



GOLDEN CRESCENT REGION UPDATED REGIONALLY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

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Purpose and Value of Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning

The purpose of regionally coordinated transportation planning is to improve transportation services for everyone that uses them in the region – including, but not limited to, people with disabilities, seniors, and individuals with lower incomes. The Updated Regional Coordination Plan will be used to identify opportunities to coordinate existing transportation resources, provide a strategy to guide the investment of the limited financial resources of the region, and to guide the use of grant funds that are acquired in the future. Coordinated transportation planning will reduce duplication of effort in the region, enhance services and encourage cost-effective transportation for everyone in the region.

Coordinated transportation planning in the Golden Crescent Regional can have several benefits, both socially and economically. Economically, coordinated transportation planning can enhance mobility, making it easier for people to reach employment opportunities; increase efficiency of transportation, reducing the costs of travel for both riders and providers; and increase the money available for transportation projects in the region. Socially, coordinated transportation planning is valuable because it increases the independence of the ridership, allowing for an improved quality of life by giving easier access to work, medical needs, shopping, education, social events, and religious services for those that cannot drive or do not have access to personal vehicles. It also makes the transportation system easier to use, because coordinated services are better publicized, more reliable, and more accessible, and have the potential to serve more people and more destinations.

Goals and Objectives of this Report

1. Goal: Better connect all customers to destinations by providing accessible services
 - a. Expand hours and days of service
 - b. Create Ambassador Program
 - c. Expand services to educational opportunities
 - d. Expand services to employment opportunities
2. Goal: Increase public awareness of transportation service
 - a. Grow ridership through marketing and outreach
 - b. More PSAs
3. Goal: Better integrate transportation services into the economic development of the region

- a. Increase partnerships and diversity
- 4. Goal: Safe, Effective and Efficient Operations
 - a. Conduct needs analysis of Maintenance Facility
 - b. Expand use of MDCs
 - c. Increase productivity
 - i. Increase MDCs
 - d. Decreasing safety incidents
 - i. Security cameras

Membership Roles

Steering Committee

The role of the Steering Committee is to provide GCRPC staff with guidance, advice, and input on all regionally coordinated transportation planning activities. The Steering Committee will have final review and approval over any documents or other products that GCRPC staff develops as part of the regional coordination activities. The Steering Committee will also provide input on potential projects as well as guidance on future regional coordination activities before GCRPC staff undertakes them. Finally, the Steering Committee will provide a communication link between GCRPC and the community by soliciting input from the committee members' various constituencies and relating that input to GCRPC as part of the regionally coordinated transportation planning process.

Staff

PROJECT MANAGER – The Project Manager will be responsible for oversight and will monitor the entire coordination project, ensuring that all goals, objectives, and activities are met. The Project Manager will also assist the Project Coordinator in submitting timely progress reports, and will attend all local, regional, and state coordination meetings.

PROJECT COORDINATOR – The Project Coordinator will be responsible for implementing all regional coordination activities and ensuring that all goals, objectives, and activities are met. Coordination activities will include:

- Scheduling of all meetings, and preparing agendas and materials to be disseminated at meetings.
- Keeping an updated Steering Committee list and keeping the members of the Steering Committee engaged in the regional coordination planning process.
- Keeping the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan updated and approved by the Steering Committee.

- Developing plans for public involvement in the regional planning process.
- Planning, leading, and recording any coordination-related meetings.
- Submitting timely progress reports and updating annual workplans as needed.
- Developing funding strategies for the sustainability of regional coordination projects.

BILLING COORDINATOR – The Billing Coordinator will be responsible for keeping records of all expenses, invoices, and bills, and will submit timely requests for reimbursement to the state.

PROJECT SUPPORT CLERK – The Project Support Clerk will be the clerical support for this project. Duties include typing a variety of letters and documents, copying needed materials, and filing.

Transportation Resources in the Golden Crescent Region

Planning Organizations

Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission

The Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC), a regional voluntary association of local governments and other agencies, is one of twenty-four (24) regional associations in Texas and one of 670 in the United States. Created in response to the regional Planning Act of 1965, as amended and codified, the GCRPC is defined as a political subdivision of the state. In part the law provides that “any two or more general purpose governmental units may join in the exercise, performance, and cooperation of planning, powers, duties and functions as provided by law for any or all such governmental units (Tex. Rev. Civ. Stat. Ann. Art. 1011m)”.

GCRPC has been committed to providing transportation services since November 1986. GCRPC is currently a multiple provider of transportation services, which serve the rural general public, elderly, and persons with disabilities. GCRPC is one of many transit contractors in the State of Texas who provide public transportation services, under contract through the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). GCRPC provides rural public transportation services called RTransit in the following counties: Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, Victoria and Matagorda. Within the City of Victoria GCRPC operates a small-urban system called Victoria Transit. Matagorda County does not fall under GCRPC’s planning region (it is part of the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). As of 2010, negotiations are under way to transfer provider services from GCRPC to the Gulf Coast Center’s Connect Transit, which would return Matagorda County’s transportation services to its planning region.

Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is an agency created by federal law to provide local input for urban transportation planning and allocating federal transportation funds to cities with populations greater than 50,000. The MPO’s mission is to provide a cooperative, continuous and comprehensive (“3C”) transportation planning process for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods consistent with the region’s overall economic, social and environmental goals. Special emphasis is placed on providing equal access to a variety of transportation choices and effective public involvement in the transportation planning process.

The MPO is responsible for conducting the urban transportation planning process that allows Victoria County to receive federal and state transportation funding. This is

accomplished primarily through three related activities and documents - the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

The MTP is our 25-year long-range plan and the basic framework for all our transportation planning. The 2005-2030 MTP, our current plan, was approved in February 2005 and programs approximately \$348.7 million worth of transportation improvements over the next 25 years.

The TIP is our four-year list of prioritized transportation improvement projects. These projects generally fall into five categories - capacity improvement projects (adding lanes), preservation projects (road reconstruction without adding lanes), bicycle projects, pedestrian projects and transit projects. Approximately 30% of our regional road network is eligible for federal aid. That 30%, however, carries the vast majority of our daily vehicle mileage. Local residential streets do not generally qualify for MPO funding.

The UPWP or Unified Planning Work Program is our two-year work plan and budget. The UPWP is funded by a combination of Federal Highway, Federal Transit, and State planning funds. It describes all the agency and consultant transportation studies, population and employment forecasts, computer travel demand modeling, and MPO staff budgeting for a two-year period. The Work Program budget normally programs \$160,000 per year.

Texas Department of Transportation

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is a governmental agency in the U.S. state of Texas. Its stated mission is to “work cooperatively to provide safe, effective and efficient movement of people and goods” throughout the state. Though the public face of the agency is generally associated with the construction and maintenance of the state’s immense highway system, the agency is also responsible for overseeing aviation, rail, and public transportation systems in the state.

The Golden Crescent Region is in TxDOT’s Yoakum District, District 13.

Transit Providers - Public

Victoria Transit - Fixed Route

GCRPC implemented Victoria Transit on January 4, 1999, providing demand response curb-to-curb services. In March 2002, Victoria Transit began a fixed route system for the City of Victoria. May 2008 brought even more expansion to Victoria Transit as the Flexible Job Access Route Service was introduced. This service is designed to provide better access to employment opportunities within the city and introduce weekend bus service. These routes also offer ADA Flex Services, which allow them to flex up to ¾ a

mile off their course to better serve ADA-eligible riders. These new routes were made possible by a Job Access Reverse Commute Grant through the Texas Department of Transportation, local funding support from the City of Victoria, and the Golden Crescent Workforce Solutions.

Victoria Transit's Fixed Route Service consists of four (4) routes, which operate over 70 scheduled bus stops. These routes are designed to connect residents to various destinations within the city limits of Victoria. Bus service is available Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm and is open to all residents and visitor to Victoria. Wheelchair accessible vehicles are available to assist in transporting persons with disabilities

There are four routes that cover the city. The Red, Green, and Blue routes run approximately every 45 minutes. The Orange route runs approximately every hour. The Orange Route serves northwest Victoria and is available Monday through Friday from 8 am - 12 pm, and 1 pm - 5 pm.

The Flexible Job Access Route Service provides riders with better access to employment opportunities within the City of Victoria. These routes also offer all riders extended hours of service by operating into the evening and on the weekends. They consist of four routes that operate in the North, South, and Central areas within the city limits of Victoria.

The Flexible Job Access Route operate approximately every 30 minutes, and have the ability to flex off their route within a ¼ mile corridor to provide ADA Flex Services such as access to work, job training, education, and/or job search for riders who have ADA-eligible disabilities and have been prior approved. Flexible Job Access Routes operate Monday thru Friday from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. The routes operate from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm on Saturday and 11:00 am to 7:00 pm on Sunday.

Victoria Transit – Paratransit Services

Victoria Transit provides Paratransit Services Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for qualified individuals with mobility impairments who are unable to use Fixed Route service. The Paratransit Service is a demand-response, advance-reservation, shared-ride, address-to-address, curb-to-curb service. Wheelchair accessible vehicles are available to assist in transporting persons with disabilities.

An ADA Para Transit Eligibility Certification Form is used to determine eligibility. The information is confidential and only shared with agencies involved with Victoria Transit's eligibility determination process, and is not provided to any other person or agency except as provided by the Texas Open Records Act. The application process takes approximately two weeks, and individuals are presumed eligible for Paratransit Service until written notification is received by mail. Re-certification for Paratransit Service is conducted on an annual basis

RTransit – Rural Transit

RTRANSIT is a curb-to-curb transit service offered through the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission. This service is offered Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm. RTransit requires 24-hour advance notice when scheduling a ride because it utilizes a demand response system. Transit service is available within each county and to other counties in the region.

GCRPC's RTransit program is one of 42 rural transit systems in the State of Texas. Texas has the largest rural population in the nation and the largest rural general public transportation program. The Golden Crescent Region is also predominantly rural. Since many of the rural communities in the Golden Crescent Region do not have access to medical care in their communities, they must depend on the health care facilities located in other non-urban cities in their county or rely on the medical facilities located in the city of Victoria for their health care needs. This need for medical transportation prompted the coordination of a comprehensive transportation program.

GCRPC has been providing Rural Transportation Services known as RTRANSIT since November 1986. RTRANSIT provides curb-to-curb transportation service for the rural residents in Calhoun, Dewitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, Matagorda, and Victoria Counties. Residents access the system by calling RTRANSIT in their county a day in advance to schedule a ride.

The transit system offers residents transportation within their county and transportation to neighboring counties. In order to provide efficient transportation services in the over 6,000 square mile region, the Planning Commission contracts with six local providers.

Major funding for this program is provided by the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) under the Section 5311 and Section 5310 Grant Programs. In addition, funding provided from the Texas Department on Aging, Texas Department of Health, Cities and Counties, as well as fare revenues help support the program.

Innovative services provided by RTransit include Goliad County's same-day services, funded through a New Freedom grant, which allows Goliad County residents to receive a ride within an hour of requesting service. Gonzales County, through use of 5310 funding, has been able to provide free services to their elderly and disabled riders – the same services that the general public pays the standard fare for.

The RTransit providers in the region also serve as the medical transportation providers for the region. GCRPC contracts to be the MTP provider for the region, and the subcontracting providers serve the Medicaid recipients in their respective counties.

GCRPC provides RTransit services for Victoria and DeWitt counties. In the other Golden Crescent Counties, GCRPC subcontracts with service providers in each county. In

Calhoun County, GCRPC subcontracts with Calhoun County Senior Citizens Associates, Inc. In Goliad County, GCRPC subcontracts with Goliad County. In Gonzales County, GCRPC subcontracts with Gonzales County Senior Citizens Associates, Inc. In Jackson County, GCRPC subcontracts with Friends of Elder Citizens. In Lavaca County, GCRPC subcontracts with Lavaca County. In Matagorda County, GCRPC subcontracts with Friends of Elder Citizens.

<p>Calhoun County SCA, Inc. 234 E. Main St. Port Lavaca, TX 77979 (361) 552-3350</p>	<p>Goliad County P.O. Box 1357 127 N. Courthouse Square Goliad, TX 77963 (361) 645-2144, fax: (361) 645-8032</p>	<p>Gonzales County SCA, Inc. P.O. Box 1834 818 Seydler Gonzales, Texas 78629 830-672-7014</p>
<p>RTransit - Edna 1010 South Wells Edna, TX 77957 361-782-5511</p>	<p>Lavaca County P.O. Box 531 Hallettsville, Texas 77964 (361) 798-4198 Hallettsville: (361) 798- 2211 Moulton: (361) 596-4981 Yoakum: (361) 293-5313 Shiner: (361) 594-2671</p>	<p>RTransit - Bay City 1510 Avenue G Bay City, TX 77414 979-245-6800 Administrative Office: P.O. Box 791 Palacios, Texas 77465 (361) 972-9921</p>

RTransit – Vanpool Services for Inteplast

Victoria County RTransit also contracts with Inteplast, which runs a plant in Lolita. Currently, two GCRPC-owned buses provide vanpool park-and-ride services for Inteplast employees on two routes through Victoria and Jackson counties. The overwhelming success of these services has spurred GCRPC to expand the service with two new routes that will run through Jackson and Matagorda counties. The service provides rides to work for employees at all three shifts. Inteplast has credited the service with reducing employee turnover at their facility.

Transit Providers – Private

Taxi Services

Taxi services are available to residents of Calhoun, Matagorda, and Victoria counties. These providers are privately owned, and in most cases provide services locally based on miles traveled, with out-of-town trips, if provided, at a flat-rate fee.

Calhoun County – Ship-Shuttle Taxi
 Matagorda County – Jitney Taxi and Delivery Service

Victoria County – Affordable Taxi, Cesar’s Taxi

Client-Based Services

The following regional agencies provide transportation for clients only:

Calhoun County

Port Lavaca Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

Goliad County

La Bahia Adult Day Care

La Bahia Healthcare

DeWitt County

Broadway Adult Day Care

Heritage Program for Senior Adults

Spring Season Nursing Home

Whispering Oaks Manor

Yorktown Manor Nursing & Rehabilitation Center

Gonzales County

Bluebonnet Trails

Care Inn of Gonzales

Gonzales Community Health Center of South Central Texas

Memorial Therapy Center

Warn Springs Specialty Hospital in Luling

Jackson County

Care Inn of Edna

Southbrooke Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation

Lavaca County

Shady Oaks Nursing Center

Shiner Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

Southern Health

Texas Lutheran Home

Yoakum Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

Victoria County

Affectionate Arms

Amour Adult Day Care

Crossroads Nursing Service

Deveraux

Gulf Bend

Head Start

Linwood Place
Retama Manor South
Retama West of Victoria
Treatment Associates
Veterans Group

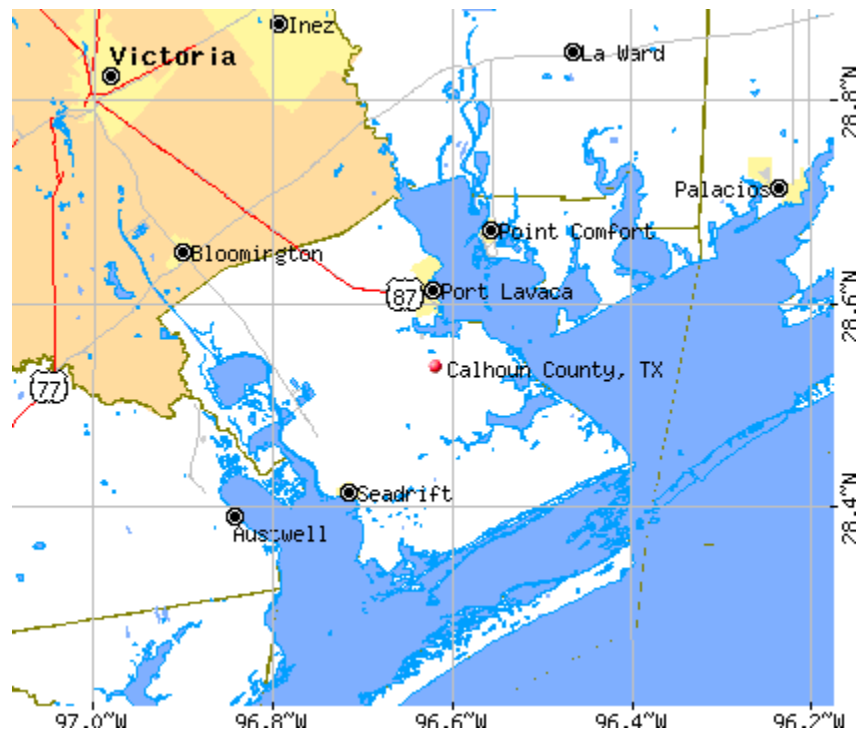
About 126,497 residents of the GCRPC region speak only English. It is estimated that 40,303 speak Spanish only or in addition to English in the home. In the region, about 6,279 have limited English proficiency.

People with a disability made up 35,544 of the population.

In the region, about 52,284 are under the age of 18. Approximately 27,401 residents are over the age of 65.

The median income for a household in the region is \$34,537, and the median income for a family was \$40,768. About 26,648 are below the poverty line, including 9,847 of those under age 18 and 3,705 of those age 65 or over.

Calhoun County



As of 2008, there were 20,833 people, 7,442 households, and 5,574 families residing in the county. The population density was 40 people per square mile. There were 10,238 housing units at an average density of 20 per square mile. The racial makeup of the county was 78.04% White, 2.63% Black or African American, 0.49% Native American, 3.27% Asian, 0.07% Pacific Islander, 13.19% from other races, and 2.32% from two or more races. 40.92% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race. 11.4% were of German, 9.4% American and 5.5% English ancestry according to Census 2000. 67.9% spoke English, 29.1% Spanish and 1.2% Chinese as their first language.

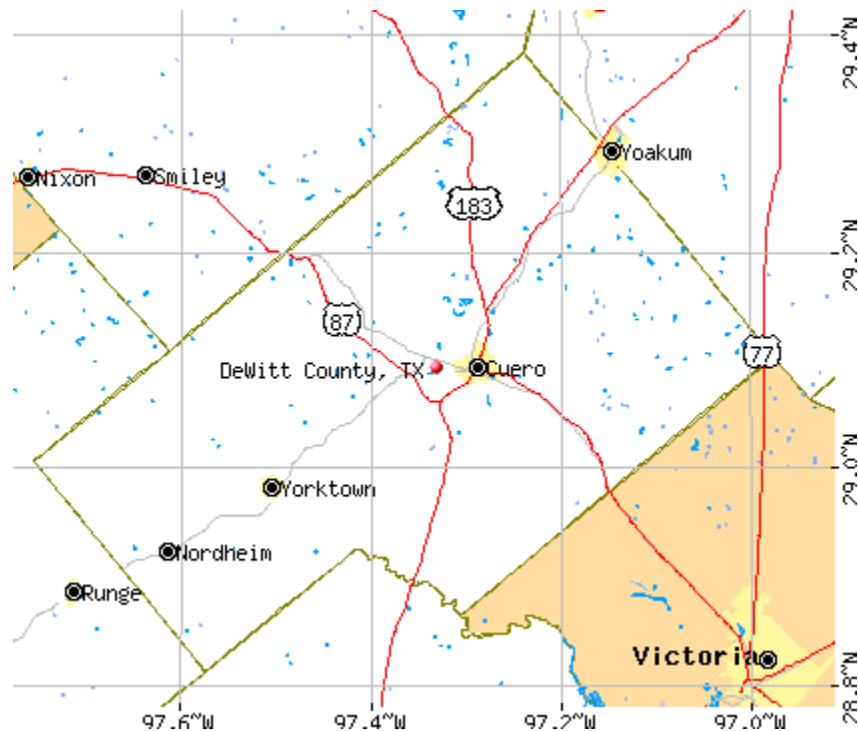
As of 2000, 3,831 residents, or 20.3% were considered disabled.

There were 7,442 households out of which 35.40% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 59.20% were married couples living together, 11.00% had a female householder with no husband present, and 25.10% were non-families. 21.30% of all households were made up of individuals and 8.90% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.75 and the average family size was 3.20.

In the county, the population was spread out with 28.50% under the age of 18, 8.70% from 18 to 24, 27.30% from 25 to 44, 22.30% from 45 to 64, and 13.30% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 35 years. For every 100 females there were 100.90 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 99.70 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$35,849, and the median income for a family was \$39,900. Males had a median income of \$35,957 versus \$19,772 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$17,125. About 12.70% of families and 16.40% of the population were below the poverty line, including 21.30% of those under age 18 and 11.70% of those age 65 or over.

DeWitt County



As of 2008, there were 20,166 people, 7,207 households, and 5,131 families residing in the county. The population density was 22 people per square mile (8/km²). There were 8,756 housing units at an average density of 10 per square mile (4/km²). The racial makeup of the county was 76.42% White, 11.04% Black or African American, 0.54% Native American, 0.21% Asian, 0.02% Pacific Islander, 10.01% from other races, and 1.75% from two or more races. 27.24% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race. 28.0% were of German and 6.1% American ancestry according to Census 2000. 77.2% spoke English, 20.5% Spanish and 1.6% German as their first language.

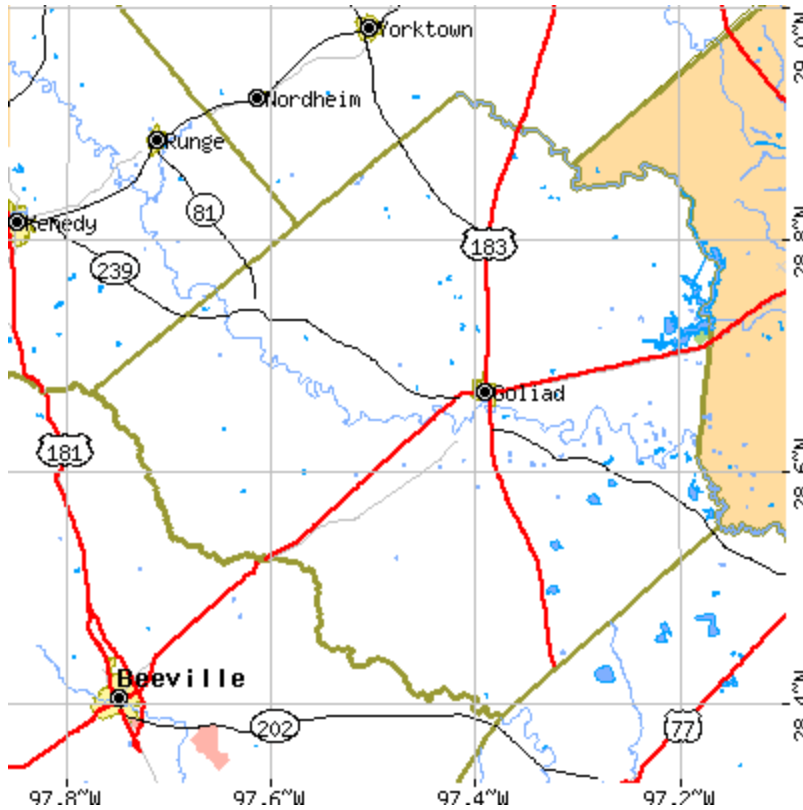
As of 2000, 4,338 residents, or 25.3% were considered disabled.

There were 7,207 households out of which 31.00% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 55.10% were married couples living together, 11.80% had a female householder with no husband present, and 28.80% were non-families. 26.40% of all households were made up of individuals and 15.00% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.53 and the average family size was 3.04.

In the county, the population was spread out with 23.80% under the age of 18, 7.00% from 18 to 24, 27.10% from 25 to 44, 23.30% from 45 to 64, and 18.90% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 40 years. For every 100 females there were 105.50 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 105.20 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$28,714, and the median income for a family was \$33,513. Males had a median income of \$27,134 versus \$18,370 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$14,780. About 15.30% of families and 19.60% of the population were below the poverty line, including 25.50% of those under age 18 and 16.50% of those age 65 or over.

Goliad County



As of 2008, there were 7,267 people, 2,644 households, and 1,975 families residing in the county. The population density was 8 people per square mile. There were 3,426 housing units at an average density of 4 per square mile. The racial makeup of the county was 82.62% White, 4.82% Black or African American, 0.55% Native American, 0.22% Asian, 0.01% Pacific Islander, 10.05% from other races, and 1.73% from two or more races. 35.20% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race.

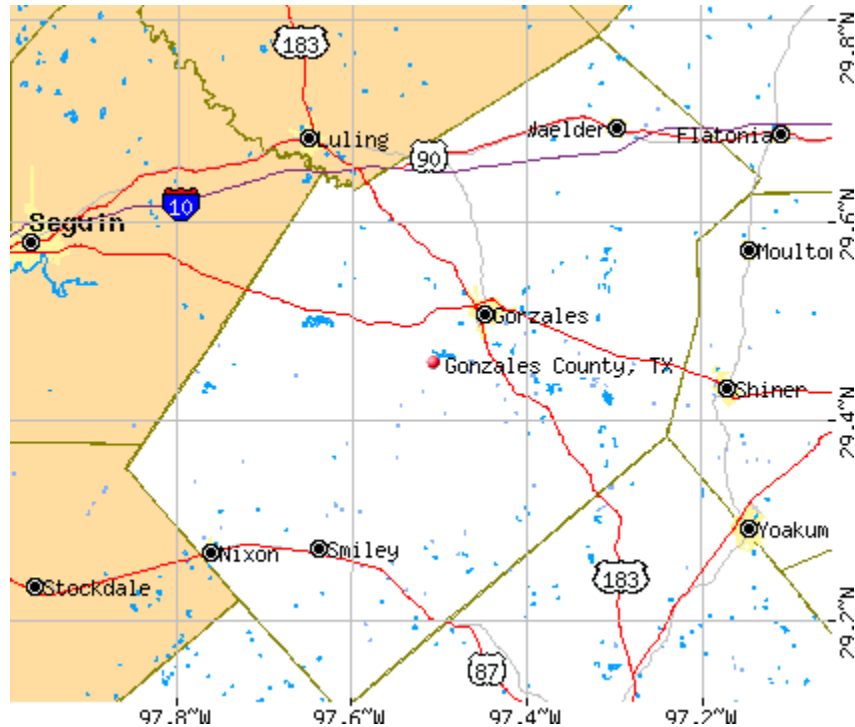
There were 2,644 households out of which 33.10% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 62.10% were married couples living together, 8.70% had a female householder with no husband present, and 25.30% were non-families. 22.80% of all households were made up of individuals and 11.90% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.57 and the average family size was 3.02.

As of 2000, 1,208 residents, or 19% were considered disabled.

In the county, the population was spread out with 25.90% under the age of 18, 6.50% from 18 to 24, 25.00% from 25 to 44, 25.20% from 45 to 64, and 17.50% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 40 years. For every 100 females there were 98.90 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 94.10 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$34,201, and the median income for a family was \$40,446. Males had a median income of \$30,954 versus \$20,028 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$17,126. About 11.90% of families and 16.40% of the population were below the poverty line, including 25.70% of those under age 18 and 11.10% of those age 65 or over.

Gonzales County



As of 2008, there were 19,223 people, 6,782 households, and 4,876 families residing in the county. The population density was 17 people per square mile. There were 8,194 housing units at an average density of 8 per square mile. The racial makeup of the county was 72.25% White, 8.39% Black or African American, 0.53% Native American, 0.26% Asian, 0.09% Pacific Islander, 16.48% from other races, and 2.01% from two or more races. 39.62% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race.

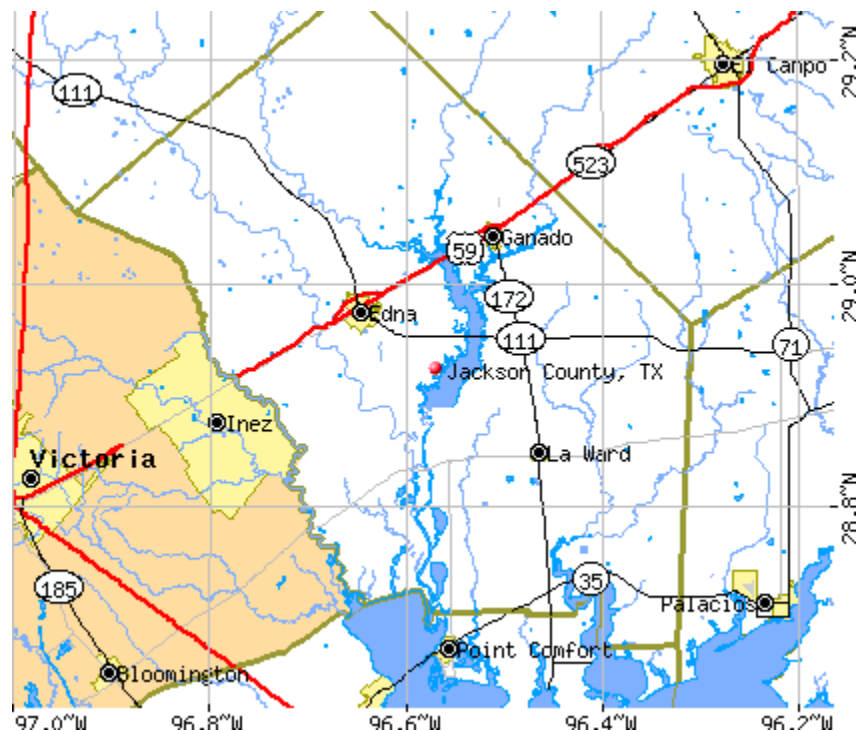
As of 2000, 3,877 residents, or 22.8% were considered disabled.

There were 6,782 households out of which 34.20% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 54.00% were married couples living together, 12.30% had a female householder with no husband present, and 28.10% were non-families. 25.20% of all households were made up of individuals and 14.30% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.69 and the average family size was 3.21.

In the county, the population was spread out with 28.00% under the age of 18, 8.70% from 18 to 24, 25.70% from 25 to 44, 20.90% from 45 to 64, and 16.80% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 36 years. For every 100 females there were 98.40 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 95.00 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$28,368, and the median income for a family was \$35,218. Males had a median income of \$23,439 versus \$17,027 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$14,269. About 13.80% of families and 18.60% of the population were below the poverty line, including 23.60% of those under age 18 and 19.40% of those age 65 or over.

Jackson County



As of 2008, there were 14,840 people, 5,336 households, and 3,889 families residing in the county. The population density was 17 people per square mile. There were 6,545 housing units at an average density of 8 per square mile. The racial makeup of the county was 76.49% White, 7.64% Black or African American, 0.39% Native American, 0.39% Asian, 0.06% Pacific Islander, 12.65% from other races, and 2.39% from two or more races. 24.68% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race. 17.9% were of German, 10.8% American, 9.3% Czech, 6.0% Irish and 5.6% English ancestry according to Census 2000. 81.6% spoke English and 17.4% Spanish as their first language.

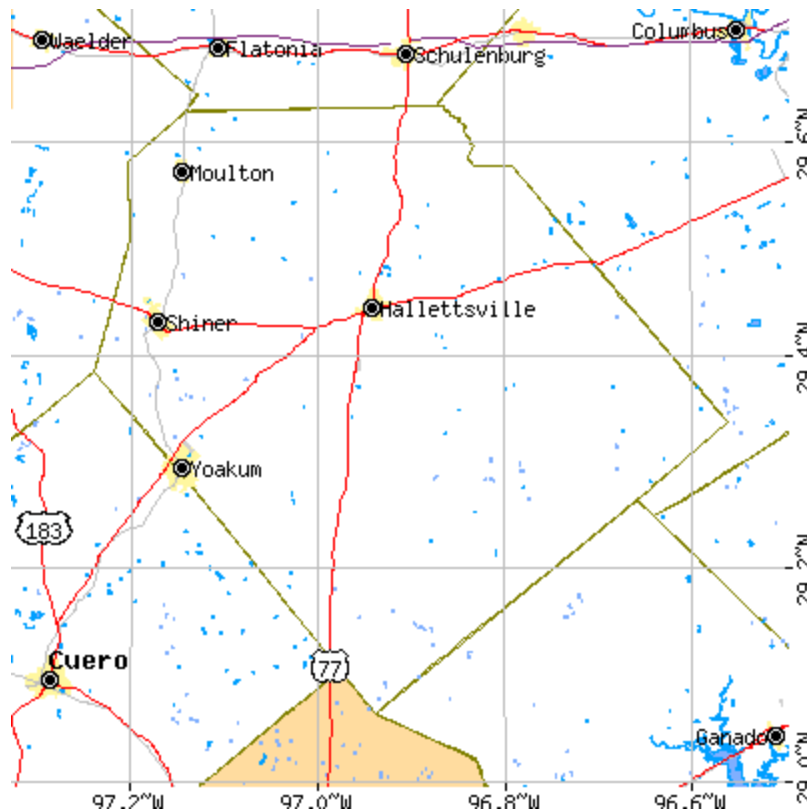
As of 2000, 3,189 residents, or 24.3% were considered disabled.

There were 5,336 households out of which 34.70% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 58.20% were married couples living together, 10.50% had a female householder with no husband present, and 27.10% were non-families. 24.20% of all households were made up of individuals and 12.50% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.65 and the average family size was 3.15.

In the county, the population was spread out with 27.40% under the age of 18, 8.20% from 18 to 24, 26.10% from 25 to 44, 22.30% from 45 to 64, and 15.90% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 37 years. For every 100 females there were 96.70 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 93.40 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$35,254, and the median income for a family was \$42,066. Males had a median income of \$32,639 versus \$19,661 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$16,693. About 12.20% of families and 14.70% of the population were below the poverty line, including 19.10% of those under age 18 and 15.60% of those age 65 or over.

Lavaca County



As of 2008, there were 19,435 people, 7,669 households, and 5,391 families residing in the county. The population density was 20 people per square mile. There were 9,657 housing units at an average density of 10 per square mile. The racial makeup of the county was 86.86% White, 6.79% Black or African American, 0.19% Native American, 0.16% Asian, 0.02% Pacific Islander, 4.84% from other races, and 1.14% from two or more races. 11.36% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race. 27.0% were of Czech, 24.1% German, 9.1% American and 5.1% Irish ancestry according to Census 2000. 86.3% spoke English, 7.7% Spanish, 4.6% Czech and 1.2% German as their first language.

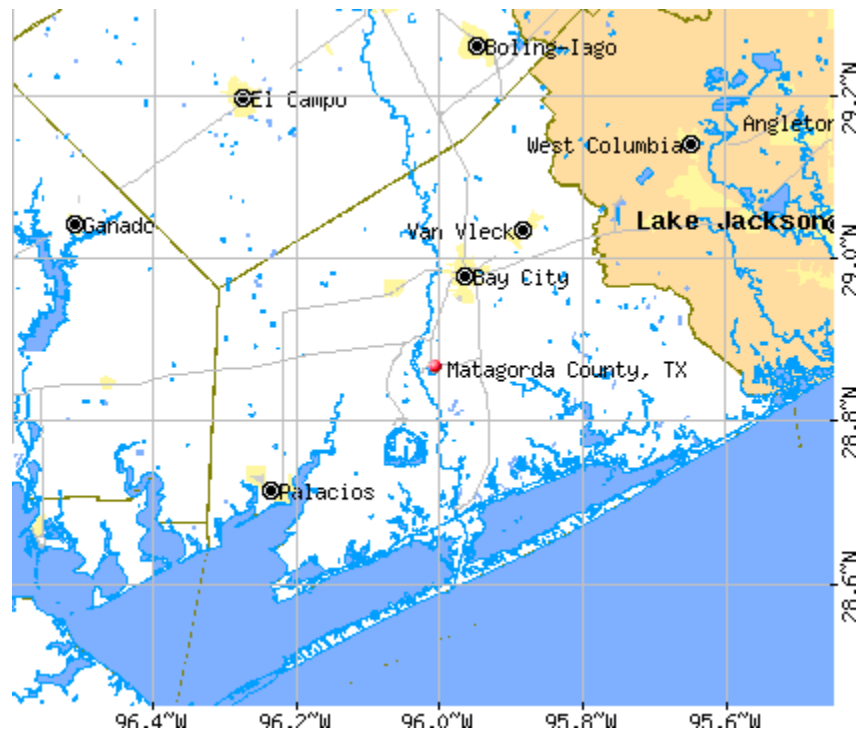
As of 2000, 4,227 residents, or 24% were considered disabled.

There were 7,669 households out of which 30.00% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 57.70% were married couples living together, 9.30% had a female householder with no husband present, and 29.70% were non-families. 27.60% of all households were made up of individuals and 16.60% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.44 and the average family size was 2.98.

In the county, the population was spread out with 24.20% under the age of 18, 6.90% from 18 to 24, 23.50% from 25 to 44, 23.60% from 45 to 64, and 21.80% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 42 years. For every 100 females there were 93.10 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 88.50 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$29,132, and the median income for a family was \$36,760. Males had a median income of \$26,988 versus \$17,537 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$16,398. About 10.20% of families and 13.20% of the population were below the poverty line, including 15.20% of those under age 18 and 18.40% of those age 65 or over.

Matagorda County



As of 2008, there were 37,375 people, 13,901 households, and 9,925 families residing in the county. The population density was 34 people per square mile. There were 18,611 housing units at an average density of 17 per square mile. The racial makeup of the county was 67.83% White, 12.72% Black or African American, 0.67% Native American, 2.38% Asian, 0.04% Pacific Islander, 13.98% from other races, and 2.38% from two or more races. 31.35% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race. 10.3% were of German, 8.2% American, 5.4% English and 5.2% Irish ancestry according to Census 2000. 73.9% spoke English, 24.0% Spanish and 1.6% Vietnamese as their first language.

As of 2000, 7,063 residents, or 20.3% were considered disabled.

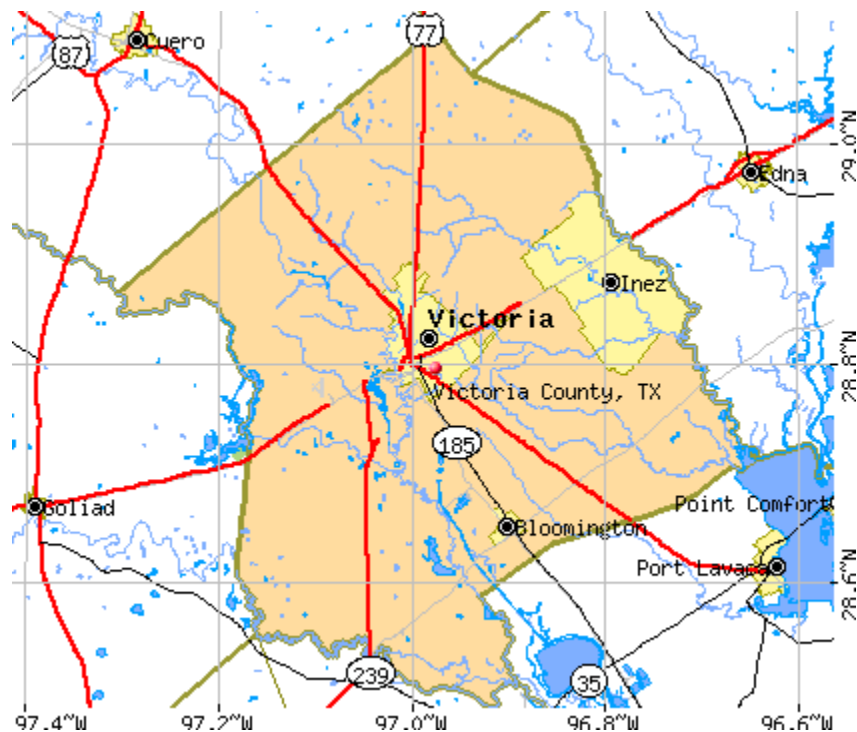
There were 13,901 households out of which 36.70% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 53.80% were married couples living together, 12.70% had a female

householder with no husband present, and 28.60% were non-families. 25.10% of all households were made up of individuals and 10.40% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.70 and the average family size was 3.25.

In the county, the population was spread out with 30.00% under the age of 18, 8.90% from 18 to 24, 26.90% from 25 to 44, 21.80% from 45 to 64, and 12.40% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 35 years. For every 100 females there were 98.60 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 95.50 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$32,174, and the median income for a family was \$40,586. Males had a median income of \$37,733 versus \$21,871 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$15,709. About 14.90% of families and 18.50% of the population were below the poverty line, including 23.00% of those under age 18 and 13.60% of those age 65 or over.

Victoria County



As of 2008, there were 86,797 people, 30,071 households, and 22,192 families residing in the county. The population density was 95 people per square mile. There were 32,945 housing units at an average density of 37 per square mile. The racial makeup of the county was 74.22% White, 6.30% Black or African American, 0.53% Native American, 0.77% Asian, 0.04% Pacific Islander, 15.92% from other races, and 2.22% from two or

more races. 39.20% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race. 16.2% were of German, 6.2% American and 5.6% English ancestry according to Census 2000. 73.3% spoke English and 25.5% Spanish as their first language.

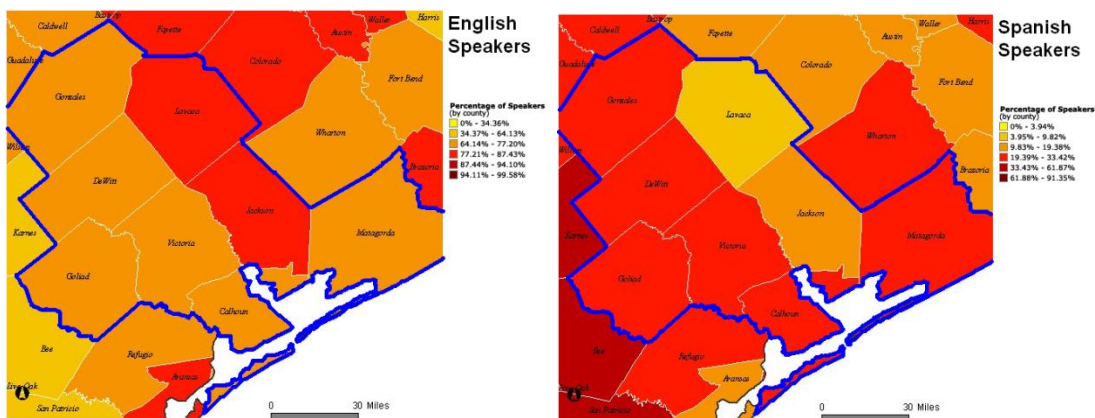
As of 2000, 3,831 residents, or 20.3% were considered disabled.

There were 30,071 households out of which 37.20% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 56.70% were married couples living together, 12.70% had a female householder with no husband present, and 26.20% were non-families. 22.40% of all households were made up of individuals and 9.10% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.75 and the average family size was 3.23.

In the county, the population was spread out with 29.10% under the age of 18, 9.20% from 18 to 24, 28.10% from 25 to 44, 21.50% from 45 to 64, and 12.00% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 34 years. For every 100 females there were 94.90 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 91.70 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$38,732, and the median income for a family was \$44,443. Males had a median income of \$35,484 versus \$21,231 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$18,379. About 10.50% of families and 12.90% of the population were below the poverty line, including 17.20% of those under age 18 and 11.70% of those age 65 or over.

English Proficiency in the Region



Transportation Planning and Health and Human Services Contacts in the Region

The regional Area Agency on Aging is part of the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission, based in Victoria. The regional Workforce board is also based in Victoria. The region has DARS field offices in Victoria, Gonzales and Bay City. The region is part of DADS Region 8, headquartered in San Antonio. The region also falls under Health Service Region 8, also based out of San Antonio. The regional Mental Retardation Authority (MRA) is the Gulf Bend MHMR Center in Victoria. Gonzales County falls under the authority of the Bluebonnet Trails Community MHMR Center in Round Rock.

Contacts for Regional Health and Human Services Organizations and Regional Coordination Stakeholders

Golden Crescent Regional Planning
Commission
568 Big Bend Drive
Victoria, Texas 77904
361-578-1587

Health and Human Services Commission
1502 E. Airline, Suite 39
Victoria, Texas 77901
361-574-7460

Victoria Transit Operations
1502 E. Airline Rd., Suite 6
Victoria, Texas 77901
361-578-8775

Gulf Bend Center
1502 E. Airline Rd. Suite 25
Victoria, Texas 77901
361-575-0611

Texas Department of Transportation –
Yoakum District
403 Huck Street
Yoakum, Texas 77995
361-293-4395

Friends of Elder Citizens, Inc.
P.O. Box 791
Palacios, Texas 779465
361-972-9921
361-972-9966 fax
foec@wildblue.net

Golden Crescent Workforce Development
Board
120 S. Main Place, Suite 501
Victoria, Texas 77901

Head Start Social Services
1908 N. Laurent
Victoria, Texas 77901
361-489-3054

Goliad County
P.O. Box 1357
Goliad, Texas 77963
361-645-2144

Goodwill Industries of South Texas
4102 N. Navarro
Victoria, Texas 77901
361-575-6242

Lavaca County
P.O. Box 531
Hallettsville, Texas 77964
361-798-4198

South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind
5602 John Stockbauer
Victoria, Texas 77904
361-570-8088

Gonzales County SCA, Inc.
P.O. Box 1834
Gonzales, Texas 78629
361-672-7014

Division for Rehabilitative Services DARS
4102 N. Navarro Suite D-2
Victoria, Texas 77901
361-580-5700

City of Victoria
P.O. 1758
Victoria, Texas 77902
361-485-3360

Calhoun County SCA, Inc.
P.O. Box 128
Port Lavaca, Texas 77979
361-552-3350

Social Security Administration
8208 NE Zac Lentz Parkway
Victoria, Texas 77904
361-575-8254

Victoria College Adult Education Center
802 E. Crestwood
Victoria, Texas 77901
361-573-7323

Golden Crescent Area Agency on Aging
568 Big Bend Drive
Victoria, Texas 77904
361-578-1587

Region III Education Service Center
Region III ESC ECI
1905 Leary Lane
Victoria, TX 77901
(888) 909-3512

DARS Bay City Field Office
2517 7th St. Bay City, TX 77414

DARS Gonzales Field Office
1600 Sarah DeWitt, Suite 200 Gonzales, TX
78629

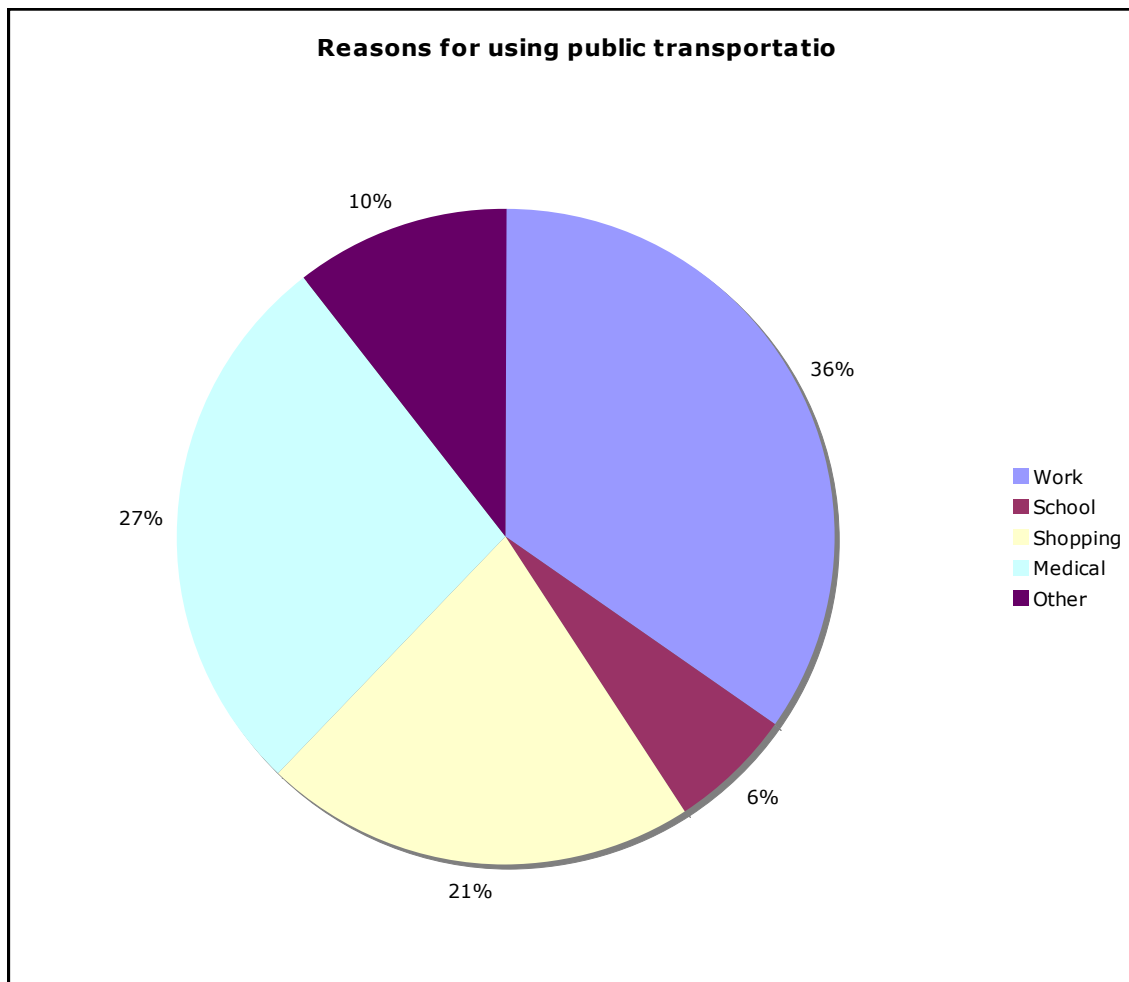
Bluebonnet Trails Community MHMR
Center
1009 Georgetown St.
Round Rock, TX 78664
Intake Phone: 512-244-8363 (Main
number)

HEALTH SERVICE REGION 8 - San Antonio
Sandra Guerra, M.D., M.P.H., Regional
Medical Director
Gale Morrow, Deputy Regional Director
7430 Louis Pasteur Drive,
San Antonio, Texas 78229, Mail Code 5716
Phone: (210) 949-2000

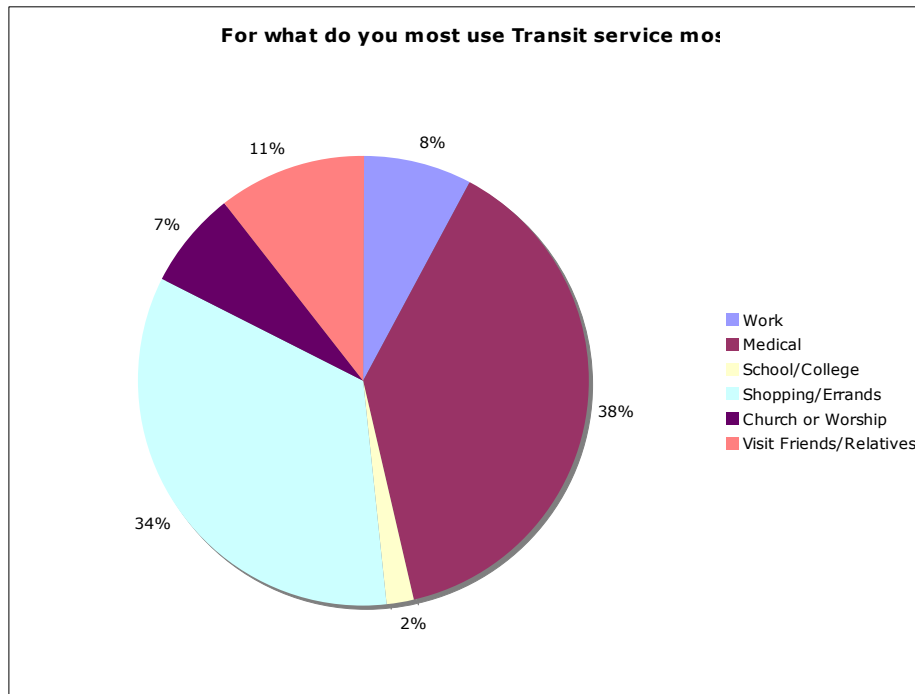
Regional Transportation Needs Assessment

In an attempt to assess the needs surrounding regional public transportation, The Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission surveyed members of the public who both use and do not use public transportation services and professionals whose clients are identified as those likely to use public transportation services.

Surveys focused on what riders use the services for, how often they use services, and what they would like from public transportation. The surveys also looked into why those that do not ride do not use public transportation services. Finally, surveys looked into the views that the professionals who serve potential users of public transportation have of the services.

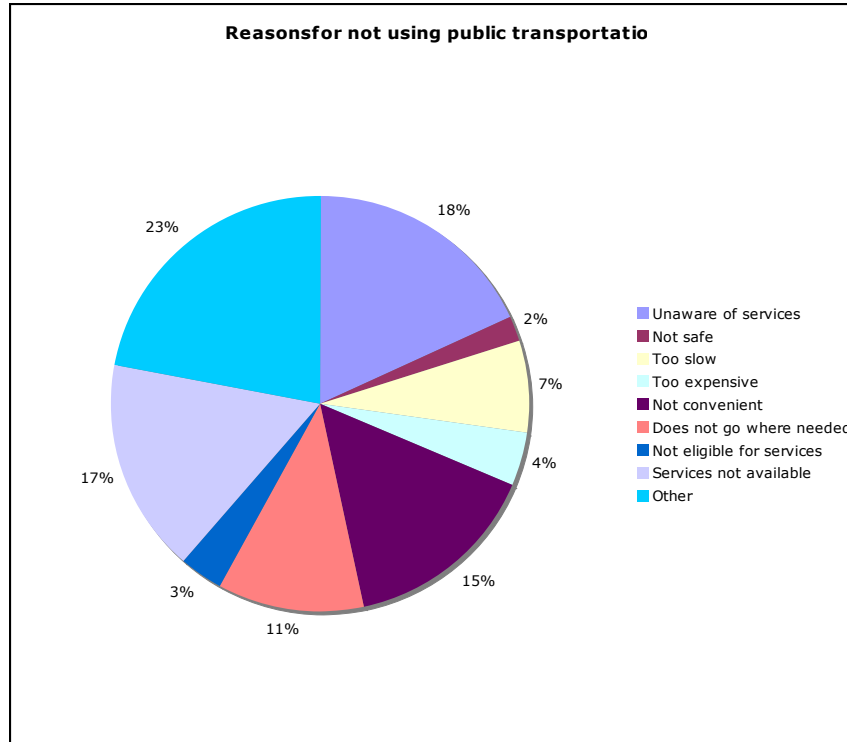


Survey respondents primarily use fixed route transportation services in Victoria for work (36%), medical services (27%) and shopping (21%).



Users of RTransit services primarily use the services for medical services (38%) and shopping/running errands (34%).

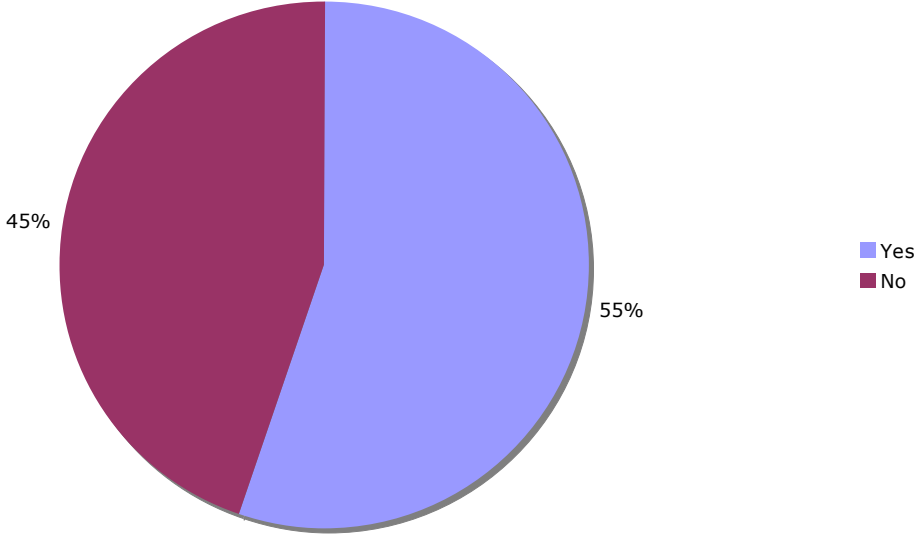
Respondents who did not use public transportation services had the following reasons for doing so:



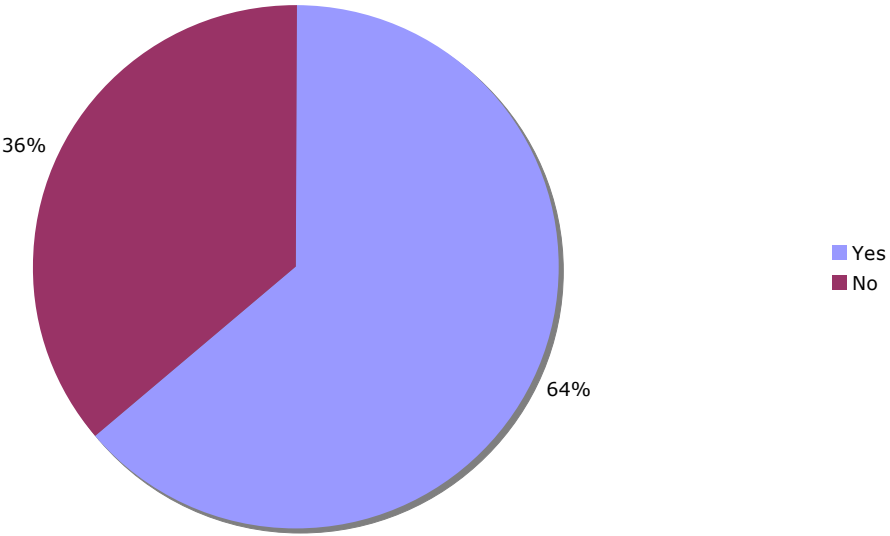
Unawareness of services (18%) and lack of services (17%) were the primary named reasons for not using services. Other (23%) led all responses, with the main response in this category being because a personal vehicle was used.

Respondents frequently noted in the RTransit surveys that there was a desire for expanded hours of service. In questions regarding the expansion of hours of services – including Saturday and Sunday service, and evening service on Monday through Friday – responses were as follows:

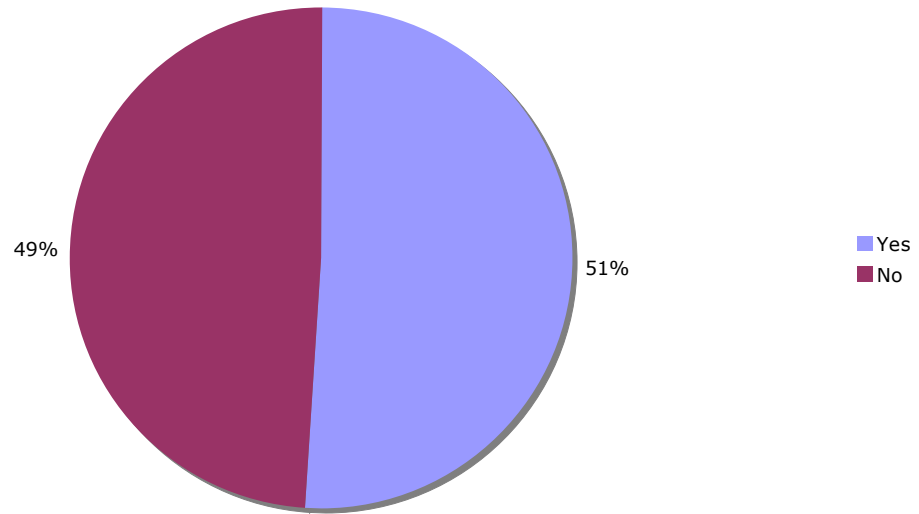
Would you use Saturday curb-to-curb service



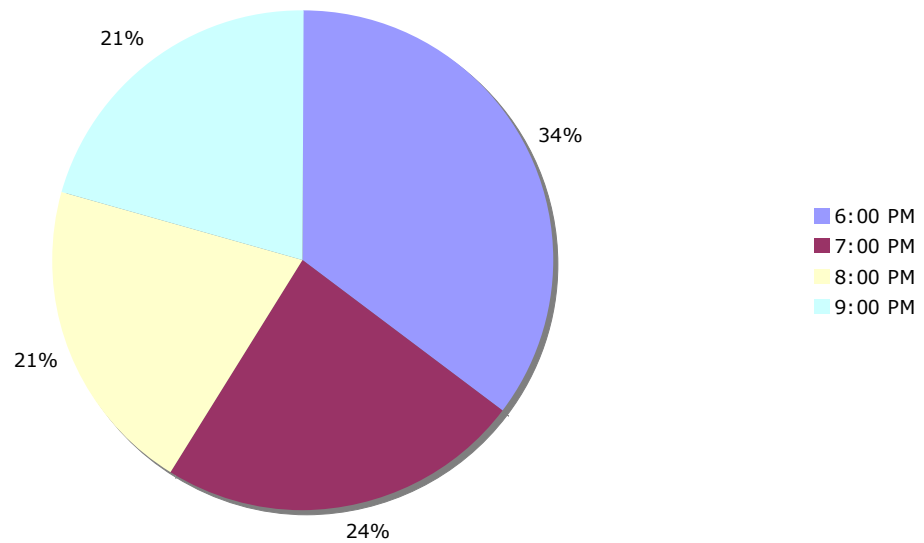
Would you use Sunday curb-curb service



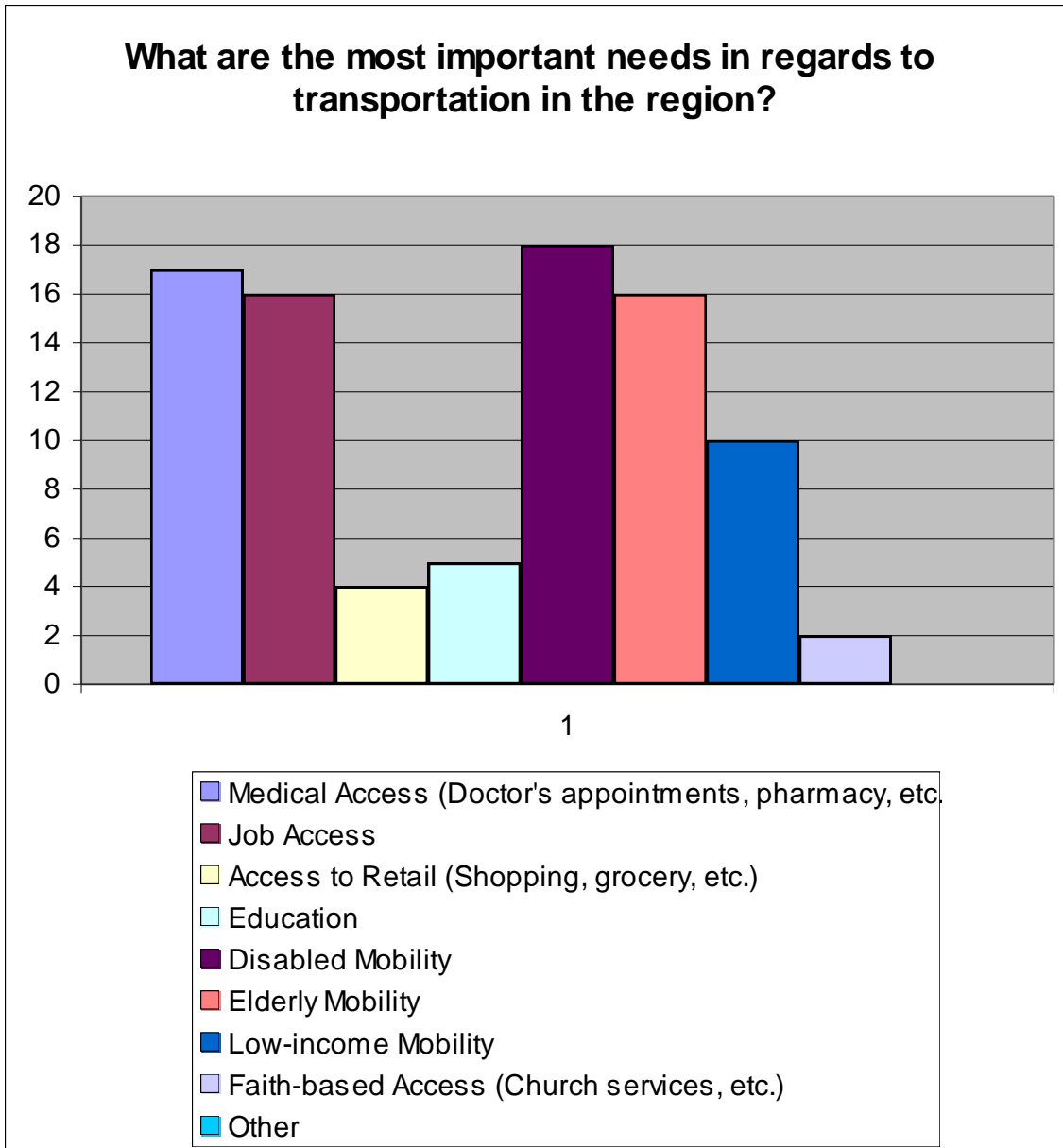
Would you use late-evening Monday through Friday curb-to-cu service?



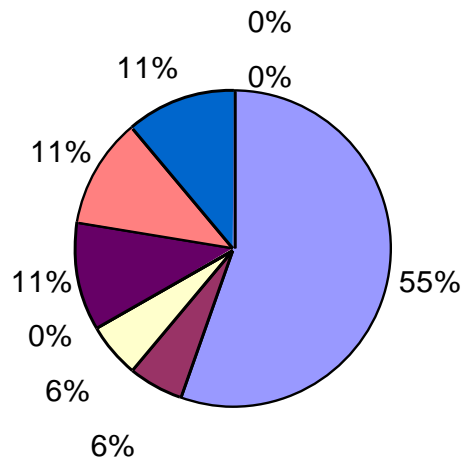
How late would you like service to run?



Professionals were surveyed and asked about their perceptions regarding the most important needs in regards to public transportation, underserved populations, and awareness of public transportation services.



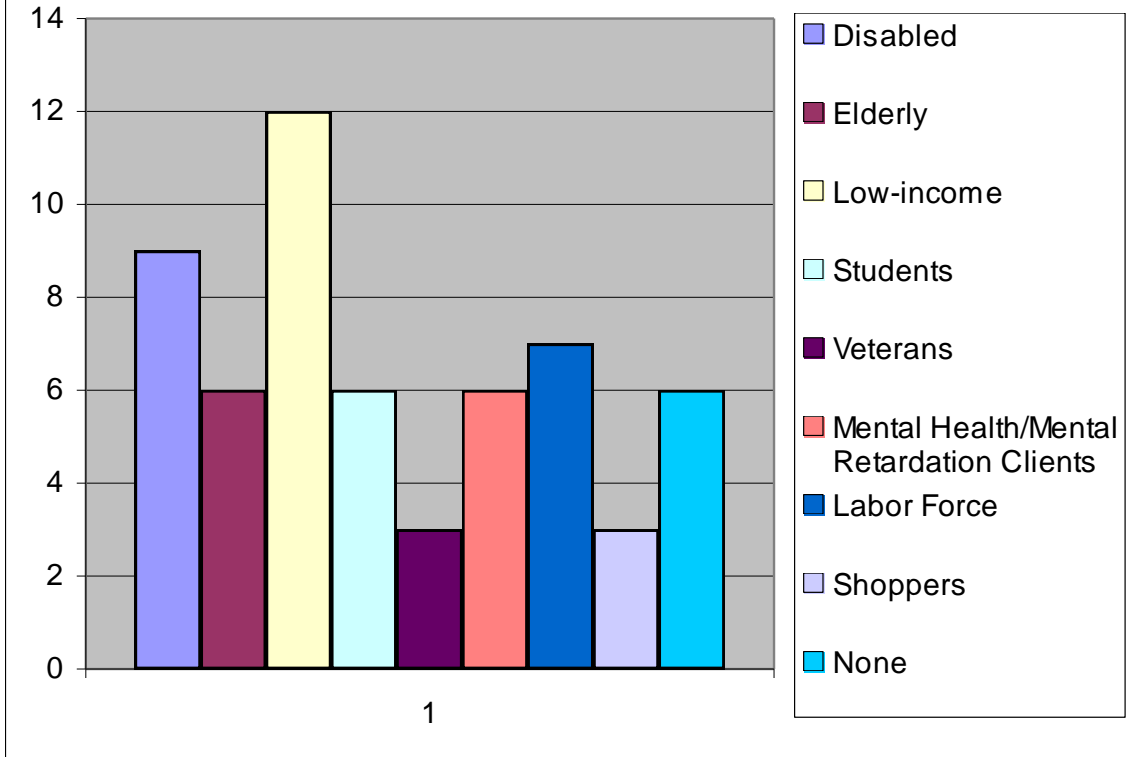
Which is the ONE MOST IMPORTANT issue regarding transportation in the region?



- Medical Access (Doctor's appointments, pharmacy, etc.)
- Job Access
- Access to Retail (Shopping, grocery, etc.)
- Education
- Disabled Mobility
- Elderly Mobility
- Low-income Mobility
- Faith-based Access (Church services, etc.)
- Other

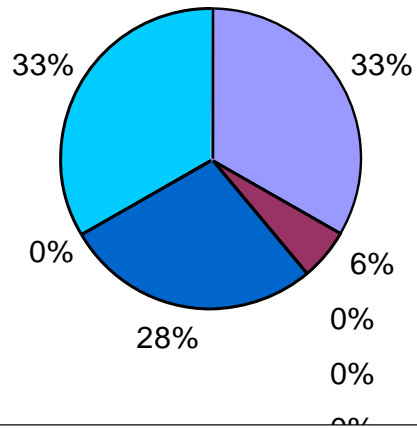
When asked to pick only one issue, the professionals surveyed chose medical services (55%) as the overwhelming most important need. But when given multiple choices, job access and elderly and disabled mobility also scored high, with at least 16 of the 18 respondents choosing these issues.

Which groups do you think are underserved by current public transportation in the region?



When asked to identify underserved populations, professionals low-income residents and disabled as their top two choices. Elderly, students, MHMR clients, workers, and none also garnered at least 6 selections each.

Which group is the ONE most underserved by public transportation services in the region?

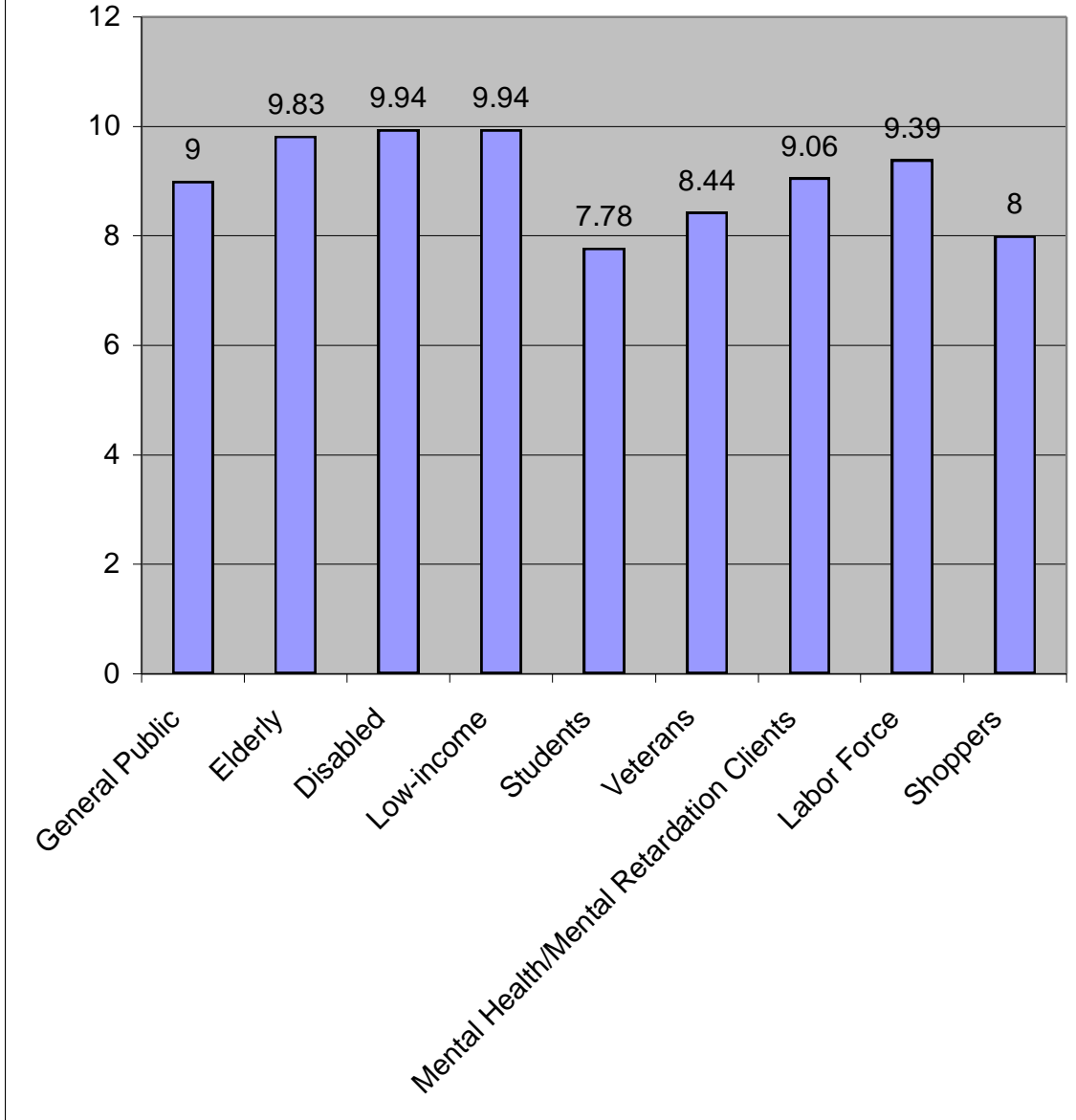


- Disabled
- Elderly
- Low-income
- Students
- Veterans
- Mental Health/Mental Retardation Clients
- Labor Force
- Shoppers
- None

When asked to select only one, disabled and workers were the top choices, with “none” also being selected by 33% of the respondents.

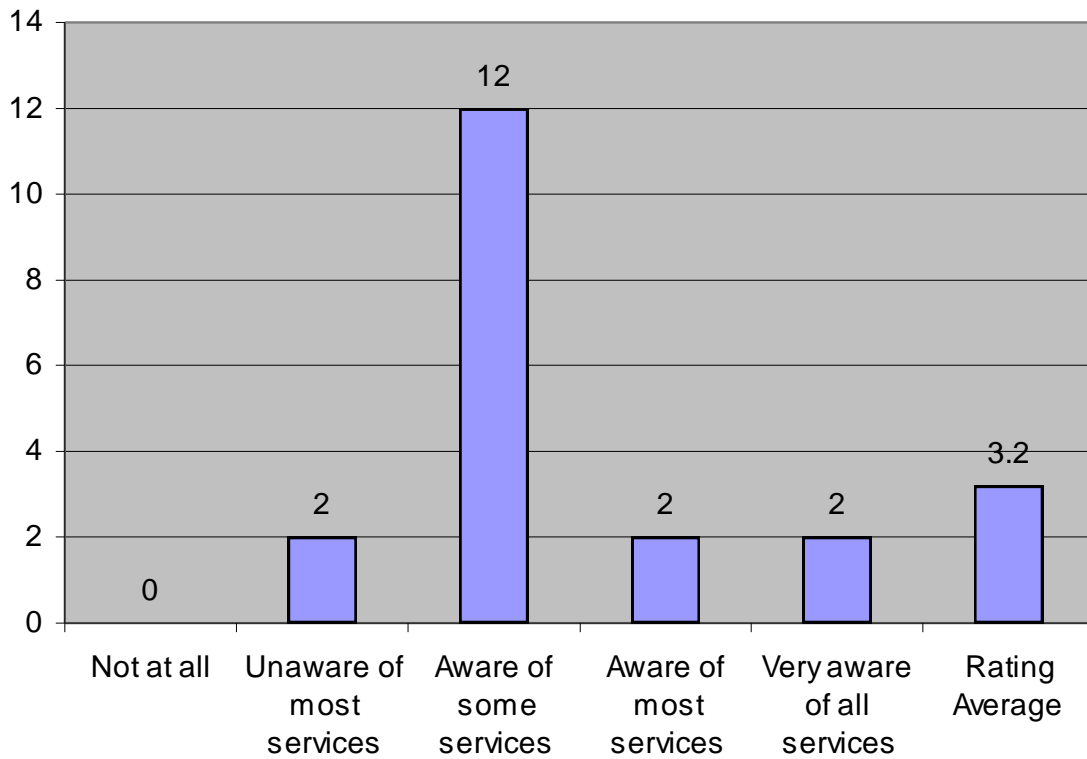
The respondents were asked to gauge the value of public transportation services to various population groups. They were asked to score the services’ value on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being “Not at all valuable” and 10 being “Extremely valuable.”

How valuable is public transportation in the region is for the these groups?

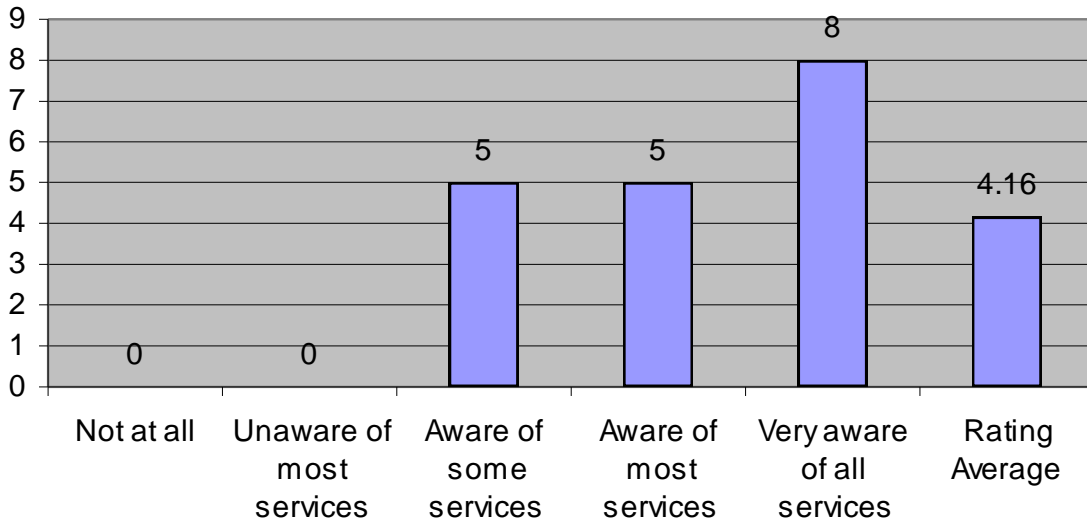


In regards to awareness of public transportation services, respondents were asked to judge their perceptions on the awareness of services by their clients and by themselves. They were also asked about the availability of public transportation information in their offices or at their agency.

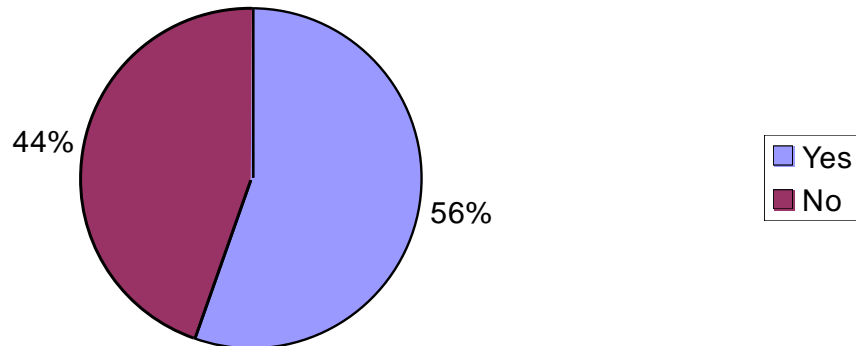
How aware are clients of the services offered to the public through public transportation in the region?



How aware are professionals of the services offered to the public through public transportation in the region?

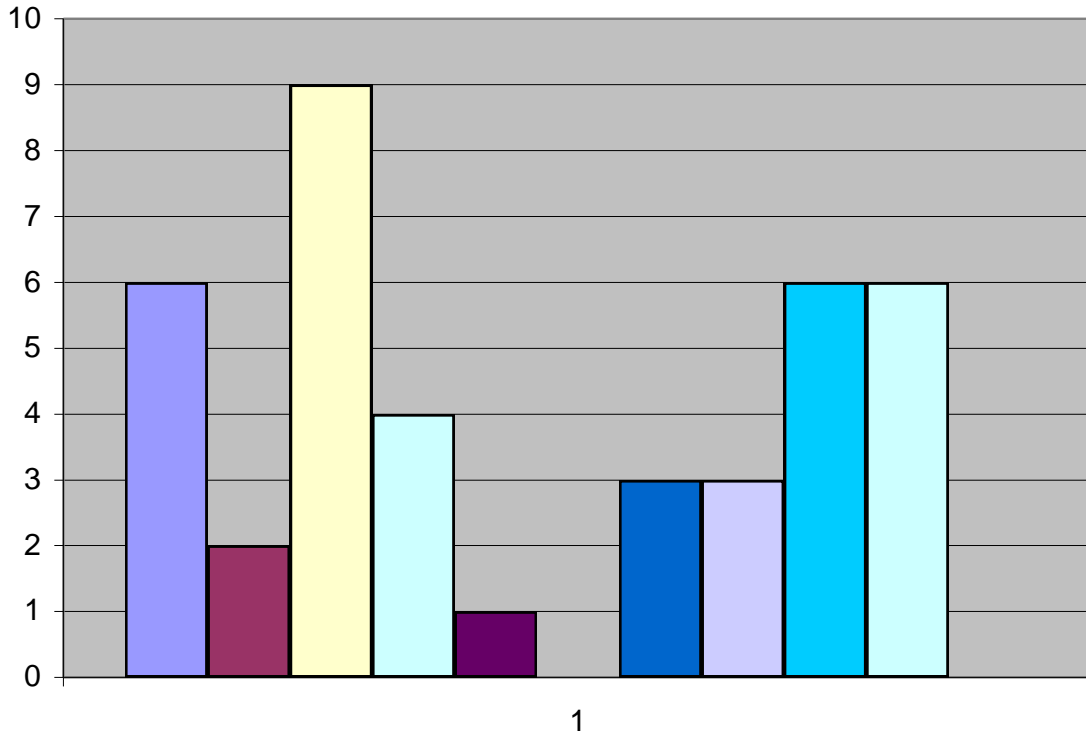


Do you or your agency have public transportation informational materials



The respondents identified their role or the role of their agency as (they were allowed to select multiple categories for this question):

Which best describes your role or the role of the agency you represent?



- Health and Human Services
- Elderly Services
- Disabled Services
- Veterans Services
- Education, K-12, public
- Education, K-12, private
- Education, College/University/Vocational
- Workforce/Employee Services
- Medical Services
- Governmental Services
- Private Business

Findings

Based on the above surveys, the following have been determined to be the priorities of public transportation in the Golden Crescent Region:

- Medical transportation
- Job access
- Other general public needs (shopping, recreation)
- Education

The survey responses indicated that there exist a few service gaps in current regional transportation services. Included in these findings are services for low-income residents, disabled and workers, increasing awareness of public transportation services among the general public and interagency coordination.

Gap	Possible strategy
Services for low-income, disabled, elderly	Voucher program implemented through regional health and human services, disabled services, workforce agencies and senior programs
Weekend & evening demand response service	Voucher program
Job access	Increased outreach to employers in regards to value of vanpool programs
Interagency coordination	Regional meetings; roundtable discussions; regional transportation summit
Increased public awareness	Regional media campaign; regional transportation services brochure

In the Golden Crescent Region, we are fortunate that there are no glaring gaps in transportation services – the populations that have the greatest demand and need for affordable public transportation have access to such services. But, there is always room for improved services – especially in the area of off-hour services and reverse commute services to rural employment. Increased awareness by the general public and increased and better coordination and cooperation among regional transportation agencies and HHS agencies, workforce agencies, and other service agencies will also benefit the region.

Barriers and constraints to regional transportation coordination

The main issues that hinder regional transportation coordination in the region are divided into two categories – barriers that prohibit coordination, and constraints that

limit coordination. The following issues are the main barriers and constraints to regional transportation coordination in the region:

- Lack of additional operation funding to increase services and add or replace the vehicles needed.
- Lack of service to work, especially to rural places of employment. The lack of evening and weekend hours of operation for many services limits employees' access to work outside of traditional work hours.
- Lack of information on how to access transit services by potential riders in the region or those involved with particular agencies.

Suggestions to improve coordination

- Create communication forums between providers and the public and agencies that could benefit from public transportation services.
- Encourage providers to reach out to those that may be in greatest need of services. Reverse the idea that users need to seek out services, and have service providers seek out users.
- Encourage more sharing of information between business and transportation providers.
- Investigate ways to distribute information and schedules to a wider audience.
- Establish single points of contact in business and agencies concerning transportation.
- Develop a regional marketing campaign for transit services and resources.
- Seek out more involvement from the general public in regional coordination efforts.
- Investigate the feasibility of regional trip sharing among providers.
- Investigate the establishment of a regional mobility manager position to disseminate information.

Planning for Comprehensive Services

This section provides an overview of regional transportation services, including FTA-funded programs as well as Health and human services and workforce programs, and the integration of these programs into a regionally-coordinated, comprehensive service plan. FTA-funded programs including Job Access Reverse Commute, New Freedom, Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities, Urban Formula, and Non-Urbanized Formula programs

FTA-funded programs

Non-Urbanized (5311)

The Formula Grants For Other than Urbanized Areas is a rural program that is formula based and provides funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in rural areas, with population of less than 50,000. The goal of the program is to provide the following services to communities with population less than 50,000:

- Enhance the access of people in nonurbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation.
- Assist in the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in nonurbanized areas.
- Encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all transportation funds used to provide passenger transportation in nonurbanized areas through the coordination of programs and services.
- Assist in the development and support of intercity bus transportation.
- Provide for the participation of private transportation providers in nonurbanized transportation.

In the Golden Crescent Region, 5311 funds are administered by GCRPC. GCRPC provides direct rural transportation services to customers in DeWitt and Victoria counties. GCRPC allocates 5311 funding to the to the remaining counties in the region, where rural transportation services are provided by subcontractors. The subcontracting agencies receive the funds to provide rural transportation services to their customers. As of 2011, the regional rural subcontracting agencies are:

- Calhoun County: Calhoun County Senior Citizens Association.
- Goliad County; Goliad County
- Gonzales County; Gonzales County Senior Citizens Association
- Jackson County: Friends of Elder Citizens, Inc.
- Lavaca County: Lavaca County

- Matagorda County: Friends of Elder Citizens, Inc.

Urban Formula (5307)

The Urbanized Area Formula Funding program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas and to Governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

GCRPC provides Small-Urban fixed-route services in Victoria under the Victoria Transit banner.

Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (5310)

This program (49 U.S.C. 5310) provides formula funding to States for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Funds are apportioned based on each State's share of population for these groups of people.

Funds are obligated based on the annual program of projects included in a statewide grant application. The State agency ensures that local applicants and project activities are eligible and in compliance with Federal requirements, that private not-for-profit transportation providers have an opportunity to participate as feasible, and that the program provides for coordination of federally assisted transportation services assisted by other Federal sources. Once FTA approves the application, funds are available for state administration of its program and for allocation to individual subrecipients within the state.

GCPRC, Goliad County, Friends of Elder Citizens in Jackson and Matagorda counties, and Affectionate Arms receive 5310 funding the Golden Crescent Region. GCRPC, Goliad County and Friends of Elder Citizens utilize this funding to provide transportation services. Affectionate Arms uses their funding to contract for services for their clients.

Job Access Reverse Commute (5316)

The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program was established to address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons seeking to obtain and maintain employment. Many new entry-level jobs are located in suburban areas, and low-income individuals have difficulty accessing these jobs from their inner city, urban, or rural neighborhoods. In addition, many entry level-jobs require working late at night or on weekends when conventional transit services are

either reduced or non-existent. Finally, many employment related-trips are complex and involve multiple destinations including reaching childcare facilities or other services.

GCRPC administers 2 JARC programs – one that allows for extended services hours and flexible routes for the Victoria Transit fixed route services. The second program is a vanpool program in partnership with Inteplast for transportation of Inteplast employees to and from work at the Lolita plant in Jackson County.

New Freedom (5317)

The New Freedom formula grant program aims to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work force and full participation in society. Lack of adequate transportation is a primary barrier to work for individuals with disabilities. The 2000 Census showed that only 60 percent of people between the ages of 16 and 64 with disabilities are employed. The New Freedom formula grant program seeks to reduce barriers to transportation services and expand the transportation mobility options available to people with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Goliad County RTransit administers a New Freedom program that allows them to provide same-day service to Goliad County riders.

Health and Human Services programs, Workforce programs

Affectionate Arms Adult Day Care in Victoria receives federal Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (5310) funding, which the organization uses to contract for transportation services for their clients.

GCRPC contracts with Devereaux in Victoria for transportation of their clients.

Workforce Solutions Golden Crescent contracts with GCRPC to provide transit passes for its clients. GCRPC provides passes as needed to Workforce Solutions.

GCRPC also coordinates with DARS and Amour Adult Day Care for the provision of passes. These agencies purchase passes for transit services from GCRPC and provide them to their clients

For purposes of this plan and for regional coordination in the region, GCRPC strives to identify and work with all HHS and workforce transportation services in the region. Currently, representatives of HHS agencies, including DARS, DADS, AAA, are members of the Regional Coordination Steering Committee. Likewise, representatives from Workforce are also members. Agencies such as Victoria College, Goodwill, Headstart, etc. also have representation on the committee.

Integration of Services

Because GCRPC is the primary public transportation agency in the region, and because transit services are provided by GCRPC and their subcontractors, services are closely coordinated and well integrated in the region. The most important manner in which comprehensive services could be planned for the region is to expand services as needed utilizing the funding available through FTA, TxDOT, Workforce Solutions Golden Crescent, and Health and Human Services organizations. Exploring under-served needs, such as low-income, elderly and disabled, job access and education access, could lead to a more comprehensive service plan for the region.

Efforts to Streamline Parallel Planning Processes

A vital part of the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan for the Golden Crescent Region is the identification of the various transportation-planning efforts in the region. By doing so, the regionally coordinated transportation planning effort can then work to integrate all of these efforts into this plan, as well as work to identify and satisfy the requirements of these other planning efforts.

The following organizations include transportation as parts of their planning efforts. GCRPC strives to include members of these organizations in the regional planning effort, to ensure that their planning efforts are integrated into the regional transportation plan.

Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission

The Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) is a voluntary association of 19 local governments within the seven-county region of mid-coast Texas, also known as state planning District XVII. GCRPC was organized in 1968, created in response to the Regional Planning Act of 1965, in order to assist in cooperation of planning at a regional level between member governments and organizations.

The GCRPC region encompasses the seven Texas counties of Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca and Victoria that lie southeast of the San Antonio region, southwest of the Houston region, and northwest of the Corpus Christi region. The seven county region covers an area of approximately 6,097 square miles.

Membership in the GCRPC is open to each of the seven counties, all the incorporated cities and towns that presently exist or may be incorporated within those counties. Currently, all seven counties and all 19 incorporated communities in the region are active members in the organization.

Recognizing that more can be accomplished by acting together, local governments in the GCRPC region created their association as a service organization for themselves. Its function is to provide a forum for study and discussion of matters of mutual interest within the region: to promote, through cooperation and pooling of common resources, maximum efficiency in governmental operations; to identify, clarify and prepare comprehensive plans for reducing and eliminating regional problems or guiding future growth; and to facilitate agreements among the governmental entities. GCRPC was formed on the following principles:

Transportation Planning

The ability to travel, to get to work, to friends, to stores, and to health care is vital to the wellbeing of all Texans. In a region as expansive as the Golden Crescent, access to transportation is particularly important. The Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) has been committed to providing transportation services since November of 1986. GCRPC is currently a multiple provider of transportation services, which serve the rural general public, elderly, and persons with disabilities. GCRPC is one of many transit contractors in the State of Texas who provide public transportation services, under contract through the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). GCRPC provides rural public transportation services called RTransit in the following counties: Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, Victoria and Matagorda. Within the City of Victoria GCRPC operates a small-urban system called Victoria Transit.

In 1995, the Victoria County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) commissioned a Transit Feasibility Study for the City of Victoria. The study was designed to identify the need for transit service in the city of Victoria and surrounding Victoria County, investigate service alternatives, and develop an efficient and effective operations plan.

The Transit Feasibility Study was conducted in three phases, with decision points at the end of each phase. In Phase I, transit need was identified using feedback from focus group meetings, stakeholder interviews, target market surveys, and existing demographic data. The results of Phase I indicated that the general population as well as seniors and the disabled have a need for transit, and transit need is highest in the central and southern portion of the city of Victoria.

Transit alternatives were analyzed in Phase II. Several service strategies were recommended, including the coordination of existing services designed to meet the specialized needs of seniors and the disabled and flexible-route service for the general public. In Phase III, the cost-effectiveness and financial feasibility of the recommended service strategies were evaluated. Financial feasibility was identified based on the ability to fund the proposed transportation services with a mix of federal, state, and local sources.

The study was concluded in July 1997 when the Victoria City Council authorized the Planning Department to submit a grant application for funding of transportation services. The findings of the study are being used in the decision-making process of planning and implementing transportation services in Victoria.

By resolution, the City of Victoria has designated Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) as the Urban Transit District for Victoria and has entered into an Interlocal Agreement with GCRPC to administer and operate a Small-Urban Transit Program in the city of Victoria. As stated above, one of the service strategies identified

and recommended was a coordination effort among the existing transit providers. GCRPC is an existing provider and has been administering a Rural Transportation program for over 11 years. GCRPC implemented Victoria Transit on January 4, 1999, providing demand response curb-to-curb services Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm for all residents regardless of age living in Victoria. A 24-hour notice is required when scheduling a ride.

In March 2002 Victoria Transit began its fixed route system for the City of Victoria.

The Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission's RTransit program is one of 42 rural transit systems in the State of Texas. Texas has the largest rural population in the nation and the largest rural general public transportation program. The Golden Crescent Region is also predominantly rural. According to the 1990 Census, over two-thirds of the region's population reside in what is considered to be rural.

Since many of the rural communities in the Golden Crescent Region do not have access to medical care in their communities, they must depend on the health care facilities located in other non-urban cities in their county or rely on the medical facilities located in the city of Victoria for their health care needs. This need for medical transportation prompted the coordination of a comprehensive transportation program.

GCRPC has been providing Rural Transportation Services known as RTransit since November 1986; over the years RTransit has grown from providing services with only a hand full of vehicles to a fleet of 28 vehicles throughout the region. RTransit provides curb-to-curb transportation service for the rural residents in Calhoun, Dewitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, Matagorda, and Victoria counties. Residents access the system by calling RTransit in their county a day in advance to schedule a ride.

The transit system offers residents transportation within their county and transportation to neighboring counties. In order to provide efficient transportation services in the over 6,000 square mile region, the Planning Commission contracts with six local providers.

Major funding for this program is provided by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) under the Section 5311 Grant Program. In addition, funding provided from the Texas Department on Aging, Texas Department of Health, Cities and Counties, as well as fare revenues help support the program.

GCRPC is also the lead agency for Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning for the seven-county region.

Transportation Programs

Victoria Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is an agency created by federal law to provide local input for urban transportation planning and allocating federal transportation funds to cities with populations greater than 50,000. The MPO's mission is to provide a cooperative, continuous and comprehensive ("3C") transportation planning process for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods consistent with the region's overall economic, social and environmental goals. Special emphasis is placed on providing equal access to a variety of transportation choices and effective public involvement in the transportation planning process.

The MPO is responsible for conducting the urban transportation planning process that allows Victoria County to receive federal and state transportation funding. This is accomplished primarily through three related activities and documents - the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

The MTP is our 25-year long-range plan and the basic framework for all our transportation planning. The 2005-2030 MTP, our current plan, was approved in February 2005 and programs approximately \$348.7 million worth of transportation improvements over the next 25 years.

The TIP is our four-year list of prioritized transportation improvement projects. These projects generally fall into five categories - capacity improvement projects (adding lanes), preservation projects (road reconstruction without adding lanes), bicycle projects, pedestrian projects and transit projects. Approximately 30% of our regional road network is eligible for federal aid. That 30%, however, carries the vast majority of our daily vehicle mileage. Local residential streets do not generally qualify for MPO funding.

The UPWP or Unified Planning Work Program is our two-year work plan and budget. The UPWP is funded by a combination of Federal Highway, Federal Transit, and State planning funds. It describes all the agency and consultant transportation studies, population and employment forecasts, computer travel demand modeling, and MPO staff budgeting for a two-year period. The Work Program budget normally programs \$160,000 per year.

Texas Department of Transportation

The Regional Service Planning website is sponsored by the Texas Department of Transportation to aid 24 regions across Texas coordinate public transportation service across metropolitan, suburban, and rural areas. Participants may use the website to find published planning resources, announce meetings, request assistance, and join an online community.

Chapter 461 of the Texas State Transportation Code focuses on maximizing the benefits of the State's investment in public transportation through the coordination of services. Accordingly, the Texas Transportation Commission, under the leadership of Commissioner Hope Andrade, established the Regional Planning and Public Transportation Study Group. The mission of the Study Group was to review current public transportation planning and programming practices within metropolitan, suburban, and rural areas and to enhance service delivery, customer satisfaction, efficiency and effectiveness. The Study Group recommended that each region of the state develop and submit a regional coordinated public transportation service plan to the Commission by September 2006. The TTI research team provided technical and facilitation support to the Study Group and assisted each region to develop a regional transportation plan. This website was created to assist regional coordination efforts, share best practices, and provided a clearinghouse of technical information on relevant public transportation planning processes and strategies.

From September 2005 through 2007, thirty-five facilitations and/or presentations were conducted in 14 of the 24 regions through 2007. Each of the 24 regions prepared and submitted regional public transportation service coordination plans to the Commission by December 2006. Barriers and constraints to coordination were identified through interviews, meetings and research. The barriers and constraints were addressed throughout the two-year project in presentations and five white papers. The white papers covered the role of overcoming coordination issues related to insurance, vehicle procurement, technology applications, alternative fuels, and driver hiring and training. The plans prepared by the regions represent the state of the practice in coordinated public transportation in Texas.

The Texas Department of Transportation has also implemented regional Intelligent Transportation Systems architectures throughout the state. Through the State of Texas Regional ITS Architectures and Deployment Plans program, ITS plans for the regions outside of the major metropolitan regions were developed. These plans provide a framework for ITS systems, services, integration, and interoperability, as well as identifying specific projects and timeframes for ITS implementation.

Health and Human Services Programs

Area Agency on Aging

The Golden Crescent Area Agency on Aging conducted a multi-faceted process to determine the needs of senior adults in the region. A regional needs assessment survey was conducted. The survey was provided to consumers, service participants, caregivers, service providers, local elected officials, the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission Board, the Regional Health & Human Services Advisory Committee and other community leaders and stakeholders. We received 420 completed surveys: 72

from the Board, Advisory Committee & Stakeholders; 25 from providers; 19 from caregivers; and 304 from consumers and participants. Group presentations were made to the Victoria Regional Health Alliance, the Victoria Area Homeless Coalition and the Victoria Non-Profit Network. Information & Referral logs and waiting lists were analyzed. Needs were also identified in the demographic research. In addition, staff participated in the Texas Silver Haired Legislature Town Hall Meeting at the Texas Conference on Aging in Kerrville on March 22, 2010. Many issues were identified at this event and the results were used to augment the local needs assessment process.

GCRPC and their subcontractors are also the Title III B transportation providers for the region.

Community Development Institute Head Start & Victoria Transit

CDI Head Start and GCRPC entered into a Community Partnership Agreement in January 2011. The purpose of the Community Partnership Agreement is to formally establish relationships among community agency programs to facilitate accessible, quality care for children and their families.

This agreement allows the two agencies to do what is necessary in order to facilitate the open exchange of client information in order to best provide their services to the community.

DARS

There is also interaction with other agencies, such as the Texas Department of Transportation since lack of adequate transportation is often a major factor in terms of a consumer's ability to maintain employment. Transportation issues are the focus of the Agency Transportation Coordinating Council established to enhance transportation for HHSC agency consumers.

Health and Human Services Commission

GCRPC is the Transportation Service Area Provider for Transportation Service Area 17.

Other

GCRPC Economic Development

GCRPC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) includes public transit – including the transit services provided in the region - as a vital part of its strategy.

CEDS is the result of the local planning process designed to guide the growth of the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission's seven member counties. The purpose of this advisory project is to assist in the establishment of a process that will help create jobs, foster a more stable and diverse economy, and improve living conditions. It is

stressed that this development strategy is a multi-year, on-going plan that carries no direct authority and is a tool to be referenced and to be used to assist in coordinating economic development efforts for the entire region. This development strategy is also to serve as a benchmark document – assisting communities in chronologically surveying their progress in developmental plans.

CEDS is intended to assist the community organizations in Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca and Victoria Counties in order to develop, implement and document the current status of the Golden Crescent region – its strengths and weaknesses – as well as the potential threats and opportunities to its future development.

Access plays a major role in determining the economic wellbeing of the region. An adequate roadway system with connections to state and interstate routes may well be the deciding factor in selection of a location for a new industrial plant. Safe and clearly marked roads to scenic areas will help attract tourism into the area. A well-run transit system may provide an incentive for retirees to settle in the region. Modern airports can be a factor in the level of business and tourist traffic. The extent of the rail system can also influence the types of business and industry that locates in a region.

Organizational Structure and Processes to Sustain Planning and Services

GCRPC's Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning efforts are supported by the GCRPC Transit Department staff and the Regional Coordination Steering Committee.

Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission Staff Structure

The GCRPC staff members with regional coordination activity responsibilities are:

Director of Transportation Services – The Director of Transportation Services will be responsible for oversight and will monitor the entire coordination project, ensuring that all goals, objectives, and activities are met. The Director of Transportation Services will also assist the Public Transit Coordinator in submitting timely progress reports, and will attend all local, regional, and state coordination meetings.

Public Transit Coordinator – The Public Transit Coordinator will be responsible for implementing all regional coordination activities and ensuring that all goals, objectives, and activities are met. Coordination activities will include:

- Scheduling of all meetings, and preparing agendas and materials to be disseminated at meetings.
- Keeping an updated Steering Committee list and keeping the members of the Steering Committee engaged in the regional coordination planning process.
- Keeping the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan updated and approved by the Steering Committee.
- Developing plans for public involvement in the regional planning process.
- Planning, leading, and recording any coordination-related meetings.
- Submitting timely progress reports and updating annual workplans as needed.
- Developing funding strategies for the sustainability of regional coordination projects.

Transportation Accountant – The Transportation Accountant will be responsible for keeping records of all expenses, invoices, and bills, and will submit timely requests for reimbursement to the state.

Program Specialist – The Program Specialist will be the clerical support for this project. Duties include typing a variety of letters and documents, copying needed materials, and filing.

Steering Committee Roles, Membership and Structure

The Regional Coordination Steering Committee is made of regional stakeholders with a vested interest in public transportation services. GCRPC has made extensive efforts to include representatives from as many organizations from health and human services, education, city and county planning, senior services, workforce and state government.

The Steering Committee's responsibility is to advise upon and review all regionally coordinated transportation activities undertaken by GCRPC. The Committee meets on a regular basis to discuss current and potential future services, planning, and new projects in order to bring a wider perspective to the transportation planning in the region.

GCRPC tries to actively update membership of the Committee in order to include as many regional stakeholder representatives as possible. In order to include a wide-ranging perspective on transportation issues, GCRPC is actively seeking members of the committee that will not only participate, but also be active in regional coordination activities. A diverse Committee can also act to engage other community stakeholders through various networking contacts, potentially bringing in even more community member to the regional coordination planning process.

One possible avenue for Committee membership that is not currently reflected in the membership list is the inclusion of community members not affiliated with stakeholder organizations – both transit riders and non-riders. Engaging these community members can help the Committee and GCRPC to include as many valuable viewpoints as possible in regional coordination planning activities.

For a complete list of the current Steering Committee membership, see Appendix A.

Update of Regional Coordination Plan

Upon completion of the Updated Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan, it will be vital that the Steering Committee meet on a regular basis to review and update the plan as needed. The Committee will review this plan on an annual basis to evaluate its relevance, completeness, and then amend the plan as needed. GCRPC will act to engage the Committee members on new information and ideas that can be integrated into the plan.

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Process of Developing Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

GCRPC contracted with the Texas Transportation Institute through TxDOT to mediate a series of meetings with the coordination stakeholder committee to develop the mission, vision, goals and objectives for the updated regionally coordinated transportation plan.

Two meetings were held, on July 25, 2011, and on August 16, 2011. Meredith Highsmith and Suzie Edrington of TTI facilitated the meetings. During the meetings, the coordination steering committee developed the following vision, mission, goals and objectives:

Vision

“Assist in improving the quality of life by providing access to meet the employment, healthcare, education, commerce, and social needs to everyone in the Golden Crescent Region.”

Mission

“Provide reliable, safe, efficient transportation through coordinated efforts with our partners to serve the community needs in an economical, equitable and environmentally friendly manner.”

Goals and Objectives

5. Better connect all customers to destinations by providing accessible services
 - a. Expand hours and days of service
 - b. Create Ambassador Program
 - c. Expand services to educational opportunities
 - d. Expand services to employment opportunities
6. Increase public awareness of transportation service
 - a. Grow ridership through marketing and outreach
 - b. More PSAs
7. Better integrate transportation services into the economic development of the region
 - a. Increase partnerships and diversity
8. Safe, Effective and Efficient Operations
 - a. Conduct needs analysis of Maintenance Facility
 - b. Expand use of MDCs
 - c. Increase productivity
 - i. Increase MDCs

- d. Decreasing safety incidents
 - i. Security cameras

Leveraging Resources and Sustainability

One of the major issues facing GCRPC in regards to Regional Transportation Coordination is sustain the regional coordination planning process beyond the 2012 fiscal year. GCRPC will receive funding from the Texas Department of Transportation for regional coordination planning through 2012-2013, but beyond that time frame, funding is not guaranteed. TxDOT is working to continue funding to the lead regional coordination agencies, but is not certain how much, if any, funding will be available.

With this in mind, GCRPC is looking to the future, and at ways in which it, along with its regional coordination stakeholders, can continue this valuable planning process. If specific regional coordination planning funds become no longer available, GCRPC has several options to leverage resources that are available and to sustain the regional coordination planning process.

GCRPC could examine the activities in its regional coordination planning, and, utilizing existing FTA funding, build those activities into its Non-Urbanized, Elderly and Disabled and Job Access/Reverse Commute administrative activities. These funding streams, along with New Freedom funding, are all able to fund a Mobility Manager position as an eligible capital expense. GCRPC could examine the creation of a Mobility Management staff position, or incorporate Mobility Management into the job duties of a current staff member.

Finally, GCRPC could look into the work of the United We Ride initiative. The State of Texas utilized a United We Ride grant to fund a coordination pilot project, which GCRPC could use as an example of how to extend coordination activities.

FTA-Funded Programs

Non-Urbanized (5311)

The Formula Grants For Other than Urbanized Areas is a rural program that is formula based and provides funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in rural areas, with population of less than 50,000. The goal of the program is to provide the following services to communities with population less than 50,000:

- Enhance the access of people in nonurbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation.
- Assist in the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in nonurbanized areas.
- Encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all transportation funds used to provide passenger transportation in nonurbanized areas through the coordination of programs and services.

- Assist in the development and support of intercity bus transportation.
- Provide for the participation of private transportation providers in nonurbanized transportation.

Urban Formula (5307)

The Urbanized Area Formula Funding program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas and to Governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (5310)

This program (49 U.S.C. 5310) provides formula funding to States for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Funds are apportioned based on each State's share of population for these groups of people.

Funds are obligated based on the annual program of projects included in a statewide grant application. The State agency ensures that local applicants and project activities are eligible and in compliance with Federal requirements, that private not-for-profit transportation providers have an opportunity to participate as feasible, and that the program provides for coordination of federally assisted transportation services assisted by other Federal sources. Once FTA approves the application, funds are available for state administration of its program and for allocation to individual subrecipients within the state.

Job Access Reverse Commute (5316)

The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program was established to address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons seeking to obtain and maintain employment. Many new entry-level jobs are located in suburban areas, and low-income individuals have difficulty accessing these jobs from their inner city, urban, or rural neighborhoods. In addition, many entry level-jobs require working late at night or on weekends when conventional transit services are either reduced or non-existent. Finally, many employment related-trips are complex and involve multiple destinations including reaching childcare facilities or other services.

New Freedom (5317)

The New Freedom formula grant program aims to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work

force and full participation in society. Lack of adequate transportation is a primary barrier to work for individuals with disabilities. The 2000 Census showed that only 60 percent of people between the ages of 16 and 64 with disabilities are employed. The New Freedom formula grant program seeks to reduce barriers to transportation services and expand the transportation mobility options available to people with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Mobility Management

Mobility management is an eligible capital expense supported by up to 80-percent Federal participation. Mobility management consists of short-range planning and management activities and projects for improving coordination among public transportation, other transportation service providers and agencies that do not provide transportation but serve people who need transportation services. It includes personnel and technology activities.

The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) circulars allow mobility management to be funded as an eligible capital expense under Sections 5310, 5311, 5316, and 5317. The goals of mobility management are to build coordination among existing transportation providers and non-transportation providers who serve individuals that need transportation and to expand the availability of services to meet the public's unmet transportation needs.

Texas has made a concerted effort to embrace mobility management as an effective transportation coordination strategy. Just as the definition and goals of mobility management are very broad and diverse so are the mobility management projects in Texas.

The Texas investments in activities to support mobility management have included:

FY 08 - Texas funded with Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP) and Section 5304 funds ten statewide workshops including all of the designated 24 regional planning areas and their local workforce and health and human service partners. The benefit of these workshops was the networking of the different partners with planning for client transportation being the common thread.

FY 09 - Texas, in partnership with the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) hosted a state specific Transportation Coordination Institute – most of the seven projects resulting from the Institute have a mobility management component.

FY 10 - Texas has been awarded a United We Ride (UWR) Grant to groom and formally train mobility managers in four pilot sites, ultimately training workforce and health and human service case managers in the sites to include transportation early on in their

process of case management activities. It is the intent to eventually roll this process out statewide.

To further encourage mobility management projects, Texas has developed a coordinated call for projects that includes six competitive funding streams: Section 5304 Planning, RTAP, Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC), New Freedom, Inter-City Bus and Rural Discretionary Funds. Mobility management is eligible for any of the funding streams and encouraged as innovation under the Rural Discretionary segment.

Since the inception of mobility management as a SAFETEA-LU strategy, Texas has hosted Jim McClary numerous times, as he provided the National Transportation Institute coordinated mobility class, as he provided the Texas specific coordinated mobility class funded through RTAP and he has participated in Mobility Management Town Hall Meetings conducted for local agencies whose clients needed transportation, local transit agencies and local elected officials in three locations, Wichita Falls, Midland/Odessa, and Austin.

The incorporation of these strategies has resulted in 15 of the 24 Texas regional planning areas having mobility management projects. Following are some examples:

Texas projects that promote, enhance, and facilitate access to transportation services, including integrating and coordinating services for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and low income individuals include: Panhandle Regional Planning Commission is funding a mobility manager that is leading the research and development of a voucher program for seniors and persons with disabilities. The Concho Valley Transit District has partnerships with the Area Agency on Aging and local health and human services agencies to better facilitate rides for the elderly and disabled.

Texas projects that support short term management activities to plan and implement coordinated services include: North Central Texas Council of Governments (COG) will be using several grass roots mobility managers that will develop local county based strategies that rollup into a major plan for the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex.

Texas projects that support state and local coordination policy bodies and councils include the Midland/Odessa MPO which is housing the regional mobility manager to better coordinate services for their vast rural area.

Texas projects that operate transportation brokerages to coordinate providers, funding agencies, and customers includes the Harris County RIDES project, funded with urbanized JARC, New Freedom and 5310 program funds – this project brokers rides for elderly and disabled outside of the Houston Metro area.

Texas projects that provide coordination services, including customer-oriented travel navigator systems and neighborhood travel coordination activities include 3 local New

Freedom projects in partnership with Independent Living Centers: Panhandle Independent Living Center in Amarillo and VOLAR ILC in El Paso provide travel training and trip planning – brokering trips for the local transit agencies for persons with disabilities. Ft Bend County provides transportation ambassadors as well as the travel training and trip planning for individuals with cognitive learning disabilities.

Texas projects that are engaged in the development and operation of one-stop transportation traveler call centers to coordinate transportation information include the East Texas Council of Governments and the Heart of Texas COG are working on coordinating dispatch for all trips across all programs and transit agencies.

Texas projects that include operational planning for the acquisition of intelligent transportation technologies includes the LULAC Project Amistad project that is implementing computer aided dispatch, Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), Mobile Data Systems (MDT), and an automated fare card.

The balance of the Texas projects established regional mobility managers or transportation brokerage activities. This includes supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation.

Some of the challenges encountered during implementation of mobility management strategies include:

- Long term funding for sustainability,
- Better communication to transportation providers, health and human service and workforce agencies of the value and flexibility of using mobility management coordination strategies,
- Local turf issues that arise from blending resources, customers and services etc.
- A resource pool of applicants qualified for mobility management positions and pay scales that adequately compensate individuals with the expertise and
- The need for transportation providers to actively/aggressively/consistently reach out to nontransportation agencies – health and human services agencies, work force agencies – and to become familiar with their respective missions, the services they provide, the transportation needs of the people these agencies serve, their gatekeepers/primary contacts.

United We Ride

United We Ride (UWR) is a federal interagency initiative aimed at improving the availability, quality, and efficient delivery of transportation services for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes. Transportation plays a critical role in providing access to employment, health care, education, community services, and activities necessary for daily living. The importance is underscored by the variety of transportation programs that have been created in conjunction with health and human services programs and by the significant federal investment in accessible public transportation systems throughout the Nation. Ironically, for most people who need transportation help, the creation of more programs has resulted in several unintended consequences. Transportation services are often fragmented, underutilized, or difficult to navigate, and can be costly because of inconsistent, duplicative, and often restrictive federal and state program rules and regulations. And, in some cases, narrowly focused programs leave service gaps, and transportation services are simply not available to meet certain needs.

The United We Ride initiative was started by the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM), a federal interagency council established by President George W. Bush by Executive Order in 2004. The CCAM oversees activities and makes recommendations that advance the goals of the Order: simplify customer access to transportation, reduce duplication of transportation services, streamline federal rules and regulations that may impede the coordinated delivery of services, and improve the efficiency of services using existing resources. Chaired by the Secretary of Transportation, the Council is composed of the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Interior and Justice as well as the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration and the Chairperson of the National Council on Disability.

Texas Project

The Texas Department of Transportation used a United We Ride transportation coordination grant to fund a grass root efforts in pilot areas to bring transportation mobility managers and case workers face-to-face to explore the mutual benefits of collaboration.

Transportation mobility managers and case workers from diverse agencies adopted or modified practices to routinely and efficiently match public transportation services to individual customers' mobility needs.

Major Activities of the Project

Select pilot sites – Wise County, the City of Plano (including Dallas & Collin Counties), and six counties surrounding Waco

Partner transportation agency mobility managers with identified staff from health, human service, education and/or workforce agencies

Provide training to address the barriers that seem to exist between the transportation programs/needs of these groups.

Spend six months using the skills taught in the training class to expand collaboration and coordination activities with financial support from the grant. End goal: Mobility managers have expanded case worker contacts and vice versa; both have increased knowledge of transportation resources.

Use university staff to carry out an in-depth evaluation process.

Appendix A

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Appendix B

Public Involvement Process

Public Meetings

Date and Time	Place	Purpose
Thursday, June 11, 2009 – 5:30 p.m.	Jackson County Chamber Annex Meeting Room 317 W. Main Edna, Texas 77957	Public comment on regional public transportation services
Tuesday, June 16, 2009 – 5:30 p.m.	Goliad County Senior Citizens Center 601 W. Pearl St. Goliad, Texas 77963	Public comment on regional public transportation services
Wednesday, June 17, 2009 – 9:30 a.m.	Calhoun County SCA, Inc. 2104 W. Austin Port Lavaca, Texas 77979	Public comment on regional public transportation services
Wednesday, June 17, 2009 – 5:30 p.m.	Riverside Community Center 110 St. Lawrence Gonzales, Texas 78629	Public comment on regional public transportation services
Thursday, June 18, 2009 – 2 p.m.	DeWitt County Senior Citizens 1013 E. Courthouse St. Cuero, Texas 77954	Public comment on regional public transportation services
Thursday, June 18, 2009 – 5:30 p.m.	Lavaca County Senior Citizens 109 N. La Grange St. Hallettsville, Texas 77964	Public comment on regional public transportation services
Thursday, August 25, 2011 – 5:30 p.m.	Sam Houston Room 120 S. Main Street, 2 nd Floor Victoria, TX 77901	Public comment on Updated Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan

