

Contra Costa County Mobility Management Plan Draft

March 1, 2013



*Central Contra Costa Transit
Authority*

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DRAFT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (County Connection) County Connection has taken the lead in managing the planning process for the development of a mobility management plan for the entire County. This Plan resulting from that effort is meant to guide implementation of a broad array of services under the mobility management framework. The starting point for the planning process is the definition of the concept.

Mobility Management is the utilization of a broad mix of service delivery and support strategies that are directed primarily at the travel needs of seniors, persons with disabilities, and low income individuals. These strategies often integrate with and support other public service solutions provided to the larger public transit and paratransit rider populations. Mobility Management is not one solution but a toolkit of solutions that are tailored to the service needs of the special population groups.

This Plan recommends the formation of an organization to take the lead in implementing a broad range of mobility management strategies. Specifically, a Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) is recommended for Contra Costa County. A CTSA in the County would provide the vehicle through which the list of desired services could be deployed. The creation of an Advisory Committee is recommended to undertake the tasks needed to establish the CTSA. Options for funding the program are identified and a draft budget of \$325,000 is proposed for each of the first two years of operation to establish the agency.

The Plan suggests a number of service strategies responding to transportation needs identified in the planning process. These gaps were vetted through outreach efforts with community stakeholders that work with seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons with low-income. The specific strategies proposed for Contra Costa County are:

- **Travel training:** Create a program to teach bus riding skills on all county transit systems.
- **Improved ADA Eligibility Process:** Institute a refined countywide ADA eligibility process, possibly an in-person assessment approach, to improve the accuracy of the eligibility determinations.
- **Agency Partnerships:** Work with human service agencies so they can provide transportation to their agency clients who currently use the ADA paratransit service operated by the transit agencies.

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- **Centralized Maintenance:** Evaluate the viability of a centralized maintenance program directed at serving the unique needs of the human service community who are operating a variety of vehicles in their programs.
- **Volunteer Driver Program:** Expand volunteer driver programs throughout the County as an inexpensive means of serving difficult medical and other trip needs for seniors and persons with disabilities.
- **Central Information Program:** Expand information availability by making meaningful resource information available through a central referral mechanism.
- **Advocacy Role of Mobility Management:** Determine the level of advocacy appropriate for a new CTSA in Contra Costa County and include the new agency in all transportation planning processes.
- **Technical Assistance Program:** Include technical support as one of the services of the newly created CTSA to assist the human service community and other agencies in planning, grant management, and other technical functions.
- **Driver Training Program:** Establish professional and consistent driver training program for human service agencies; offer driver training services relating to special needs populations to existing paratransit providers.

Chapter 1: METHODOLOGY

Background

The Contra Costa Mobility Management Plan was commissioned by County Connection. It was derived from a Countywide outreach process, involved agencies throughout the entire County, and offers strategies applicable to the entire County. The Plan's technical basis is derived from input from transportation experts representing many agencies and the experience of the consulting team.

The Plan is intended to guide long term development of mobility management projects that fill gaps in existing transportation services and are sustainable both on the basis of organizational structure and funding. Traditional transportation services are increasingly challenged to meet the needs of a diverse population. The result is increased emphasis on specialized programs that enhance transportation services and provide alternatives to fill gaps that seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons with low-income face. These are broadly defined as mobility management strategies.

The identification and even pursuit of these service delivery strategies is not enough to meet the need. Only through institutional commitment and appropriate institutional structures can these unique delivery strategies be provided. A CTSA will provide the framework for that process in Contra Costa County.

Methodology and Outreach

The process used to construct the Plan involved the following general steps:

Establish overall project direction and objectives: This initial planning stage involved discussions with the agencies managing the planning process, in particular County Connection and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA). The outcome was the broadening of the objective of the project to include consideration of the full range of mobility management options and structures for the County as opposed to a "one-stop" call center information referral project.

Identify appropriate mobility management functions and service delivery structures through technical analysis and community input: The analytical portion of the planning process was strongly supported by extensive community input. Activities involved meetings with community agencies to identify needs and to present technical options. The results of this process became the list of strategies included in the Plan.

Formal advisory input: The planning process was supported by two levels of advisory input. The first was the formation of an ad hoc Stakeholders Advisory Committee. This group represented varying interests throughout the County and included a cross section of agency types and geographic perspectives. The direction provided by this group was invaluable to the direction of the Plan. Among the most important outcomes of the advisory committee was recognition that an institutional frame work was necessary to deliver the creative service options. The Plan defines both the structure recommended and the functional programs that were identified by the community and Advisory Committee.

The second level of advisory input was in the form of three Summit meetings held throughout the County. These Summits were structured to solicit input and feedback on specific mobility management options. Input from the participants was extremely helpful in defining the elements of this Mobility Management Plan.

(See Appendix 1 for documentation of outreach meetings)

Throughout the outreach process stakeholder input was elicited to identify the challenges their target population face when traveling throughout Contra Costa County. These findings were used to design strategies to fill the gaps that are detailed in Chapter 3. Throughout the outreach process the overarching theme was the lack of coordination amongst human service agencies, transit operators, and private/public/non-profit agencies. Although there are many providers of transportation there has been no central focal point for coordination, implementation, and enhancement of transportation options for the special needs population. The recommendations in this Plan provide a comprehensive approach to address the challenges identified through outreach to the community.

Chapter 2: MOBILITY MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OPTIONS

Mobility management is one part of a complex matrix of transportation services in any urban area. The “public transportation system” is made up of a number of elements that interact and often overlap. The major components of a public transportation system are: fixed route bus service for the general public, paratransit bus service for individuals with disabilities as described in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and mobility management/human service transportation serving the specialized transportation needs of the population. These three elements have traditionally operated independently of each other.

In a coordinated transportation system, the three elements work in a more integrated fashion to serve certain targeted populations, specifically individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and persons of low income. This can result in service and cost efficiencies that yield benefits for the individual riders, public agencies and smaller human service transportation providers. The quantitative and qualitative impacts of integrating the system are captured in this Plan.

Though “mobility management” has often been defined narrowly to focus on one-stop call centers, this Plan takes a broader view. No one strategy can serve all of the needs of the special needs groups targeted and for this reason the Plan consists of a variety of programs each meeting some aspect of the overall demand. This Plan includes strategies that exceed available funding and sets forth a list with recommended priorities. It also suggests approaches to funding intended to create a viable and sustainable program.

Consolidated Transportation Services Agency

Elements embodied in the concept of mobility management have been a part of the transportation service delivery framework for many years. Only recently have the elements been referred to as mobility management. The federal coordination requirements are now placing renewed emphasis strategies to increase coordination in California such as the formation of CTSA's.

When the State passed AB 120, the Social Services Transportation Improvement Act, it allowed county or regional transportation planning agencies to designate one or more organizations within their areas as Consolidated Transportation Service Agencies (CTSA's). The goal was to promote the coordination of social service transportation for the benefit of human service clients, including the elderly, disabled individuals, and

persons of low income. AB 120 specified the following advantages of service coordination through use of CTSA:

- Combined purchasing of necessary equipment so that some cost savings through larger number of unit purchases can be realized.
- Adequate training of drivers to insure the safe operation of vehicles. Proper driver training should promote lower insurance costs and encourage use of the service.
- Centralized dispatching of vehicles so that efficient use of vehicles results.
- Centralized maintenance of vehicles so that adequate and routine vehicle maintenance scheduling is possible.
- Centralized administration of various social service transportation programs so that elimination of numerous duplicative and costly administrative organizations can occur. Centralized administration of social service transportation services permitting social service agencies to respond to specific social needs.
- Identification and consolidation of all existing sources of funding for social service transportation services can provide more effective and cost efficient use of scarce resource dollars. Consolidation of categorical program funds can foster eventual elimination of unnecessary and unwarranted program constraints.

The CTSA structure is unique to California. While other states are beginning to implement coordinated transportation projects, only California has the state legislated model of the CTSA. Thus, for three decades, initiatives to coordinate human service transportation programs in California have been largely guided by AB 120. There is a new focus on CTSA as the appropriate entity to implement the federal programs embodied in the federal legislation that provides funding for mobility management projects - SAFETEA-LU. Other communities are seeking to create new CTSA or designate existing organizations as CTSA to combine the State and federal legislation into service delivery mechanisms that have resources and focus to achieve real coordination. A significant dialogue is underway throughout California regarding the role of the CTSA and its ability to meet both the federal and State coordination requirements.

One of the provisions of SAFETEA-LU is that all projects must be derived from a locally developed human service transportation plan. In January 2013, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) circulated a Draft Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Update which recommends the designation of CTSA to facilitate sub-regional mobility management and transportation coordination efforts

What Is A CTSA Intended To Do?

While no two CTSA's are structured the same or provide exactly the same services, there are common objectives to be found in all CTSA activities:

- Increase transportation options for seniors, the disabled, and persons of low income.
- Reduce the costs for public transportation.
- Identify and implement efficiencies in community transportation operations.

What Can A CTSA Look Like and Accomplish?

CTSA's in California have taken on a variety of forms and within those various forms they provide a range of services. The most successful CTSA's have embraced the concept of human service coordination and mobilized efforts to creatively use resources to accomplish great things in their local communities. While all forms of CTSA have the potential to achieve the objectives of the concept, evidence provided through a review of available CTSA documentation and case studies indicates that certain structures may be more conducive to successful project implementation than others.

AB 120, the California legislation creating CTSA's along with the subsequent federal guidance on human service transportation coordination offers a general concept of a coordination or mobility management agency. Within that guidance is great latitude to mold the concept to the unique circumstances of a local community. The most successful CTSA's have built a creative array of programs serving a broad population of persons in need. The typical target populations include the disabled, elderly, and low-income individuals. Many studies including planning efforts in Contra Costa County have documented the substantial unmet needs of these groups and the need for additional specialized transportation capacity programs capable of targeting these potential riders. As the definition of need is broadened to include young children and possibly other groups, the volume of need becomes even more extensive.

Well refined CTSA's have addressed the broad variety of needs in creative ways. They have typically used limited funds in creative ways to achieve substantial results. For example, efforts in other counties have included joint funding of service provided by human service agencies for their own client populations. Some communities combine funding for transportation programs with other sources. Examples of non-transportation funding that are sometimes used to support transportation services include Regional Centers, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Area Agency on Aging.

A very effective CTSA is an organization that serves as a broad facilitator – or champion - of transportation coordination. The role typically means that the agency is well

connected in the transportation and human service community and is a leader in creating solutions to travel needs. This is often accomplished through negotiating cooperative agreements between agencies to coordinate their use of funds, acquisition of capital assets (e.g. vehicles, computer equipment, etc.), buying power for goods or services (e.g. joint fuel purchase), physical facilities such as garages and parking, or other functional elements. Service delivery can be as low profile as coordinating a volunteer driver program to managing a travel training program for fixed route service to facilitation of direct service delivery through contracts with social service agencies. An important consideration is that most functions that a CTSA can perform can be offered through any of a variety of structural models.

Consolidated Transportation Service Agency Models

AB 120 requires that a CTSA be designated by a transportation planning agency. In Contra Costa County, this entity is the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). According to statute each CTSA designated must be an agency other than the planning agency. The range of options for CTSA designation as defined in law are:

- a) A public agency, including a city, county, operator [transit operator], any state department or agency, public corporation, or public district, or a joint powers entity created pursuant to the California Government Code Section 15951.
- b) A common carrier of persons as defined in Section 211 of the Public Utilities Code, engaged in the transportation of persons, as defined in Section 208.
- c) A private entity operating under a franchise or license.
- d) A nonprofit corporation organized pursuant to Division 2 (commencing with Section 9000) of Title 1, Corporations Code.

Within these broad legal definitions, a number of alternative CTSA structure models have emerged. These or possible variations are open for consideration for application in Contra Costa County. The following are the principal structural options for CTSA organizations in the County.

1. Single Purpose Nonprofit Agency: In California there are limited examples of nonprofit agencies that have been designated a CTSA that provide a wide range of transportation programs and services. Noteworthy examples of existing nonprofit CTSA's are Outreach in Santa Clara County, Valley Transportation Services in San Bernardino County, and Paratransit, Inc. in Sacramento County.

Outreach and Escort of Santa Clara County served as the CTSA in the County for several years before its designation was rescinded by MTC. It was recently

re-designated by MTC and is currently the only CTSA in the nine county Bay Area. Access Services in Los Angeles was created largely to manage the ADA paratransit program in LA County but was also designated the CTSA. It was created through action by public agencies to address ADA and coordination issues.

2. Multi-Purpose Nonprofit Agency: There are examples in California where a multi-purpose nonprofit agency has been designated the CTSA. This is typically a situation where a strong nonprofit organization with an effective infrastructure wishes to champion transportation issues and adds those functions to a broader list of agency activities. Ride-On of San Luis Obispo is an example of this form of organization. Ride-On was originally the United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) affiliate in San Luis Obispo and still serves in that capacity in addition to its transportation responsibilities. There are many examples of nonprofit organizations that have created major transportation programs under an umbrella that includes nutrition services, housing programs, food banks, and other common human service functions.
3. County Government: In many rural California counties, transportation services are provided by the County. Often this includes providing public transit services. This is a common structure in smaller or rural counties. Several counties have been designated CTSA. Often though not always, transportation services are provided through the public works department. Counties such as Glenn and Colusa are examples of this form of CTSA.
4. Public Transit Agency: In some California counties the local public transit agency has been designated the CTSA. This applies to both legislated transit districts and to Joint Powers Authority (JPA) agencies. It is typically in smaller counties that the transit agency has been designated. Examples of transit agencies that are CTSA are El Dorado Transit, Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (Bishop), and the Mendocino Transit Authority. All of these are JPAs.

Legal Setting

The legal basis for establishing and managing CTSA is contained in the California enacted Transportation Development Act (TDA). This broad set of California laws and regulations concerning transportation funding and management contains the various provisions governing CTSA. The CTSA portion of the TDA is a relatively small part of a much larger law concerning funding for all modes of transportation and certain specific funding sources available to all counties for transportation purposes.

The two funding sources included in TDA are:

- Local Transportation Fund (LTF): derived from a ¼ cent of the general sales tax collected within the county
- State Transit Assistance Fund (STA): derived from the statewide sale tax on gasoline and diesel fuel.

The portion of the TDA creating CTSA provides that such agencies are eligible to claim up to 5% of the LTF for community transportation purposes.

The Act also specifies the process through which a CTSA may be designated. The designating agency may promulgate regulations specific to the CTSA as well as the duration of the designation. The length of CTSA designation varies throughout California. For a number of CTSA, the term of designation has evolved over time. For example, Paratransit, Inc. in Sacramento was designated the CTSA in 1981 for a one year period. This designation was reviewed and extended later in multi-year increments. In 1988, the designation was extended “without a time limitation.” This designation has continued to this day.

The oversight of claimants for TDA funds including CTSA are subject to two audits. First is an annual fiscal audit that must be submitted within 180 days of the close of each fiscal year. The second is a triennial performance audit. This periodic audit conducted according to specific guidelines, evaluates the performance of a TDA claimant and could serve as the basis for determining the future of a CTSA.

Governing Structure

An area of CTSA oversight that is not contained in the TDA law and regulations is the local governing structure of the designated agency. If a CTSA is a public agency, the governing board of that agency would traditionally oversee receipt and expenditure of public funds. Since a CTSA can be a County, a transit agency, or other government agency, it would be subject to the scrutiny of a board that is otherwise responsible for fiduciary oversight. A CTSA may also be a nonprofit corporation. The governing structure may vary substantially among nonprofit corporations. Many traditional charitable nonprofit corporations have self-appointing boards. This typically means that interested members of the community may be appointed to the board by the sitting board members. Ride-On in San Luis Obispo is an example of this type of governing structure.

There is precedent in California for a nonprofit corporation to have a board of directors whose make-up is governed by political agreement associated with its structure. Paratransit, Inc. began as a traditional nonprofit corporation with a self-appointing board. Later in its evolution, local public agencies formed an agreement associated with Paratransit's designation as a CTSA that included specific appointing authority to local governmental jurisdictions. This revised structure provided the desired level of oversight and representation.

Sample Consolidated Transportation Service Agency Operating Budget

Once the functions to be performed by a new CTSA are determined, then a budget for the early operation of the organization can be developed. The budget will be defined by whether a new agency is created or the CTSA designation is added to an existing organization. This will determine whether the entire infrastructure of an organization is necessary or if staff and other support services are added onto an existing agency. Administrative overhead will be an important element to identify. The staff capacity of the CTSA will have an impact on the organization's ability to build programs and to manage the range of functions that a CTSA is capable of performing.

In the growth stage of a CTSA, considerable time and effort (staff resources) will be necessary to forge partnerships with other organizations, prepare grant applications, implement service functions, etc. For discussion purposes, a startup CTSA budget for Contra Costa County is presented below. It presents general cost estimates for overhead but does not include costs for individual program elements. Significant refinement would be necessary with actual implementation. However, the sample budget serves as a presentation of basic cost items to guide decision making relative to structure options. This draft budget is based on the premise that a new stand-alone agency would be created to operate the CTSA. The budget therefore includes the financing necessary to lease office space, equip and staff the office, and initiate selected startup service delivery projects.

CTSA Operating Budget: New Nonprofit Corporation

COST CATEGORY	Cost Estimate	Notes
Staff		
Executive Director	\$140,000	Salary, taxes, benefits
Administrative Assistant	\$49,000	Salary, taxes, benefits
Direct Expenses		
Office Space	\$72,000	2000 square feet @ \$3/square foot
Utilities	\$5,400	\$450 / month
Professional Services	\$35,000	legal; accounting
Phone	\$3,600	\$300 / month
Supplies	\$3,600	\$300 / month
Insurance	\$3,000	\$3,000/ year
Travel	\$1,000	\$1,000 / year
Misc. Expense	\$12,000	
Functional Programs		
Travel Training		Cost to be determined
ADA Eligibility Process		Cost to be determined
Agency Partnerships		Cost to be determined
Coordinated Vehicle Maintenance		Cost to be determined
Volunteer Driver Programs		Cost to be determined
Central Information Program		Cost to be determined
Advocacy Role		Cost to be determined
Technical Support		Cost to be determined
Reserve		
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$324,600	
FUNDING SOURCES (potential)		
Measure J	\$120,000	
MTC Grant	\$205,000	
FTA 5316 JARC		
FTA 5317 New Freedom		
TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES	\$325,000	

Chapter 3: FUNCTIONS

The actual functions or services provided by CTSA's and the methods through which they are delivered can vary widely. One major influence on the overall effectiveness of a CTSA is the amount of available funding that the organization has to manage or direct. Some funds do not have to actually flow through the agency. Other funds are directly managed by the agency and can be used to provide direct services or to "seed" projects through other agencies using various grant management strategies.

The service functions that were supported by the stakeholders and the public in Contra Costa County are defined below. Some of these have been under consideration by the community for several years. Others emerged as priorities through the planning process. A subsequent implementation step would be to set priorities among the listed strategies and prepare precise implementation plans and budgets.

Travel Training

Existing Travel Training Programs In Contra Costa County

Some travel training programs currently operate in Contra Costa County. These programs have limited scope both geographically and relative to the clientele that are included in the programs.

- County Connection has a travel ambassador program but staff time to manage it has been cut.
- Futures Explored provides travel training for their consumers and receives a stipend from the Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB) to provide this service.
- Independent Living Resources (ILR) of Solano and Contra Costa Counties has an informal travel training program for clients of their agency. ILR staff will provide training to clients on an as needed basis.

Proposed Countywide Travel Training Program

There are several potential elements in a full scale travel training program. Each is defined below.

- Travel Training or Mobility Training – The most intensive level of travel training is based upon one-on-one instruction for difficult cases. Often the trainees are developmentally disabled and require extensive and repetitive instruction in order to achieve transit independence. The trainer will work with a client usually for

several days to instruct them on how to use the transit system to get to their destination.

- **Bus Familiarization** – This type of training is less intensive and generally can be done in several hours. Typical bus familiarization training would be for a person or group to learn how to read transit schedules and/or take a single trip to a major destination such as a mall. This is also common for physically disabled individuals who need instruction on the use of the special equipment on standard transit buses such as wheelchair lifts, kneeling features, audio stop announcements both internal and external, farebox usage, etc. Bus familiarization is sometimes done in the field in active transit service. In other cases, this training is conducted at the transit facility using out-of-service transit coaches.
- **Transit Ambassador/Bus Buddy Program** – Transit ambassador or bus buddy programs can take several forms. The program usually matches a trainee with a trainer. Typically the trainee and trainer will have something in common - perhaps both are seniors going to a congregate meal site. Transit ambassador and Bus Buddy programs typically use volunteers to teach transit riding skills.

Cost Implications

Moving riders from the ADA service to fixed-route transit can produce dramatic savings to transit operations. For example if a rider travels to and from a day-program each day using a paratransit service which costs \$31.00 per passenger one-way trip versus using fixed route transit which costs \$8.00. Assuming a travel trainer can train between 4-6 ADA riders per month, the cost of the program easily pays for itself. In Fiscal Year 2012, Sacramento, CA three travel trainers instructed a total of 219 people with a cost avoidance of \$674,702.

ADA Eligibility Process

Eligibility Assessment Options

The FTA does not prescribe a particular eligibility process and a number of models are in use across the US. Whatever process is selected by a local transit operator must simply meet the established FTA criteria outlined above. In addition to the paper application process currently in use by Solano County transit operators, three other types of eligibility procedures are in use by transit operators in other communities. The three principal alternative approaches are: telephone interviews/assessments; web-based assessments; in-person eligibility assessments.

ADA eligibility experts debate the accuracy of the various assessment models. While telephone and web-based options are less expensive than an in-person process, the lack of personal contact and observation and the lack of functional testing make refined eligibility determinations, or conditional eligibility, difficult to assign. Yet some communities strongly endorse the telephone and web-based options. The paratransit broker in Santa Clara County, California (where San Jose is located) relies primarily on telephone interviews for eligibility determinations. These are usually conducted by high level professionals such as occupational therapists who conduct a comprehensive conversation on the phone with the applicant, and in a very few cases where a determination cannot be made, the applicant will be referred for an in-person assessment. Eligibility outcomes are relatively similar to those of in-person assessments, though the ability to apply eligibility conditions is arguably more challenging.

Web-based assessments have been pioneered by a Southern California firm. This model has been applied in nine paratransit programs, ranging from those in smaller communities such as Victor Valley and Butte County, CA (population in the 200,000 range) to larger systems such as Richmond, Virginia and North San Diego County (population in the 600,000 to 800,000 range). The web-based model is based on the premise that, since most applicants are found fully eligible, and since most systems that use in-person assessments have yet to apply their eligibility conditions, transit agencies that are fiscally constrained should not be spending significant sums on transporting applicants to in-person assessments and burdening applicants with travel to an assessment location.

Under this model, applicants need to create an on-line account, complete the application and then mail or e-mail a healthcare form completed by a professional who is familiar with their abilities. This information is then reviewed by the professional on the evaluation team who has specific expertise in the disability that is the basis for the person's application. Team members include medical doctors, physical and occupational therapists, registered nurses, social workers etc. Eligibility outcomes are relatively similar to those from in-person assessments in terms of the breakdown of eligibility categories, but not in terms of level of detail. On average, about 56% of the 36,000 applications that have been reviewed so far have been determined fully eligible, 38% conditional (includes 11% temporary), and 6% ineligible. In a small number of cases, if determinations cannot be made remotely, the firm sets up in-person functional assessments locally. Appeals have remained below 1% of the total number of certifications.

Assessment costs range from \$45 to \$70 per application. While the relatively lower costs of these assessments have been appealing to a number of agencies, some of the

shortcomings that have been cited by paratransit eligibility experts have been as follows:

- The model relies too heavily on applicants' ability to use technology (although these are often completed by caseworkers and other professionals, and exceptions are available for those who cannot use the web)
- There is limited ability to have a discussion with the applicant about the full range of mobility options afforded by in-person assessments.
- The inability to observe applicants ambulate in-person places a significant limit on the evaluator's ability to establish reliable and informative eligibility conditions.

An in-person assessment process results in the greatest accuracy. The ability to personally observe applicants, discuss their functional limitations, and perform structured functional evaluations results in a much greater level of accuracy. Though typically more expensive to perform than assessment models, many operators have determined that the refined ability to introduce conditions for ADA paratransit use make the additional expense of the assessment cost effective. Most of the major transit operators in the US have already introduced in-person assessments. Of the top 10 transit agencies, Boston was the last to introduce an in-person process in December, 2012. As interest in applying conditional eligibility as a cost control tool increases, more agencies are implementing in-person eligibility as the means to achieve that objective.

Overview of In-Person Eligibility

An in-person ADA eligibility process typically consists of a number of steps in order to more precisely evaluate an applicant's bus riding ability, mobility to access a bus stop, and to come to a definitive decision as to functional capability. The shift from a paper process to an in-person approach is based upon the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) focus on a functional model of eligibility versus a medical model. With a paper process, the emphasis is typically on the *diagnosis* of a disability of the applicant.

Steps common to an in-person eligibility process include:

1. In-person interview of the applicant during which details of condition can be established by a trained interviewer
2. Various transit skill functional tests that help the interviewer verify certain abilities relating specifically to transit riding, and
3. Selected use of professional verification if the interviewer needs further information to establish details of conditions that are not readily apparent to the interviewer.

An in-person process usually takes between 30 and 90 minutes to complete depending upon the nature of the individual's disability and the resulting need for various functional tests. In order to render consistent and accurate determinations, the interview and any skills tests are conducted in a very uniform and "scientific" manner. Interviewers are typically trained to a high level of proficiency in evaluating information provided by the applicant and in interpreting information gathered during functional tests or from medical professionals. Thorough documentation of each assessment is then compiled. This becomes the basis for reviewing any case that is appealed by the applicant.

Cost Implications

Transit agencies that transition from a paper ADA eligibility application process to in-person assessment process typically realize an approximate 15% drop in applications. Although the specific cost implications will vary, implementing in-person assessments has been shown to contain paratransit operating costs.

Agency Partnerships

One of the most effective tools for implementation by a CTSA is partnering with community agencies to deliver trips more efficiently and at lower cost than those through traditional ADA paratransit service. An underlying concept in partnership agreements are shared cost contracting. This concept has proven effective in many communities and is now being replicated in others both within and outside California. This approach to service delivery builds on the resources of community agencies and offers partial support of their transportation through subsidized maintenance, insurance, or other technical contributions. Another form of community partnership involves the payment to an agency for the provision of its own transportation service through some combination of funding sources. The resulting service is far less expensive than traditional door-to-door service commonly provided today under ADA guidelines. Since virtually all clients of these agencies are ADA eligible, they could simply be added to the growing numbers of ADA riders. Instead, agency clients are carried on agency vehicles more efficiently and at lower cost. Higher quality service for the client also results from the dedication of the agency to its clients, the stability of routine pick up and drop off schedules, and the often shorter trip length due to the proximity of individuals to programs.

There are two advantages to transit operators of this type of CTSA coordination program.

- By moving agency trips off ADA service, the 50% subscription cap in any given time period on ADA demand response service, which causes service denials under ADA, can be avoided.

- Reporting of CTSA agency trips can bring more federal funding into a region through formula programs. Some CTSA's report trips directly into the National Transit Database (NTD). Counting these trips increases the formula funding available to a region through 5307. Agency trips typically qualify as part of the ADA trip total.

Cost Implications

In locations where successful agency trip models have been deployed cost saving for moving trips off ADA service is dramatic. Honolulu, Hawaii has such a model where trips performed by the local ADA service provider at a cost of \$38.63 for a one-way trip are now being completed by a human service agency for \$4.85 a one-way trip, with over 55,000 trips performed in the first year of operation. **A savings of \$1,857,900.**

Coordinated Vehicle Maintenance

A major program function that can be performed by a CTSA is coordinated vehicle maintenance. In such a program, a central maintenance provider operates a garage servicing a broad range of vehicles. Participation in the maintenance program is voluntary but brings with it such benefits that it is appealing to community agencies from a business perspective. Typically, there are many advantages to the social service community in participating in a program designed to meet its unique maintenance needs. A primary benefit is the overall safety of the CTSA fleet. With services being provided according to rigorously structured maintenance standards, overall fleet safety is ensured. The central provider works with agency customers to ensure compliance with such requirements as CHP inspections and all OSHA regulations.

There are beneficial features common to a coordinated-maintenance program which is listed below:

Specialized Expertise

A centralized maintenance program that services paratransit type vehicles (typically cutaway buses) develops specialized expertise that is not routinely available in commercial repair shops. This includes familiarity with wheelchair lifts, cutaway chassis, brake interlock systems, fareboxes, mobility securement systems, and other unique features.

Central Record Keeping

A centralized maintenance program normally provides record keeping systems that help to ensure compliance with local laws and regulations as well as agency specific

reporting on costs, maintenance intervals, life cycle costs, vehicle replacement schedules, etc.

Loaner Vehicles

A feature of a centralized maintenance program that is often cited as a “life saver” by participating agencies is the use of a loaner vehicle that is similar in size and configuration to the basic vehicles of the participants. This can be very beneficial to small agencies that do not have many or, in some cases, any backup vehicles.

Specialized Schedules

A common feature of a centralized maintenance program is business hours that best serve the client agencies. This can mean operating during evening hours or on weekends when commercial shops are often closed. Carefully crafted work schedules can greatly assist agencies by obtaining inspections and repairs when convenient to the customer.

Fueling

Centralized fueling can also be a great benefit to agencies. It allows for careful monitoring of the fueling process and fuel usage. It also provides the opportunity for lower prices due to bulk purchasing, and guaranteed availability in times of shortage.

Volunteer Driver Programs

Volunteer driver programs are an efficient method of providing specialized transportation to people that may need a level of service not being met in any other fashion. These programs can provide door-through-door options for riders that are unable to use public transit due to their functional ability. Often these programs focus on seniors and can be designed to take older adults to central destinations such as medical facilities or shopping complexes or can be highly specialized to meet specific needs of rider's. Whatever the focus, these volunteer driver programs are generally highly efficient, costing a fraction of what an ADA paratransit trip would cost.

Due to the nature of the service, volunteer driver programs may provide only a small percentage of the overall trips in a community. Yet these programs are critical to a robust transportation matrix providing a specialized transportation component that cannot be served by public transit. Volunteer programs can be utilized to complement the existing transportation matrix for individuals that need assistance navigating trips to medical offices, grocery shopping, and personal errands.

There are currently several volunteer driver programs in Contra Costa County that provide both specialized transportation services and shuttles to common destinations, these programs include:

- Caring Hands
- Lamorinda Spirit Van
- San Ramon Senior Center
- Senior Helpline Services

These programs play a key role in providing transportation services to Contra Costa residents, particularly seniors, each operating a bit differently while assisting with the overall human service transportation function.

Cost Implications

Collectively the volunteer driver programs listed above provided 20,027 one-way passengers trips to county residents in Fiscal Year 2011/2012. If these same trips were taken on an ADA paratransit service at \$31.00 a trip the cost would have been \$620,837. These agencies provided this service at an average cost of \$2.65-\$5.21 per one-way trip.

Central Information Program

A central information program is often considered the heart of a mobility management program. While this Plan includes an information program as an important element, it is only in combination with one of many forming a complete mobility management program. There are two primary call center functions; a simple information referral services, and a more sophisticated trip planning function.

The simplest call center is a referral service. In this case a caller will be asked question(s) by the call taker and referred to the appropriate agency. Due to the broad nature of the information that is being provided these services generally require a second call to answer the caller's questions. For instance 211 callers can be referred to a number of community services, such as food, shelter, counseling, employment assistance, and child care.

The central information program for Contra Costa County is meant to be a resource for persons needing to find information on public, private, and human service transportation in the County. This could include detailed transit route and schedule information, eligibility information, fares, as well as information on private and non-profit transportation providers. The central information program for Contra Costa County will serve as a point of contact for residents to call to receive both transportation referral

services and trip planning assistance. The call center was brought up as a helpful mobility management element during discussions with stakeholder groups.

Advocacy Role of Mobility Management

A mobility management CTSA can play an important role in advocating for the needs of the population groups that it represents. Because the CTSA works closely with agencies and individuals in the human services sector, it is often in a strategic position to advocate for the special needs population

There are several alternative approaches or levels of advocacy that the mobility management program can take. The advocacy role for a mobility manager can vary widely depending on the existing conditions in the area that is being served. Possible levels of advocacy are listed below.

- Information source: Mobility Manager serves as source of “expert” information resource to other agencies in the community on issues relating to special needs population.
- Special needs representative: Mobility Manager represents special needs populations in transportation decision making venues including funding advisory groups, Agencies on Aging, Regional Center vendor groups, etc.
- Active lobbying for special needs populations: Proactive advocacy for special needs groups including initiating proposals for funding and service improvements.

The new CTSA in Contra Costa County will have some level of advocacy involvement simply by the nature of its position in the transportation mix. Such a role is typically defined by the Board of Directors who represent diverse interests in the County. A balanced advocacy role typically contributes to the overall effectiveness of the agency in the institutional mix in the service area.

Technical Support

Mobility management agencies can provide a variety of support services that benefit local human service transportation providers. Whether due to lack of staff, or technical experience or funds, many organizations are not able to fully utilize the resources available to them. A CTSA has the ability to assist agencies by supplying technical assistance that can allow for increased funding, expansion of existing programs, implementation of new projects, or development of a more highly trained staff.

Grant Writing

CTSAs have the potential to significantly impact available transportation services within their geographical area by supporting local agencies in their efforts to secure grant funding. Completing grant applications can be confusing and overwhelming. While larger agencies often have staff dedicated to the preparation of grant applications, smaller public and non-profit human service agencies usually assign this responsibility to a program manager or other administrative team member. A human service agency may not have the time or the expertise to seek out grant opportunities and submit applications.

Many human service agencies are intimidated by Federal or State grant application requirements and. Although some agencies have projects that could qualify for grant funds, choose not to apply. Though grant programs are changing as a result of the passage of MAP-21, the newly enacted federal transit funding program, grants still contain rigorous requirements for management and reporting. Programs such as 5310 are available to agencies and now can be used in part for operations. Yet such grants carry complex requirements that a CTSA can help agencies fulfill.

A CTSA can provide the expertise and the technical support necessary to complete grant applications for local agencies. CTSA staff time can be dedicated to staying current on specific grant requirements and application instructions. This type of time commitment is often difficult or impossible for human service agencies to achieve. CTSA staff can provide assistance through local grant writing workshops, by mentoring local agencies or by actually preparing grant applications.

Grant Management

Grant management is a complex process that often prevents agencies from applying for funding. The data collection and reporting requirements can be daunting. Often agencies look at the amount of the grant award and determine that the staff time necessary to oversee the grant is not worthwhile.

A CTSA can assist human services agencies in its region by providing grant management services or by offering training in grant management. In either case, the CTSA staff takes on the role of expert advisor based on its in-depth understanding of the rules and regulations required by each grantor. It can then provide advice and assistance in matters such as:

- Overall compliance with grant reporting requirements
- Development of recordkeeping systems
- Data collection techniques

- Understanding of sub-recipient agreements in FTA grants
- Compliance with DBE and Title VI requirements

The CTSA can go so far as to prepare and issue reports on behalf of the grant recipient or sub-recipient, if necessary.

Driver Training and Professional Development

California state law is very specific about the requirements for driver training programs, including the qualifications for instructors. For a variety of reasons, agencies may have difficulties operating their own training programs. The driver corps may be small, the need for training classes may be infrequent or the agency may not have the resources to employ a certified driver instructor. A CTSA can help meet the demand for qualified instruction in a variety of ways.

- A CTSA can employ a fully certified instructor to teach driver training classes, to which agencies can send new drivers
- A CTSA can coordinate between those agencies that have their own programs and those that do not in order to fill available training “slots”
- A CTSA can make available materials and speakers that can be used as part of ongoing required safety training

Chapter 4: IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

The following implementation steps will lead to the creation of a new CTSA in Contra Costa formed to implement Mobility Management functions that will decrease costs and improve service quality. A number of specific recommendations result from the planning process. These recommendations are derived from the various outreach and stakeholder committee efforts detailed in Chapter 1.

Steering Committee

- Form a Steering Committee to guide the process of forming CTSA
 - Steering committee comprised of elected officials and executive management from transit and human service agencies
 - Steering committee defines CTSA by-laws, board structure, and performance standards
 - Steering committee serves as advisory body after CTSA has been established

Structural Platform

- Form a CTSA for Contra Costa County
 - Establish a nonprofit corporation to serve as the mobility management agency for the County.
 - MTC designate the nonprofit corporation as the CTSA for Contra Costa County
 - Fund setup and initial operation of the CTSA through a combination of funding provided by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and MTC for a minimum period of two years.
 - Establish a governance structure for the nonprofit corporation through appointment of Directors to the governing Board by public agencies in Contra Costa County.
 - Allocate a combination of funds totaling \$300,000 to \$400,000 per year for initial CTSA operation.

Functional Programs

- Direct the CTSA to establish priorities among the identified functional programs for Contra Costa County.
- Develop grant applications through community partnerships for implementation of functional programs. (e.g. Work with Meals on Wheels to fund a travel training

program to provide services Countywide by preparing the grant application, providing technical assistance, serving as contract oversight, etc.)

Funding

- CTSA pursues available grant opportunities
- CTSA works with transit operators to allocate funds to mobility management programs which move riders from ADA service
- CTSA works with MTC to identify discretionary funds
- CTSA participates in re-authorization of Measure J to include funding specifically for seniors, persons with disabilities, persons with low-income, and the CTSA.
- CTSA pursues Measure J Funds including Line 20a Funds through the Regional Transportation Planning Committee for Central Contra Costa – TRANSPAC.
- CTSA pursues TDA allocation of Article 4.5 as defined in statute.

Implementation Timeline

CTSA Implementation Time Line
(approximate)

Date or Time Period	Activity
Form Steering Committee	May 1, 2013
Draft Incorporating Documents	May - August, 2013
Establish Initial Funding	July - August, 2013
File for Incorporation	September, 2013
Seek CTSA Designation	September - November, 2013
Establish Operation	December - January, 2013
Create and Provide Operations	January - December, 2014

Appendix 1: OUTREACH MEETINGS

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