance Measurement," *CTAA Brief*

Semmens, John, *Public Transit: A Worthwhile Investment?* Goldwater Institute, December 1999.

Semmens, John, *Rethinking Transit "Dollars and Sense:" Unearthing the True Cost of Public Transit*, Reason Public Policy Institute, August 1998.

Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 34 *Assessment of the Economic Impacts of Rural Public Transportation*, 1998

Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 56 *Integrating School Bus and Public Transportation Services in Non-Urban Communities*, 1999

Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 48 *Integrated Urban Models for Simulation of Transit and Land Use Policies: Guidelines for Implementation and Use*, 1999

Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 31 *Funding Strategies for Public Transportation*, Volume 1, Final Report, 1998

Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 31 *Funding Strategies for Public Transportation*, Volume 2, Casebook, 1998

Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 54 *Management Toolkit for Rural and Small Urban Transportation Systems*, 1999

Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 58 *New Paradigms for Local Public Transportation Organizations, Task 5 Report: Opening the Door to Fundamental Change*, 2000

Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 6 *Users' Manual for Assessing Service-Delivery Systems for Rural Passenger Transportation*, 1995

Transit Cooperative Research Program, TCRP Report 3 *Workbook for Estimating Demand for Rural Passenger Transportation*, 1995

Transportation Research Board, *Bus and Rural Transit*, 1979

Transportation Research Board, Special Report 186, *Para-transit: 1979, Proceedings of a Workshop*, 1979

Transportation Research Board, Special Report 155: *Research Needs for Evaluating Urban Public Transportation*, 1975

Transportation Research Board, Special Report 181: *Urban Transportation Economics*, National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C., 1978

*Twelve Anti-transit Myths: A Conservative Critique*, Free Congress Foundation, Paul M. Weyrich and William S. Lind, July 2001

U.S. Department of Transportation, *Coordination of Rural Public Transportation Services in Three Southeastern States*, Final Report, June 1990

U.S. Department of Transportation, *Guidebook for Planning Small Urban and Rural Transportation Programs*, Volume 1, June 1990

U.S. Department of Transportation, *Planning for the Phase-In of Fixed-Route Accessible Buses*, February 1982



U.S. Department of Transportation, *Planning Guidelines for Suburban Transit Services*, Final Report, August 1988

U.S. Department of Transportation, *Marketing Public Transit: An Evaluation*, February 1985

U.S. Department of Transportation, *Rural Public Transportation Performance Evaluation Guide*, November 1982

U.S. Department of Transportation, *Small Transit System Management Handbook*, December 1985

U.S. Department of Transportation, *The Use of Contracting by Public Transit Agencies in California*, September 1986

U.S. Department of Transportation/ Transportation Research Board, *Proceedings of The Fourth National Conference on Rural Public Transportation*, September 1979



**APPENDIX I: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Arizona Department of Transportation  
Critical Factors in the Development of  
Rural or Small Community Transit/Bus/Van Systems**

This survey will help the *Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)* determine critical factors in the development of Rural Transit Systems in Arizona. Although you may not consider your operation a transit system as much as a basic service provided for the community, however, please answer the question as appropriate as possible even though we use the term Rural Transit System or RTS. You will be asked questions concerning the development of rural transit in your community. At the conclusion of the survey, please add any additional comments that might help ADOT better understand Rural Transit issues in Arizona. This survey should only take a few minutes of your time and all of your answers will be kept confidential. Please answer the questions regardless if your community has had, has made an attempt to develop, is in the process of developing, or currently operates a rural transit system. Finally, before returning this survey, please attach a copy of your annual report on rider-ship. It should contain data on revenue and expenses. This will help other communities get a better understanding of the financial requirements necessary to operate a rural transit system.

Person completing this survey: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Agency/Position \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

1. How long has your community had a transit system? (*Check the most appropriate response.*)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never  | <input type="checkbox"/> Between 1 and 3 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In the process of creating a transit system  | <input type="checkbox"/> Between 3 and 5 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than one year   | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 5 years     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My community does not currently have a transit system but did at one time.<br>(Please describe below why your community no longer has a transit system.) |  |

2. In reference to the list below, what was/or would be the most important factor in developing your community's transit system? (If your community does not currently have a transit system but has experienced pressure to create a system, please check the most appropriate response).

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public need          | <input type="checkbox"/> Political interests                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public demand        | <input type="checkbox"/> Available money                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Both need and demand | <input type="checkbox"/> My community doesn't have a transit system |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business interests   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Please describe below:              |

3. In your opinion, what group or factor had or would have the **greatest** impact in the development of the transit system?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The public                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Private interests             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local businesses              | <input type="checkbox"/> Available money/state funding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local government              | <input type="checkbox"/> Elected officials             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Please describe below: |  |

4. What group or factor had or would have the **least** impact in the development of the transit system?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The public                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Private interests             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local businesses              | <input type="checkbox"/> Available money/state funding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local government              | <input type="checkbox"/> Elected officials             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Please describe below: |  |

5. How important is publicity and marketing in either developing and/or maintaining your community's transit system?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important     | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat unimportant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/Unsure  | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable       |

6. Please rank the importance of the following factors in the creation (or potential creation) of your community's transit system with one representing the most important factor and 7 representing the least important. (**Please use each number only once.**)

a. Importance of transit dependent population (projected demand or need)

b. Ability to receive funding from ADOT

- c. Political support
- d. Fare box recovery rate
- e. Citizen participation and/or support
- f. Expert or technical help
- g. Ability to connect with other modes of transportation

The following section asks questions about stakeholder participation in the process.

7. How important has the cooperation and or contribution of major **employers or businesses** in your community been to the creation or push for a transit system? (ex. Walmart, Target, etc.)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important     | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat unimportant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/Unsure  |   |

8. How important have the following items been in the creation or push for a transit system?

Public participation?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important     | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat unimportant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/Unsure  |   |

9. Public officials?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important     | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat unimportant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/Unsure  |   |

10. Expert assistance such as consultants?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important     | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat unimportant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/Unsure  |   |

11. Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important     | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat unimportant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/Unsure  |   |

12. In your opinion, what are the top three barriers to achieving and/or maintaining a functional and efficient transit system. Please write these barriers by order of importance order in the spaces provided below.

1st \_\_\_\_\_

2nd \_\_\_\_\_

3rd \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS SECTION IS FOCUSED ON FUNDING TRANSIT SYSTEM PROGRAMS. PLEASE CHECK THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE AND ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS THAT WILL FURTHER CLARIFY YOUR RESPONSES.**

13. Are there other issues that prevent your community from pursuing transit system funding? Please explain your response in the space below.

- Yes                                       No  
 Don't know/Unsure                       Not Applicable

Comments:

14. Are there any existing partnerships or other transit system's that might help your community pursue funding or combine resources?

- Yes                                       No  
 Don't know/Unsure                       Not Applicable

Comments:

**Finally, we would like to clarify issues and definitions specific to individual communities. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.**

15. If there exists a need for a transit system in your community, what is the main obstacle to obtaining funding?

- Ability to receive funding from ADOT                       Expert or technical help  
 Political support     Fare box recovery rate  
 Citizen participation and/or support  
 Importance of transit dependent population (projected demand or need)

Comments:

16. Does your community have a planning department with the resources necessary to pursue transit funding or did a planning department play a role in securing transit system funding?

- Yes  No  
 Don't know/Unsure  Not Applicable

Please describe the planning department and its role:

17. Has your community pursued other funding sources unsuccessfully?

- Yes  No  
 Don't know/Unsure  Not Applicable

Comments:

18. Does your community have any plans to pursue/continue transit funding in the near future?

- Yes  No  
 Don't know/Unsure  Not Applicable

Comments:

19. Is your community or transit system able to provide information concerning how to obtain transit funding or support?

- Yes  No  
 Don't know/Unsure  Not Applicable

Comments:

#### DEMAND versus NEED

1. *Transit need* may be defined as an estimate of transit trips needed annually and is typically based on demographic characteristics regardless of actual service levels. Transit needs are present whether or not passenger transportation is offered. How does your transit system measure actual need for transit services in your community? (Please specify the process as completely as possible).

21. *Transit demand* can be defined as the number of trips that will be taken when a given capacity of passenger transportation is presented. How is demand measured in your community? (Again, please be specific).

22. Do you have any additional comments that would further explain your community's experience with its transit system?





## APPENDIX II: ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ASKED OF INTERVIEWEES

1. What kind of information has been gathered so far? Do you or does ADOT have any information or reports similar to the SPR 530 project?
2. Is there any additional information on TIP or LTAF? Has this affected agencies from applying in the past?
3. Is there competition for 5311 funding that discourages agencies from applying? Is the money used for other priorities (ex. highways) instead of transit?
4. Please expand on number of existing rural transit systems, private systems, etc. Summarize those that are considering or in the process of applying. Distinguish from others not considered by ADOT because they do not receive FTA or LTAF funds.
5. Can you think of anyone that can be considered as a forerunner for the “best practices” recognition?
6. Please summarize anything that can be a barrier to the development of rural transit- from your opinion and from what you perceive municipalities, counties, or the agencies are experiencing. Some other examples are, funding, distance and isolation, demand versus need challenges, the application process, amount of money, perceived competition with other applicants.
7. Summarize your relationship with the COG’s, the Communication and expected responsibilities. Can this be a barrier to the development of rural transit? Do you have information on CAG’s “regional coordinating council?”
8. Are there any other types of funding that municipalities, tribes, counties can use such as STIP, or “enhancement monies, or bridge rehabilitation and replacement funds?”
9. What is your experience, in general, when agencies have applied for rural transit. Is there a lack of government support? Citizen support? ADOT support?
10. Improvements could be slow after a system is set up. The “status quo” can be a factor- and change is difficult. Do you see any of these elements affecting rural transit?
11. Is lack of ridership a factor, or perceived need does not turn into demand or ridership? Is there more need than demand?
12. Can you provide information on Flagstaff Section 18 program – strengths and weaknesses and also summarize the transition from rural to urban? For example, once the transition was complete there was more money, more city involvement, more demand, more demand for improving the quality of services.
13. During the application process, is there too much competition and not enough money? Does that affect the agencies decision to apply?
14. What are the barriers during the application process?
15. In 1991, in an article in USA today, Flagstaff transit was recognized in the top 5 for a rural transit its size. Do you have a copy of that article and can you fax it to me (928) 779-0514?
16. Do you have a list of CURRENT COGs and Planners?
17. Is there any overlap of any kind between the two programs, 5310 and 5311 that should be considered in any of these reports or Lit Review? Another viewpoint: are providers reluctant to share services with other providers because matching funds are so difficult to come up with. Is on program more popular than the other? Why?
18. Does the State of AZ have a long-range (20 yr?) Transit plan?
19. Is Sedona a good example of need without potential provider?
20. Summarize current status of rural transit in Prescott?
21. Summarize how funding affects the decision to develop a rural transit system.
22. Are there any other barriers, such as road development, infrastructure problems, 3 year plan maintenance, etc.?

### Appendix III: Current Rural Transit Providers

City of Bisbee	Suzanne Drum	sdrum@cityofbisbee.com	phone: 520-432-6016 fax: 520-432-6069	118 Arizona Street Bisbee AZ 85603
City of Bullhead	Laura Henry	Transit1@bullheadcity.com	phone: 928-763-9400 x 374 fax: 928-763-0180	1255 Marina Blvd Bullhead City AZ 86442
City of Coolidge	Lisa Pannella (billings) Eleanore Wieczorek	<a href="mailto:Lisap@coolidgeaz.com">Lisap@coolidgeaz.com</a> <a href="mailto:Ekwieczorek@yahoo.com">Ekwieczorek@yahoo.com</a>	phone 520-723-6008 fax: 520-723-7910 phone: 520-723-4882 fax: 520-723-3004	P O Box 1498 Coolidge AZ 85228
City of Cottonwood	Shirley Scott	Sscott@ci.cottonwood.az.us	phone: 928-634-2287 fax: 928-634-7284	827 N Main St Cottonwood AZ 86326
Hopi Tribe	Judy Polingyumptewa	Jpolingyumptewa@hopi.nsn.us	phone: 928-734-3245 fax: 928-734-9218	P O Box 123 Kykotsmovi AZ 86039
City of Kingman	Beth O'Connor	Boconnor@ci.kingman.az.us	phone: 928-753-8762 fax: 928-826-3859	310 North 4 <sup>th</sup> St Kingman AZ 86401
Lake Havasu City	Carolyn Call Ted Swendra	Ccall@redrivernet.com swendrat@ci.lake_havasu_city.az.us	phone: 928-453-5479 fax: 928-680-4611 phone: 928-764-3330	900 London Bridge Rd Lake Havasu City AZ 86403
Town of Miami	Francis Givens	cvct@theriver.com	phone: 928-473-8222 fax: 928-473-3003 Town Hall: 928-473-4403	Town Hall 500 Sullivan St Miami AZ 85539
Navajo Transit System	Perry Yazzie	<a href="mailto:Pyaze@yahoo.com">Pyaze@yahoo.com</a>	fax: 928-729-4116 phone: 928-729-4113	P O Box 1330 Window Rock AZ 85616
Pima County DOT	Pat McGowan	Patrick.mcgowan@dot.pima.gov	Phone: 520-740-6403 direct: 520-740-6731 fax: 520-620-1933	201 North Stone Tucson AZ 85702
Salt River Indian Tribe	Elaine Cabrera Pete Chavez	<a href="mailto:Elaine.Cabrera@srpmic-nsn.gov">Elaine.Cabrera@srpmic-nsn.gov</a> <a href="mailto:pete.chavez@srpmic-nsn.gov">pete.chavez@srpmic-nsn.gov</a>	phone: 480-850-8596 (8276) fax: 480-850-8284 Phone: 480-850-8232 8084	10005 E Osborn Rd Scottsdale AZ 85256
Show Low / Pinetop	Cheryl Parks (billing) Joel Weeks	<a href="mailto:Cpark@ci.show_low.az.us">Cpark@ci.show_low.az.us</a> <a href="mailto:Tspader@ci.show_low.az.us">Tspader@ci.show_low.az.us</a>	phone: 928-532-4122 fax: 928-537-2338 (2218)	200 West Cooley Showlow AZ 85901
City of Sierra Vista	Steve Tyminiski Mary Lynn (billings)	Styminski@ci.sierra_vista.az.us	phone: 520-458-5775 x 256 520-417-4888 fax: 520-452-7516 520-458-3315	1224 North Avenue Sierra Vista AZ 85635
Sunsites Transportation	Kathy Larsh	Sunsitestrans@vtc.net	phone: 520-826-3378 fax: 520-826-3859	P O Box 187 Pearce AZ 85625

## **APPENDIX IV: CITY OF COOLIDGE SAMPLE APPLICATIONS**

The City of Coolidge provides a deviated-fixed route service. Regular stops on the fixed route are served at scheduled times. The bus, when dispatched, will deviate from the fixed route to provide door to door service for the disabled or elderly rider.

The Route provides service within the City Limits of the City of Coolidge. It operates from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except legal holidays. The deviated fixed route serves both residential and commercial areas within the City. The fixed route, identified by bus stop signs and bus shelters, is located in such a manner as to accommodate virtually every household and business within the incorporated boundary of the City of Coolidge within easy walking distance (approximately 2 blocks). Stops are located adjacent to social service agencies such as the Department of Economic Security and Family Resource Center as well as doctor and medical facilities. Stops are located on or near major employment centers, the main business corridors and within the three major shopping centers/grocery stores. The entire route is run during each hour of service.

1. Describe your transit system fare rates and structure.

**Route fares are:**

<b>ADULT</b>	<b>12 years and older</b>	<b>\$1.25 per passenger trip</b>
<b>CHILD</b>	<b>3 thru 11 years</b>	<b>\$0.75 per passenger trip</b>
<b>0 thru 3 years</b>	<b>no charge and must be accompanied by a paying adult</b>	

**Dial-A-Ride fares are:**

**ALL PASSENGERS \$1.50 per passenger trip**

**Passengers are encouraged to buy bus passes. Passes are available for both adults and children. A two week pass provides 17 rides for the cost of 15 rides. A month pass provides 34 rides for the cost of 30 rides.**

**Vouchers provided by the Family Resource Center for bus service are billed at \$0.75 per ride for students and regular fares for adults.**

**Vouchers for the Department of Economic Security are billed at the regular adult fare.**

2. Transit *Provider* Information: (Brief description of your agency’s primary mission (include mission statement), number of years in service, statistics, and transportation services.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The City of Coolidge Cotton Express Community Transit provides safe, reliable, courteous and affordable public bus service to meet transportation needs of individuals within our community.

The City of Coolidge has been providing transportation services since 1990. Beginning as a “Dial a Ride” program utilizing a van purchased by the City. The Cotton Express expanded to a deviated fixed route within the City Limits in 1993, following the purchase of a 16 passenger bus utilizing ADOT capital assistance. In October 1997, fixed deviated service was expanded to serve unincorporated areas within ten miles of the City limits following purchase of a second 16 passenger bus, again purchased with assistance from ADOT. In 1998 the expanded route was cancelled due to lack of ridership and need. However, the inner city route having increased ridership by 263% between 1995 and 2001, gave need for the City to purchase two additional buses in 2001, with assistance from ADOT. In 2003 the City was able to purchase an additional bus with funds provided by ADOT. The oldest bus (1993) is now used only when absolutely necessary and the 1997 serves as the back-up vehicle. The City now utilizes three buses for the deviated fixed route. The Cotton Express provides fully accessible door-to-door service to the elderly and disabled through a dispatch system.

	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>% Change 96 to 01</b>
<b>Passenger Trips</b>	9525	13583	19244	24856	26001	29322	207.8%
<b>Total Project Miles</b>	24166	31123	41741	37148	31638	54373	125 %
<b>Vehicle Service Hours</b>	1788	2633	3700	3032	3247	3517	96.7%
<b>Cost/Passenger Trip</b>	4.37	5.16	4.00	3.22	3.42	3.90	12.05%
<b>Passenger/Population</b>	0.62	0.88	1.25	1.61	1.68	1.90	206.5%

## 2.4 APPLICATION (FY 2003-2004)

### PART ONE

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

Provide a detailed description of your organization. Be sure your application and budget information are accurate and complete. This information will be used to get a general idea of who you are, what you do, and determine if you qualify for funding assistance under the FTA Section 5311 Program.

1. Transit Agency Name (if any). (Please print full name)

#### **CITY OF COOLIDGE**

Contact person's name: **Lisa Pannella**

Title: **Finance Director/Transit Director**

Transit *provider* address: **130 W. Central Ave.  
Coolidge, AZ 85228**

Phone #: **(520) 723-5361**

FAX: **(520) 723-7910**

E-mail (if any) **LisaP@coolidgeaz.com**

Web Site Address (if any) **coolidgeaz.com**

2. Select choice of Sponsorship:  City  
 County  
 Tribe  
 Other Agency (Specify)
3. Provide a general description of your transit schedule (typical day-to-day operation, current service area(s), days and hours of operation, and describe type of routes).

The City of Coolidge provides a deviated-fixed route service. Regular stops on the fixed route are served at scheduled times. The bus, when dispatched, will deviate from the fixed route to provide door to door service for the disabled or elderly rider.

The Route provides service within the City Limits of the City of Coolidge. It operates from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except legal holidays. The deviated fixed route serves both residential and commercial areas within the City. The fixed route, identified by bus stop signs and bus shelters, is located in such a manner as to accommodate virtually every household and business within the incorporated boundary of the City of Coolidge within easy walking distance (approximately 2 blocks). Stops are located adjacent to social service agencies such as the Department of Economic Security and Family Resource Center as well as doctor and medical facilities. Stops are located on or near major employment centers, the main business corridors and within the three major shopping centers/grocery stores. The entire route is run during each hour of service.

4. Describe your transit system fare rates and structure.

Route fares are:

CHILD/REG. ROUTE 3 thru 11 years \$0.75 per passenger trip  
 ADULT/REG. ROUTE 12 years and older \$1.25 per passenger trip  
 DIAL-A-RIDE \$1.50 per passenger trip (regardless of age)

**0 thru 3 years no charge and must be accompanied by a paying adult**

Passengers are encouraged to buy bus passes. Passes are available for both adults and children. A two week pass provides 17 rides for the cost of 15 rides. A month pass provides 34 rides for the cost of 30 rides.

Vouchers provided by the Family Resource Center for bus service are billed at \$0.75 per ride no matter the age or destination.

Vouchers for the Department of Economic Security for bus service are billed at the regular adult fare.

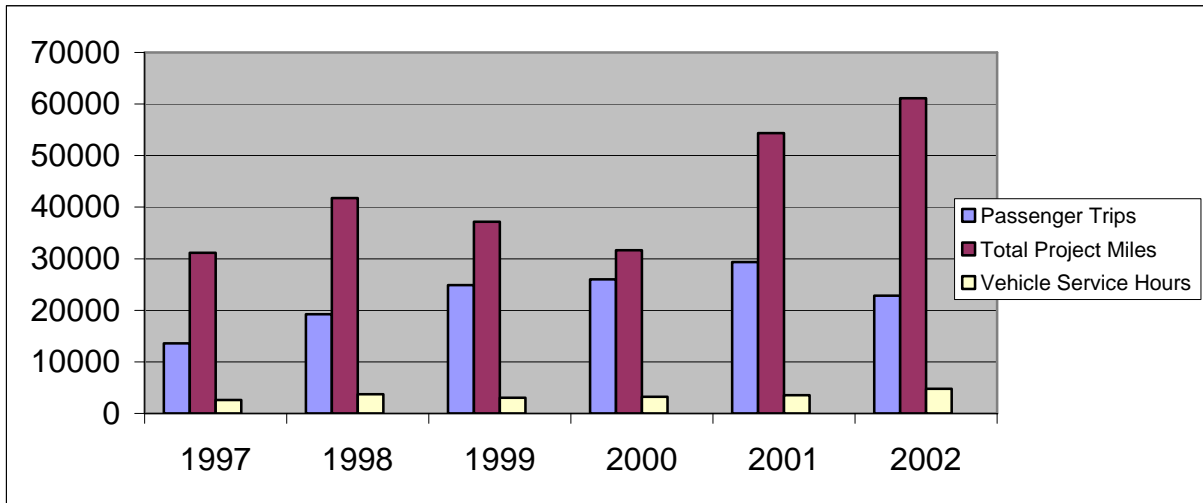
5. Transit *Provider* Information: (Brief description of your agency’s primary mission, include mission statement, number of years in service, statistics, transportation services, and general service area boundaries)

**MISSION STATEMENT**

*The City of Coolidge Cotton Express Community Transit provides safe, reliable, courteous and affordable public bus service to meet transportation needs of individuals within our community.*

**The City of Coolidge has been providing transportation services since 1990, beginning as a “Dial a Ride” program utilizing a van purchased by the City. The Cotton Express expanded to a deviated fixed route within the City Limits in 1993, following the purchase of a 16 passenger bus utilizing ADOT capital assistance. In October 1997, fixed deviated service was expanded to serve unincorporated areas within ten miles of the City limits following purchase of a second 16 passenger bus, again purchased with assistance from ADOT. In 1998 the expanded route was cancelled due to lack of ridership and need. However, the inner city route having increased ridership by 263% between 1995 and 2001, gave need for the City to purchase two additional buses in 2001, with assistance from ADOT. The City now utilizes three buses for the deviated fixed route and the oldest bus (1993) as a backup vehicle. The Cotton Express provides fully accessible curb to curb service to the elderly and disabled through a dispatch system.**

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	% CHANGE 97 to 02
<b>Passenger Trips</b>	13,583	19,244	24,856	26,001	29,322	22,867	68.4%
<b>Total Project Miles</b>	31,123	41,741	37,148	31,638	54,373	61,114	96.4%
<b>Vehicle Service Hrs</b>	2,633	3,700	3,032	3,247	3,517	4,766	81.0%
<b>Cost/Passenger Trip</b>	5.16	4.00	3.22	3.42	3.90	4.33	-19.2%



The statistics above demonstrate significant increases between 1997 and 2002 in both the number of passenger trips at 68.4%, and the service hours at 81%. The table also demonstrates a cost per passenger trip *decrease* of 19.2% demonstrating good management and effective service routes.

The City of Coolidge Cotton Express provides a fixed route service with regular identified stops. Fixed route passengers account for approximately 50% of the passenger trips. The bus deviates from the fixed route to provide curb to curb service through dispatched calls for the elderly and disabled. Dispatched calls for service to the elderly and disabled account for an average 50% of the passenger trips. The number of dispatched calls varies by month with a slightly higher number of calls being logged during fall and winter months. Additionally, the number of fixed route passenger trips increases slightly during the summer months which is believed to be a result of transporting a higher number of local youth to recreational activities.

The City provides safe, reliable and affordable transportation for the public. Service is provided within the municipal boundaries of the City of Coolidge.

6. Number of employees and job descriptions: (e.g. drivers, mechanics, administrative, etc.)

**Currently the Cotton Express is staffed by the following:**

**Transit Manager 50% FTE - responsible for general oversight of the program, marketing, financial management, staffing and Drug and Alcohol training. Also serves as back up Driver/Dispatcher.**

**Transit Supervisor - 100% FTE driver/dispatcher - responsible for vehicle maintenance and hands on training for new drivers in equipment use and procedures.**

**Drivers/Dispatchers – 2.50 FTE.**

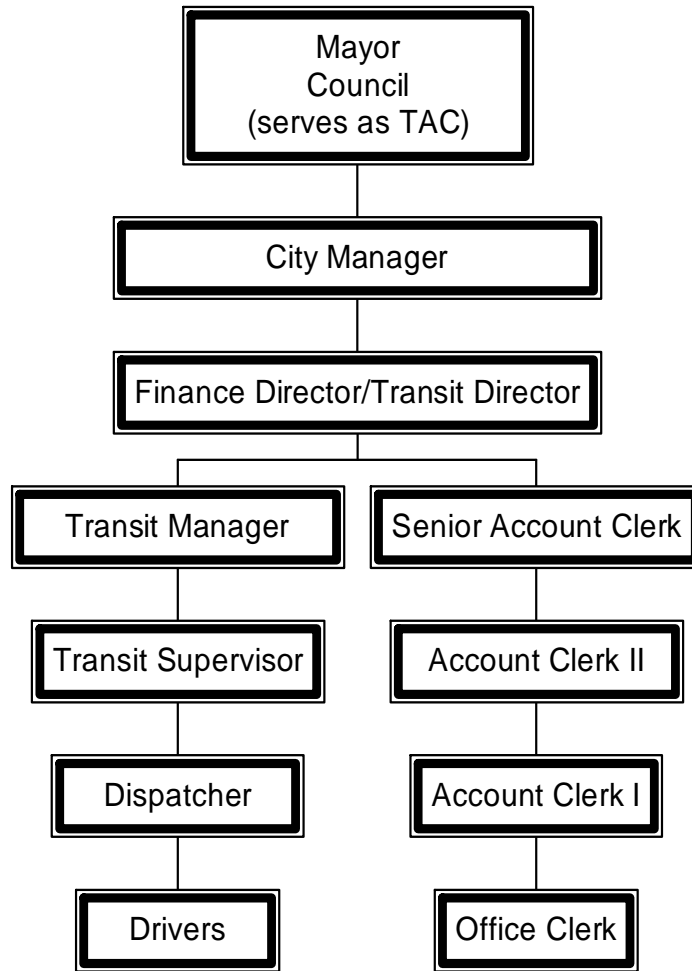
In the beginning, the City of Coolidge utilized part time employees for drivers and experienced significant turnover. Drivers indicated that the reasons for turnover included lack of benefits, salaries, limited hours and frequent schedule changes as some issues. Transit staff recognizes that driver turnover has a significant impact on service, cost and safety. Passengers appreciate regular drivers and a distinct drop in ridership is noted when a new driver begins. Turnover affects cost and safety through the need for additional training, job orientation and lack of experience. Additionally, utilizing multiple drivers on the bus in any one day led to additional vehicle maintenance in that each driver's style was different and it was difficult to identify which driver was creating mechanical problems, especially to the braking system.

To alleviate these problems and reduce turnover, the City of Coolidge is now utilizing full time drivers and providing full benefits. Salaries have been increased and are competitive with private employers and the local school district. Although this change has impacted the transit operating budget, particularly in fringe benefits, we believe the City is experiencing a cost savings, reduction in turnovers, and are able to attract more qualified applicants.



7. Structure of your organization (include organizational chart)

CITY OF COOLIDGE COTTON EXPRESS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



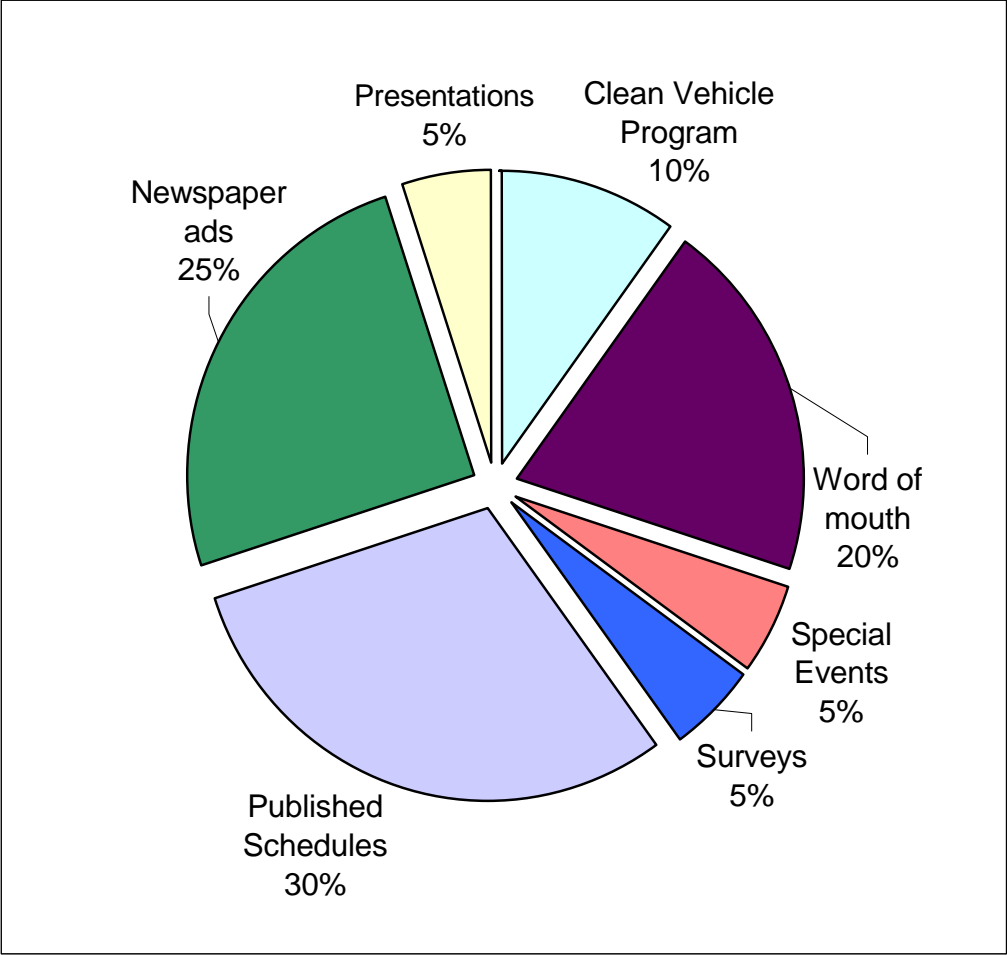
8. Describe your marketing program and promotion methods. Include samples of radio and newspaper ads, brochures, and other promotional materials.

**Following are some of the various marketing efforts, promotions and outreach conducted:**

- Flyers are printed and posted at many locations within the City and on the bus notifying the public of holidays, policy or pricing changes, and general public information concerning the system. Posting locations include City Hall, Library, Family Resource Center, Department of Economic Security, Post Office, Safeway, Wal-Mart, and Shopes Market. Please see some examples of these flyers attached.
- Bus schedules and promotional flyers are displayed in clear, 4 pocket slant back holders in over 25 businesses and offices throughout the City. Displays are stocked and revised on a regular basis. All pertinent schedules and flyers are printed with a Spanish version.
- Regular announcements concerning bus service, accommodations, promotional items, etc. are aired over Channel 19, the local public information television station operated by the City of Coolidge.
- Weekly information is published in the Coolidge Examiner, the local newspaper, notifying the public that the City of Coolidge provides reasonable accommodations to the disabled for all programs and services.
- The Coolidge Examiner frequently reports action by the Mayor and Council while serving as the TAC which affects the transit system, including such items as discussion of fares, award of capital purchases, discussion and action on various route changes, etc.
- The Cotton Express bus was entered as a participant in the Calvin Coolidge Days and Cotton Days Parades and was decorated with over 2,000 lights and entered in the City Christmas Light Parade. A bus was also open on display for tours for the children and their parents at the annual Easter Egg Hunt at San Carlos Park. A drawing for an, "Easter Basket of Goodies" was held for those who participated in the tour; there were over 100 entries in the drawing.
- In the summer the Cotton Express provided transportation for the "Kids Kamp", a summer long program sponsored by the Coolidge Parks and Recreation Department.
- The Transit Manager attends regular meetings with school official and provides after school transportation for the ACTFAST program. Informational displays have been set up and manned at school events such as, Open House and Meet the Teacher Night.
- Monthly informational items concerning the transit system are included in the City of Coolidge Newsletter which is mailed to each residence served by the City sewer system, approximately 99% of the population.
- In November 1997 the City of Coolidge went on-line with a 26 page Web Site. The address is coolidgeaz.com. Included in the web site is information concerning the Cotton Express. The web site was reconstructed in 2003.

- The Cotton Express works with the Coolidge Adult center and offers a free one-on-one training session for the, “First Time Rider” who may intimidations about using the wheelchair lift or their ability to enter and exit the bus via the steps. The Cotton Express employees regularly donate prizes for the Coolidge Adult Center Bingo. All prizes are labeled, “Compliments of Cotton Express”.
  - At Christmas the Cotton Express coordinated efforts with the Coolidge Indian Assembly of God Church and their Needy Family Program by assisting with shopping transportation to the Coolidge Wal-Mart.
9. Provide the percentages for the type of marketing promotions used by your transit system in the table below:

<b>Promotion</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Published Schedules</b>	30%
<b>Newspaper ads</b>	25%
<b>Presentations</b>	5%
<b>Clean Vehicle Program</b>	10%
<b>Word of mouth</b>	20%
<b>Special Events</b>	5%
<b>Surveys</b>	5%



## PART TWO

### EVALUATION CRITERIA INFORMATION

#### A. APPROPRIATENESS OF SERVICE

Applicants should demonstrate that the proposed service is appropriate to the transportation needs of the general public.

1. Summarize how your transit system will meet the prioritized Public transportation goals, as identified in your three-year plan.

In August of 2001, the City hired a Transit Manager as recommended in the Three Year Transit Plan as the most important step the City can take to improve the existing service to position the system for the future. During this past year the Manager has been working on implementing the Operational Procedures Manual, updating the route and marketing strategies.

In April of 2001 the City began a checkpoint service as recommended in the Three Year Transit Plan establishing a reliable schedule that serves the busier locations such as Wal Mart, Safeway, and Shoppes every half hour. A Dial-A-ride identification card was established for riders who are 55 years of age and older and/or disabled, allowing them to call for curb-to-curb pick up and delivery. All other riders are picked up at a bus stop. The route serves each bus stop every hour. The Dial-A-Ride service ridership has dwindled slightly during the year. While the regular route service showed an increase in ridership. This is probably due to the lower fares for Route Bus service as opposed to the Dial-A-Ride. Passengers eligible for the Dial-A-Ride are also using the Route service to take advantage of the lower rate. In February 2003, fares increased from \$1.00 per adult passenger ride to \$1.50 for the Dial-A-Ride and \$1.25 for the Route Bus. The addition of a Transit Manager and increased stops on the route have prompted the city to explore the need to increase passenger fares, as we had not increased fares for the past five years. On January 13, 2003 the TAC Advisory Committee/City Council approved a rate increase to begin February 3, 2003.

The City will continue to operate the deviated fixed route and will review and adjust the schedule to ensure convenient and effective service while working to reduce deadhead miles.

As identified in the three year plan, the Cotton Express will continue to provide safe and reliable service by:

- Hiring and retaining qualified drivers
- Providing and updating driver training in safety and customer service
- Continuing implementation of a routine, preventative vehicle maintenance program

The City will continue the marketing and outreach program attempting to identify unmet needs, encouraging increased ridership and cooperation with business, employers and social service agencies.

2. Describe your process for serving transit dependent clients in your proposed service area, include trip origins and destinations. How is data collected related to transit dependent service?

Statistics demonstrate that the majority of passengers of the Cotton Express are transit dependent and ride from necessity rather than choice. According to the needs survey done in January 2004, (attached), an estimated 96% of riders do not own a vehicle. An aging population is anticipated to increase senior citizen and disabled ridership. Outreach efforts are anticipated to increase TANF participant and work related rides.

- The Cotton Express anticipates a 10% increase in ridership during FY 2004-2005 and expects to provide 24,295 passenger trips with 50% of those trips dedicated to the Dial-A-Ride service solely utilized by the elderly and disabled.
- It is estimated that trip origins and destinations will remain similar to the pattern established in the past two years. Round trips being provided primarily to-and-from home, to shopping, medical and school.
- The data related to transit dependent service is tracked by the drivers on their daily log sheets for the regular route as well as the Dial-A-Ride service.

3. Indicate the type of service proposed:

- a. Local route providing essential service;
- b. Local route providing non-essential service;
- c. Regional circular providing essential service; and
- d. Regional circular providing non-essential service.

4. Attach a copy of your proposed schedules and service area boundaries for the service to be provided with funds requested in this application.

**Attached please find the route schedules.**

5. Provide an explanation for DES, Welfare to Work recipients, i.e., exis

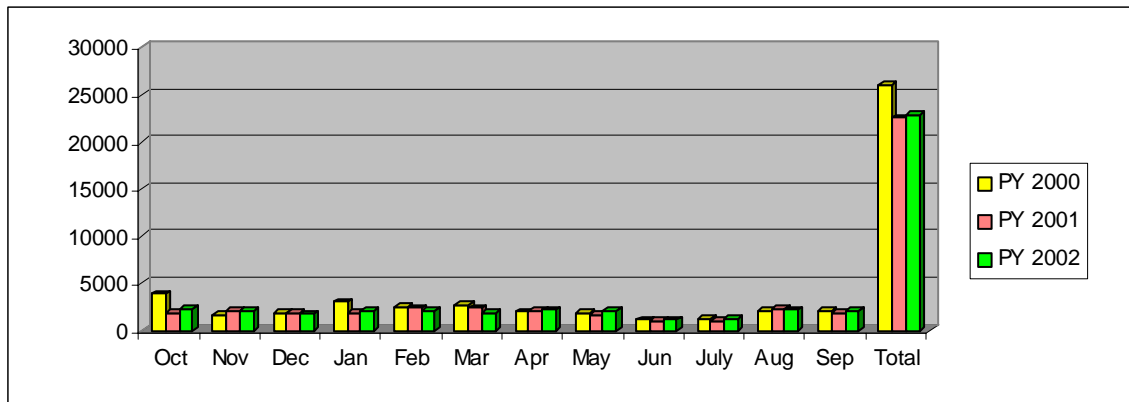
The Pinal Gila Community Child Services Inc., located at 1750 S. Arizona Blvd., Coolidge, AZ currently has a TANF grant to provide transportation services to welfare to work participants in Pinal County. The routes are so extensive that there is no need for the city's transit system to modify its services for welfare to work recipients, but is always open to the general public if the need arises. (please see the attached route schedules for the Pinal Gila Community Child Services, Inc.)

**B. UTILIZATION OF SERVICE**

Applicant should indicate how extensively the requested funds would be utilized in the provisions of the transportation services described in this application. Responses should be supported by documentation of current ridership.

1. Indicate the trips per month:

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Total
PY 2000	3869	1705	1841	3015	2500	2711	1975	1803	1153	1307	2025	2097	26001
PY 2001	1877	2018	1916	1943	2419	2380	2013	1678	1048	1021	2370	1839	22522
PY 2002	2219	2151	1755	2005	2031	1860	2197	2049	1133	1169	2179	2119	22867



2. Indicate the average number of revenue miles per: Day 243 , Month 5,092 , Year 61,114.

3. Does your system connect with other modes of transportation? For example, urban public transit services, airports, or park-and-ride lots.

Because our system operates within the city limits of Coolidge only, and at this time there are no other local public transportation services, we do not connect with outside modes of land transportation. Transportation to the Coolidge Airport has been established and when the expansion of the airport is completed an expanded route to that area may be considered.

4. List the local activity centers and employment locations served by your route (Explain the daily schedule service).

The route serves primarily business and shopping centers such as Safeway and Wal-Mart, but also incorporates social service agencies such as DES, the Family Resource Center, Pinal Hispanic Council, governmental centers, the post office, doctor’s offices, child care facilities and schools. Each of these locations have a bus stop and are serviced every hour, with Shopes IGA, Safeway and Wal Mart serviced every half hour.

5. Based on last year's statistics, estimate the proposed percentage of your service in the following categories:

**TRIP PURPOSE**

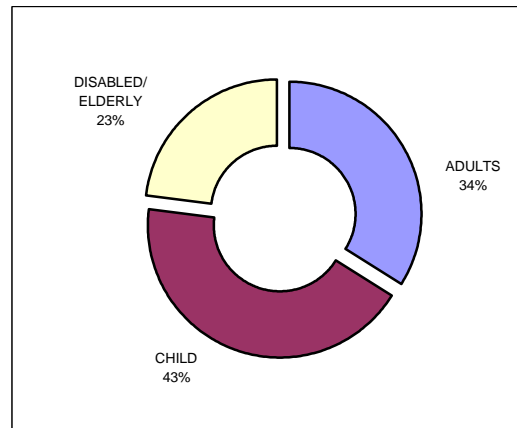
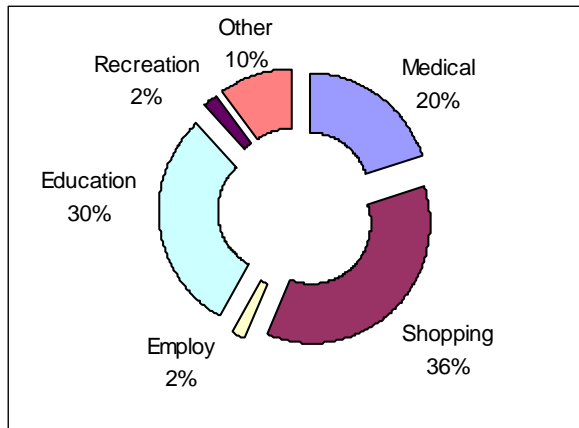
A. Medical	20%
B. Shopping	36%
C. Employment	2%
D. Education	30%
E. Recreation	2%
F. Other (Specify)	10%
▪ Social Service Agencies	
▪ Child Care	
▪ Governmental Offices	
▪ Misc.	

**% Total: 100%**  
**TOTALS MUST EQUAL 100%**

**PASSENGER TYPE**

A. ADULTS	34%
B. CHILD	43%
C. DISABLED/ELDERLY	23%

**% Total: 100%**



6. Would you consider any part of your service "Inter-city Service?" (Refer to guidelines for definition). If yes describe frequency and service area.

NO

7. Do you have sufficient back-up vehicles to maintain the levels of service identified in this application in the event of vehicle breakdowns? Explain implementation procedure to address service disruption due to vehicle breakdowns.

Yes. Currently the City operates five fully accessible 16 passenger buses, utilizing two of those buses as backup. In case of breakdowns, the two backup vehicles are utilized. Two vehicles are on the route at all times and are dispatched to pick up each other's passengers while the backup vehicle is being accessed. All vehicles have a pre-trip inspection every morning whether being utilized that day or not, so as to be ready for use.



8. Are there any limitations on services, such as unescorted minors, amount of baggage, bike racks, flag stops, etc.? Explain:

Yes. Children under the age of five must be accompanied by an adult. We also run into the problem of too much baggage on the first of each month. A good portion of our riders are welfare participants and rely on their government checks at the first of each month. They try to do all of their shopping in one day creating a space problem. Therefore, we must limit the amount of baggage to what the passenger can carry on board and hold in their lap on the regular route bus. We use extra seats and empty wheel chair slots to carry packages and goods for the disabled and elderly on the Dial-A-Ride bus.

9. Explain methods to communicate rules and regulations applying to passengers using the transit system?

Our Rules and Regulations are posted on each bus in large print for passengers to read. The signs are posted in both English and Spanish. If the passenger is illiterate or visually impaired, those rules are relayed to them orally.

### **C. COORDINATION OF SERVICE**

Applicant should provide evidence of coordination or attempts to coordinate with other agencies, e.g.: DES, DHS etc., or public transportation operators in the service area.

1. Discuss all steps taken to coordinate services with private non-profit agencies, DES, Department of Human Services, or Senior Centers within your proposed service area, including any Section 5310 providers.

The City of Coolidge supports the Coolidge Senior Center in many ways including facilities and operating capital. Additionally, City Cotton Express staff work closely with Senior Center personnel concerning transportation issues and supports the efforts of the Area Agency on Aging's applications for Section 5310 assistance.

The Cotton Express frequently provides transportation to the Family Resource Center where individuals can receive a myriad of support services such as family counseling, tutoring, clothing bank, food bank, housing vouchers, etc. Through a voucher system, the Family Resource Center can elect to provide free transportation to individuals. Vouchers are billed to the Family Resource Center by the City monthly.

The Cotton express has worked with DES in providing transportation to and from work for their clients through a voucher system.

The City of Coolidge transit staff stays in contact with the staff from the Pinal Gila Community Child Services to coordinate services as they are providing transportation for the welfare to work participants through a TANF grant. .

Bus stops are located adjacent to DES and the Pinal County Health Department making transportation services extremely convenient for participants. The City provides bus schedules and

route brochures to DES for distribution to clients. The City regularly provides orientation and transportation to developmentally disabled adults in cooperation with DES.

The City of Coolidge, in cooperation with the Pinal County Public Fiduciary, provides transportation services to special needs passengers and their children. The Fiduciary purchases bus passes for the riders. The bus driver holds the passes during use and notifies the Fiduciary's office when more passes are needed.

The City currently has an agreement for bus services with Statewide Express who is contracted with AHCCCS to transport individuals to health care facilities.

2. Describe the procedure(s) used by a passenger to access your service.

- For fixed route service, a passenger waits at a clearly identified bus stop or shelter placed within two blocks from every home. Each bus stop is serviced at least once every hour.
- For deviated route service (Dial-A-ride), a passenger contacts dispatch by phone or TDD or comes into the Transit Office or other City Department and requests a pick up by providing the address. The passenger is notified of the approximate pickup time, usually between 15 to 20 minutes and the bus is dispatched. Please note that employees of local businesses and service agencies frequently place calls for customers/clients as an additional service.

3. Is any part of your service subcontracted to another agency? Explain.

NO

4. Is there a contingency plan for the delivery of transit services when there are insufficient vehicles or drivers? Explain.

We have a sufficient number of buses to accommodate our service, including backup vehicles. All five buses require CDL drivers, and while we employ full time, part time, and back up drivers, occasionally we find ourselves short. The Transit Manager also fills in as a backup driver if needed but if necessary, we utilize a non CDL employee to transport passengers in our eight passenger van.

Demonstrate the level of coordination with DES agencies in regards to "Welfare to Work", "Access to Jobs" TANF, and "Reverse Commute" programs.

The City of Coolidge continues to explore and encourage a joint effort by Coolidge and DES in provision of transportation services. DES has allowed the City to place a bus stop shelter adjacent to the DES building for easy access for their clients.

The Cotton express has worked with DES in providing transportation to and from work for their clients through a voucher system.

5. Do you meet with DES/HUD staff to discuss transit service coordination? Explain.

- The Transit Manager works closely with other Section 5311 transit providers in the state, particularly in Pinal and Gila Counties. She provides technical assistance, training and feedback and information upon request.

- The Transit Manager attends the Regional Transit meetings hosted by the Central Arizona Association of Governments and discusses regional transportation issues, particularly regional coordination and development of intercity and regional transit programs.
- The City of Coolidge continues to explore and encourage a joint effort by Coolidge and Florence in provision of transportation services.
- The Coolidge School District does not provide bus transportation for students within the Coolidge city limits. The School District has allowed the City to place bus stops adjacent to the elementary and secondary schools. The Cotton Express picks up and delivers students from designated stops along the bus route and designated stops at the school. School District personnel supervise students waiting for the bus and work closely with the City to ensure that students are at the designated stop on time to prevent service delays.
- The City provides a Cotton Express driver[s] to assist the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument in transporting passengers during events such as the State Archeology Fair and the Heritage Fund Representatives' tour.

- **D. ACCESSIBILITY, SAFETY & TRAINING PROGRAMS**

Applicants should describe what policies; programs and other features of their operation encourage and promote accessibility and safety training.

1. How does your transit system comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements? What distances do the bus routes deviate from normal route to serve ADA passengers?

All transportation services provided by the City of Coolidge are fully accessible to persons with disabilities. All five buses are lift and tie down equipped for transportation of the mobility impaired. The 1997, 2001 and 2002 and 2003 buses have an extra wide lift to accommodate scooters and an extra wide entry door to more easily accommodate walkers. Bus shelters are fully accessible to the disabled and bus stops have been placed in such a manner as to make them accessible. The Dial-A-Ride bus picks up and delivers the rider curb-to-curb anywhere within the city limits of Coolidge. In addition the regular bus route will deviate and pick up passengers at curbside.

Additionally, the City in the past several years has completed several curb cut and sidewalk projects to provide convenient access through most of the City to designated bus stops. The City is continuing this effort this year with the latest project underway at the SR 87 and Vah Ki Inn Road Intersection adjacent to the DES Office,

Bus drivers are fully trained in courteous and safe procedures for transporting not only the mobility impaired, but those with mental disabilities, seeing impairments, hearing impairments, seizure disorders, etc.

The City's 504/ADA Coordinator is available to assist residents with questions, requests for accommodations or complaints.

The bus deviates two to three blocks from the normal route to serve ADA passengers.

2. Describe how accessibility programs and transportation services provided by your agency maximize the ongoing availability of these services to persons with disabilities.

Weekly the local newspaper prints a notice that the City provides reasonable accommodations to the disabled and provides a contact name, address, phone number and TDD number for obtaining additional information or requesting an accommodation.

A notice is posted in each City department notifying the public of the City's policy to make all programs accessible to the disabled.

All promotional materials distributed by the transit system include an accommodation statement.

Public meeting and public hearing notices include an accommodation statement.

3. How does your transit system provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the service? How do they submit comments? Attach sample of surveys.

Yes. See attached survey which is posted twice per year on the buses and at the locations utilized by the City for dissemination of information.

4. Are your vehicles and equipment capable of accommodating elderly and disabled passengers?

All transportation services provided by the City of Coolidge are fully accessible to persons with disabilities. All five buses are lift and tie down equipped for transportation of the mobility impaired. All the buses except the 1993 have an extra wide lift to accommodate scooters and an extra wide entry door to more easily accommodate walkers.

5. Provide information regarding required driver training methods (e.g. first aid, CPR, and defensive driving):

**Driver Training requirements**

<b>Training</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
PASS	Provided by ADOT or Certified PASS Trainer.	Annually
First Aid	Provided by the Coolidge Fire Department.	Annually
Communication	Provided by the Transit Manager.	Semi-Annually
Defensive Driving	Provided by the Coolidge Police Department	Annually
CPR		
Pre-trip Inspection	Provided by the Transit Manager.	Semi-Annually
Substance Abuse Training	Provided by ADOT or Transit Director.	Annually, or as needed for new hires.

6. How do you notify persons with disabilities (including visual or hearing impaired) of your service?

Marketing and promotional materials are available in various formats and interpreters are available upon request.

All promotional material includes a TDD number for the hearing impaired. Information concerning the Cotton Express is aired regularly on Channel 19, a locally operated television station.

7. Describe what training programs are underway or have been accomplished to assure that all safety sensitive, administrative and supervisory personnel are adequately trained.

Supervisors are trained upon hire, upon promotion and on an annual basis on the City of Coolidge Transit System Substance Abuse Policy Statement and implementation of FTA Drug and Alcohol policies and procedures 49 CFR Parts 40 and 655. Training incorporates video tapes with special emphasis on identification of drug and alcohol use and abuse.

Safety sensitive personnel are trained upon hire on the City of Coolidge Transit System Substance Abuse Policy Statement and FTA Drug and Alcohol policies and procedures. Training includes review of City Policy. Additionally, various handbooks and videos are available for refresher training provided annually.

The Transit Director and/or Transit Manager attend various training programs offered by ADOT annually.

- 8 Explain how your agency considers risk management aspects in your transportation program.

The Transit Manager works closely with the City Fire Chief, who serves as the City Risk Manager, and with the City liability carrier in implementation of the transportation program. Equipment specifications, and operational policies and procedures are reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with state and federal laws.

Southwest Risk, the City insurance provider, has provided assistance and guidance on installation of restraints in the new bus, revision of the City Bloodborne Pathogen Policy, and development and implementation of a Policy to Eliminate Sexual Harassment.

- 9 Explain any safety violations identified by employees within the last year.

A spent [used] diabetic testing needle was found on the floor by one of the drivers who failed to dispose of it properly. The following driver was stuck on the finger with the needle. Bloodborne Pathogen training was re-given to all the drivers and the driver at fault was counseled, documented and given a written warning.

- 10 List training sessions/workshops attended by employees over the last year, including location.

Transit Director

1. ADOT Conference, [January 9<sup>th</sup>] Scottsdale
2. CAAG Training, [February 24, 2003]
3. Drug 7 Alcohol Training, Beverly Kreigher, [April 7, 2003]

4. ASTA Conference, [April 20, 21, 22, 23, 2003]
5. ADOT Conference, [August 19, 20, 2003]
6. ADOT Workshop, [January 8, 2004], Tucson

Transit Manager

1. ADOT Conference, [January 9, 2003], Scottsdale
2. CAAG Training, [February 24, 2003]
3. Drug & Alcohol Training, Beverly Kreiger, [April 7, 2003]
4. ASTA Conference, [April 20, 21, 22,23, 2003]
5. P.A.S.S. Training, [June 18, 19, 20, 2003] Tucson
6. ADOT Conference, [August 19, 20, 2003]
7. ADOT Workshop, [January 8, 2004]

Mechanics:

1. Wheelchair lift maintenance and repair, [January 8, 2004],  
Az. Bus Sales, Phoenix

**E. FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY**

Applicants should demonstrate the financial capacity and management abilities to meet ADOT Section 5311 program guidelines.

1. Describe your budget experience and qualifications related to the rural transit program.

The City of Coolidge has effectively and responsibly managed a Section 5311 funded transit program since 1989 with service beginning in 1990. The program has proven to be fiscally responsive and has been implemented according to federal and state regulations.

The Transit Director, who also serves as the City’s Finance Director responsible for the citywide budget, has nineteen years experience in managing, budgeting, and implementing federally funded grant programs. She is qualified to supervise and train personnel and has been managing the Cotton Express Transit System for the past 10 years. She is a certified PASS instructor. She received her CCTM certification in November, 1998 and re-certified in September, 2001.

The Transit Manager has over nine years CDL Driving Experience and twenty years managerial experience. She is a certified EMT with HazMat, evacuation and disaster training. She has been responsible for scheduling and oversight of the Coolidge Cotton Express Transit System for the past two years and is also a certified PASS Instructor.

The Transit Supervisor has over 20 years CDL driving experience. He has been responsible for the preventive maintenance of the Coolidge Cotton Express Transit System for the past 3 years. He is also a certified PASS instructor.

2. Describe your organization's goals and objectives and the strategies you intend to utilize to implement them.

**Goals** - are general statements about what an agency should accomplish.

**Objectives** - translate goals into specific aims that are to be accomplished within a designated time period.

- Increase ridership

1. Increase passenger trips by 10% between October 2004 to September 2005.
  - a) Actively market bus service through the use of brochures, Channel 19, word of mouth, postings, newsletters and newspaper articles.
  - b) Provide "How to Use the Bus" presentations at the Senior Center and provide one free "Try It Out" pass to attendees.
  - c) Provide transportation to the Community College and provide twice weekly shopping transportation into Coolidge for students residing in the dorms for the Fall 2004 session.
  - d) Display marketing material at City buildings, social service agencies and local businesses.
  - e) Market bus service through local employers such as the Arizona Training Center Employee Newsletter.
  - f) Distribute flyers at the schools prior to summer recess promoting "Ride the Bus to Fun" activities such as recreational/swimming opportunities.

- Decrease costs

1. Increase revenue miles by 5% between October 2004 to September 2005.
  - a) Ensure that the fixed route and designated stops are located to attract the greatest number of passengers.
  - b) Ensure that schedules and hours of service meet the needs of passengers.
2. Reduce emergency vehicle maintenance by 5 service calls between October 2004 and September 2005.
  - a) Continue regular 3,000 mile preventative maintenance service.
  - b) Review proper bus operating procedures and pre/post inspection procedures every six months with each driver.

- Maintain safe and courteous service

1. Develop and retain qualified personnel with no more than 1 employee turnover per year
  - a) Provide PASS Training and refresher course annually.
  - b) Provide Defensive Driver Training annually.
  - c) Provide refresher Drug/Alcohol, Evacuation Techniques, Bio-Hazard and basic First Aid training annually.
  - d) Update and maintain an operation policy and procedural manual for reference by employees.
  - e) Provide conflict resolution training to drivers and dispatchers.
  - f) Provide safety awareness training quarterly.
  - g) Ensure that salaries and benefits are comparable to other transit systems through annual review.
2. Have no more than 2 incidents per driver per year and no accidents
  - a) Document all incidents
  - b) Conduct background checks at time of hire of all employees
  - c) Conduct motor vehicle record checks upon hire and semi-annually thereafter on all drivers

3. Describe your past performance with ADOT Section 5311 government contract requirements.

The City has successfully implemented Section 5311 contracts through ADOT according to rules and regulations since 1990. In that time we have had no findings of non-compliance during our annual audits.

4. Describe your management plan for vehicle maintenance. How do you keep track of vehicles with a long history of maintenance problems? How are non-emergency repairs handled?

Each bus has a maintenance card that is filled out daily. The City’s mechanics review those cards for notations from the drivers daily, and for preventative maintenance items scheduled. The history on each vehicle is represented on those cards. Currently most repairs and preventive maintenance are handled by the City’s mechanics using city facilities and equipment. Technical repairs are scheduled at Arizona Bus Sales in Phoenix.

5. Explain any efforts to obtain additional local funds within your own community.

Staff researched the possibility of utilizing advertising on the side of the buses. Two local businesses have expressed interest and ads have been drawn up to their specifications. Removable ads are being designed by, “Vision It” the company which created the graphics presently on our buses.

Ad space has been sold on the back of our bus schedules. Two of the companies purchasing exterior bus ads are presently advertising on the schedules.

List any governmental jurisdictions you have met with over the last year to identify additional funding sources for transit services. Include names of agencies, counties, and/or cities. Describe those agencies that have agreed to provide financial assistance or that have refused assistance and why the assistance was refused.

The Coolidge City Council is very cooperative in utilizing Lottery Funds to support the Transit project. Current funding includes:

**Fare Revenues**

**23,688**

**Local Match**

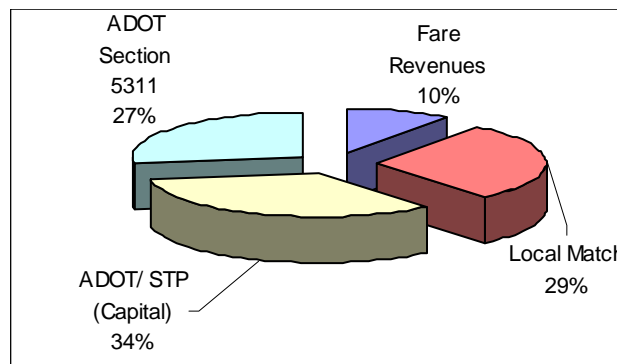
**68,411**

**ADOT/ STP (Capital)**

**79,790**

**ADOT Section 5311**

**64,447**





6. Explain the utilization of STP Flexible Funding, “Welfare to Work”, TANF, “Access to Jobs”, and “Reverse Commute” funding programs.

During this contract year (2004-2005), the City was awarded \$\*\*,\*\*\* from the STP Flexible funding for capital expense. Should additional funds become available the City will submit additional proposals. The City submitted a proposal for TANF funding in 1997 and were not funded. That funding has been with the Gila Pinal Community Child Services here in Coolidge since that time, and we would expect them to continue.

#### **F. LOCAL COMMITMENT TO TRANSIT**

1. Provide a general description of your involvement with community and civic groups and steps you have taken to involve the community in your activities.

The City is committed to work with community civic groups.

- The City provides transportation services to the Family Resource Center and ACTFAST after school program.
- Cooperation with the local Chamber of Commerce is demonstrated by participation in local events such as the Coolidge Days and Cotton Days parades.
- The Cotton Express Transit system works with the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument providing bus service during events such as the State Archeological Fair and the Heritage Fund Representatives’ tour.
- The Cotton Express supports the efforts of the City Parks and Recreation Program by providing transportation for C.A.S.P.E.R. after school participants and the summertime Kids Kamp program.

2. Describe your participation in local transportation planning and policy decisions in your community.

The City of Coolidge participates with CAAG, Pinal County and other local communities in planning for and addressing transportation issues identified now and anticipated in the future.

The Mayor, City Council and City Management have demonstrated a significant commitment to rural transit by implementation and expansion of Cotton Express services.

3. Describe the commitment of your Transportation Advisory Committee or local government entity with regards to marketing, promotion or outreach efforts.

The Mayor and City Council serving as the TAC provides a greater opportunity for public outreach and dissemination of information concerning transit operations. Council meetings are televised locally on Channel 19 and regular articles appear in the local newspaper concerning Council meetings and actions taken. The Council is very supportive of the Cotton Express, are pleased with operation of the program and gladly point out with pride that the City of Coolidge is the only community in Pinal County to have a public transportation system.

At least quarterly, the Mayor and Council discuss transportation issues and encourage active public participation.

4. What is the composition of your Transit Advisory Committee and their position in the community? How is input obtained related to service design changes that affect the operation of the transit system?

As noted above the TAC is composed of the Mayor and six Council members. The current Council has 4 males and 3 females, three of whom are Hispanic, and one individual with a hearing impairment. The TAC represents a wide range of professions including two farmers, a retired R.N., social service worker, adult probation supervisor, director of a human services agency, and a housing programs manager. Input is obtained via questionnaires made available to the community.

As noted in our three year Transit Plan, we are working on forming a Transportation Advisory Committee during this current year.

Over 100 flyers went out to local business owners and managers asking for their interest in becoming a TAC Board member. We didn't receive a single reply to our letter.

5. Describe the involvement of elected officials in transit policy issues, including funding, welfare-to-work, and service changes.

As noted above the Coolidge City Council serves as the Transit advisory Committee. All transit related decisions are made by the City Council. All grants or proposals for funding are brought before the City Council. City Council approves all cash match funding for grants.

## **G. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS**

Describe the impact your service has on local economic development. It is necessary that your response include reference to such points as:

1. List the local employment and commercial centers that are served by your routes.

Inside the City, the Cotton Express fixed route is no more than 4 blocks from every employment and commercial center. Additionally, bus stops are located at the following:

- Safeway Shopping Center
- Shopes IGA
- Wal Mart Shopping Center
- Main Street shops
- Coolidge Unified School District
- DES
- Doctor's offices
- City Offices
- County Offices

2. Any plans on expanding service boundaries or extending service hours to meet additional transit needs?

The City is in the process of developing an Industrial Park. Once industrial sites are open, the City will consider providing service to the area. The City annexed approximately 3,500 acres into the

corporate limits of the City of Coolidge this past year. Transit services will be extended to those areas where housing is present.

The Cotton Express would like to provide transportation to the College beginning with the Fall 2004 semester; provided that ridership is sufficient to meet costs. Twice weekly dorm student transportation into Coolidge to shop is also another proposal for the Fall 2004 semester.

The City does not plan to extend hours of operation at this time.

3. Discuss promotion of transit service as an aid to development. Cite any integration activities with local economic development groups, such as Chambers of Commerce.
  - Information concerning the Cotton Express is available on the City's web page.
  - The Chamber of Commerce brochure includes notation of the city bus service.
  - Prospectus for potential businesses includes a description of transportation services.
  - Bus stop shelters are placed along the main boulevard to let anyone passing through Coolidge know that the city has a public transit system.

How do you ensure that the community is aware of your intent to apply for Section 5311 funding?

A public hearing is advertised in the local newspaper and takes place at a January City Council meeting televised on our local television channel. Notices are placed in the city newsletter. Notices are sent to all known providers in our area notifying them of our intent.

4. What means are used to communicate job openings, relative to minority individuals?

Job openings are advertised in the local newspaper, posted at City Hall, listed on the City web page and listed with DES. All job notices contain a statement that the City of Coolidge is an equal opportunity employer and that reasonable accommodations are provided to qualified disabled applicants.

5. How does your transit system provide service to public housing and low income communities: Explain

The City of Coolidge is a low mod populated community with 57% of its' residents below the poverty level. Thus, the Coolidge City Council is committed to keeping the fare prices low. The transit system serves the community with bus stops within virtually every two blocks, and dial-a-ride services available throughout the entire community.

#### **H. CIVIL RIGHTS TITLE VI**

1. How are minority individuals, low-income families, and persons with disabilities informed about the availability of transit service in your community?

Marketing is to the general public and not to any particular group within the community; however, particular emphasis is placed on dissemination of information through outlets frequented by minority individuals and the disabled such as DES, the food bank, and social service agencies. Ads are placed

in the City's newsletter that is mailed to every household within the city. Bus schedules, flyers and other pertinent informational flyers are printed in both English and Spanish.

2. Provide information about any complaints, lawsuits, allegations or legal actions that have been filed against your agency in the last two years? Explain the nature of the complaint(s):

A lawsuit has been filed by a lessee at the City of Coolidge Airport to prohibit City action of enforcement of potential lease violations. Action pending.

3. Does your agency have an Equal Employment Opportunity Policy?

Yes. A statement of non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity is included in the City Personnel Policy.

4. What means are used by your agency to ensure that hiring, terminating, promoting, demoting and other employee actions are accomplished within Civil Rights Title VI requirements?

The City of Coolidge Personnel Policy ensures that employee actions in hiring, termination, promotion, demotion, etc. do not discriminate against any of the protective classes and that an employee is allowed due process under the law.

5. What means are used to communicate job openings and other Information pertinent to minorities seeking employment?

Job openings are advertised in the local newspaper, posted at City Hall, listed on the City web page and listed with DES. All job notices contain a statement that the City of Coolidge is an equal opportunity employer and that reasonable accommodations are provided to qualified disabled applicants.

6. What attempts are made to utilize Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) contractors?

In procurement of products or services, the City maintains a bid list and incorporates DBE and MBE contractors and providers listed in the ADOT DBE/MBE listing as well as the Arizona Department of Commerce DBE/MBE listing. Bid notices include a statement encouraging MBE/WBE participation.

## **APPENDIX V: GUIDELINES FOR 5311 PROGRAMS**

Guidelines may be obtained on the web at...

[http://www.azdot.gov/PTD/PDF/5311\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.azdot.gov/PTD/PDF/5311_Guidelines.pdf)

Or by contacting Sam Chavez, 5311 Program Manager, at the Arizona Department of Transportation, Public Transit Division, phone: 602 712 7465 and/or e-mail: [schavez@azdot.gov](mailto:schavez@azdot.gov)