



## 3.0 Public Outreach

Public meetings were conducted to inform the public about the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan and seek input on the transportation needs of the Tulsa Region. Several presentations were made upon request, including the Homeless Services Network, the Katrina Coalition, NE Oklahoma Disability Taskforce Meeting, and the Funders Roundtable. Transcripts can be found in Appendix C.

Many comments demonstrating the participants' interest and commitment in improving the Tulsa region transit system were recorded from these meetings.

Participants pointed out the need of churches' participation in providing assistance to those who need transportation; the need of assessing the connectivity to different appointments on the same day; obstacles to providing services because of insurance, liability and manpower; the need to expand alternative fuels use; the issue of relying on volunteer drivers; the need to better place bus stops and benches; and the necessity to improve the condition of sidewalks and pedestrian signals so residents can access transit routes. Some other essential issues were discussed, such as reduction of headways on bus routes and flexibility of the system.

The public meetings also yielded many comments and questions:

- What innovative examples exist in other communities
- Need for access to medical appointments, social engagements, and worship services
- Some seniors are isolated because they can't drive and relatives and friends are deceased or have moved away
- Users are not informed about the available services. Confusion about how nightline system work, what routes are available, and calling for deviations
- Need for evening and weekend transit service
- Using transit as a way to reduce congestion
- Education and advertising to alleviate transit stigma and low usage
- Idea of surveying users to determine their needs and elicit suggestions on how to get residents to participate in the process
- Safety with riding/waiting at night and on-bus violence
- No access to jobs (such as call centers, distribution centers, etc.) and industrial park because of hours of operation and location
- Interest in vanpool or ridesharing to work and social events, but current system is unsatisfactory
- Transportation based on the specific trip types – routes to stores one day, another day medical centers, etc.
- Emergency transportation and evacuation planning
- Current usage below capacity
- Making presentations to local organizations
- Churches and organizations have underutilized vehicles
- In other states, seniors can donate their car to an organization, and in turn they will receive a voucher for rides provided by the organization
- Hiring unemployed individuals to operate vehicles that take others to work
- Lift requires riders to meet eligibility requirements – what about those who do not meet requirements but have no other service options?
- Ask businesses to sponsor vehicles that take clients from home to that business (grocery stores, shopping centers, etc.)
- Young mothers have difficulty finding work and childcare if depending on current transit system - once employed, they need the flexibility to drop off children and get to work in a timely way

An Advisory Group was formed with the purpose of sharing thoughts, perceptions and experiences on the strengths and weaknesses of local human services agencies and public transit providers, opportunities and obstacles to coordination, and recommendations for strategy and action. The Advisory Group had key input on the gap analysis, identifying the region's needs and guiding the development of the Plan.

Around twenty people representing public transit providers, human service agencies, private for-profit providers, advocacy groups, neighborhood associations, among others, attended each Advisory Group meeting. Each meeting had a presentation to update participants on the data collected for the development of the Coordinated Plan draft and new regulations issued by the Federal Transit Administration concerning the Plan, followed by brainstorming sessions and exchange of information and experience.

The first Advisory Group meeting took place at the Tulsa Central Library Lecture Room in August 2006. At this meeting, the Advisory Group members were introduced to the Coordinated Plan requirements and purpose, the Plan development timeline, members' responsibilities and expectations, and the providers' inventory.

The second Advisory Group meeting took place at LIFE Senior Services in September 2006. Participants worked on a brainstorming session and comments were recorded. There was discussion about strengths and weaknesses of local human service agencies and public transit providers and obstacles and opportunities to coordinate. These comments were reviewed and used in drafting the Coordinated Plan.

The third meeting took place at Park Village Nutrition Center in October 2006. At this meeting, the Advisory Group discussed recommendations for State and City's role in coordination and action items recommended to facilitate transportation coordination in the Tulsa region.

A fourth Advisory Group meeting was held February 2006 at the Community Service Council offices. Advisory group members discussed federal, state, and local funding and prioritized gaps and actions for the region. The fifth meeting was also held at the Community Service offices in March 2006 to review the draft Coordinated Plan.

The complete summary of these Advisory Group meetings is included in Appendix C.