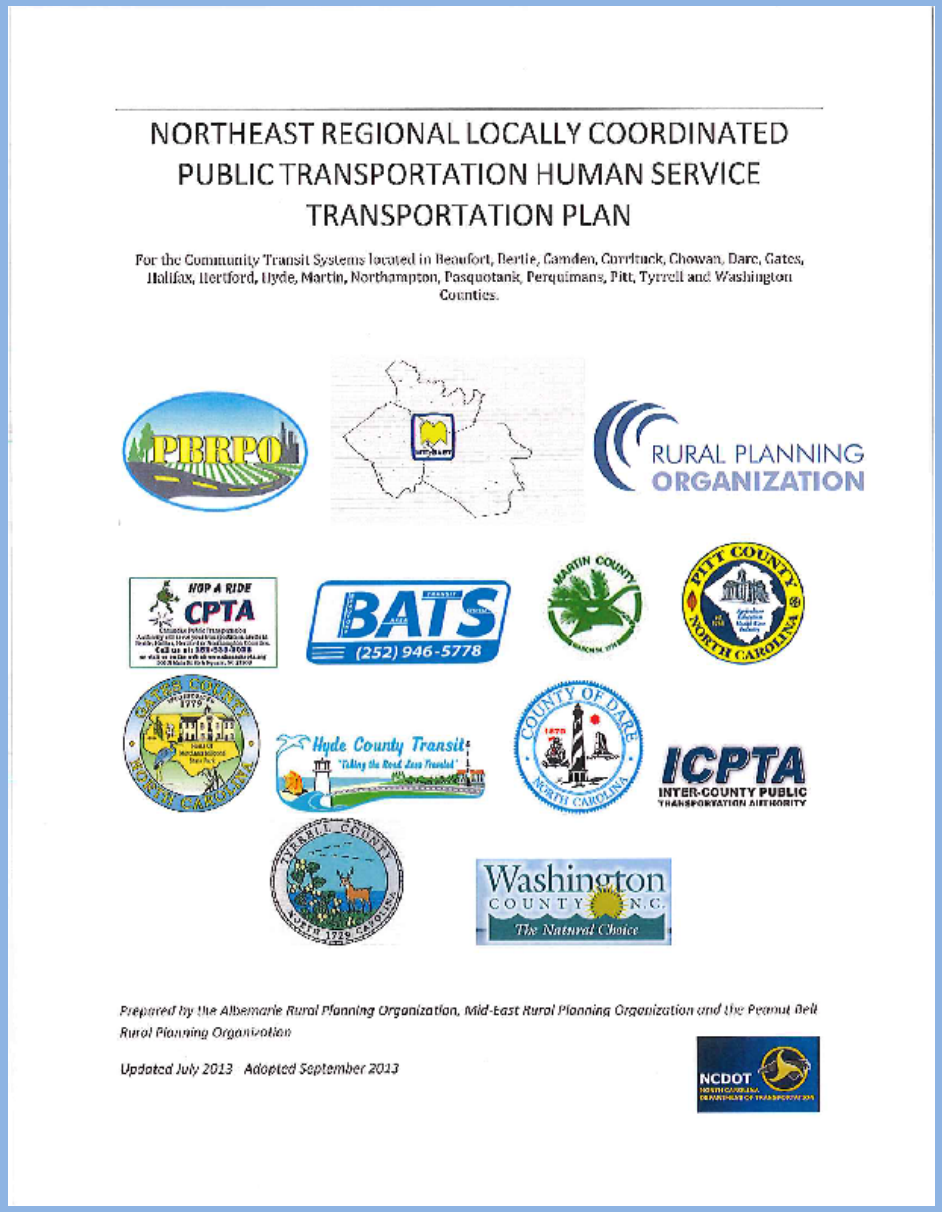


NORTHEAST REGIONAL LOCALLY COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

For the Community Transit Systems located in Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Currituck, Chowan, Dare, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell and Washington Counties.

Prepared by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization, Mid-East Rural Planning Organization and the Peanut Belt Rural Planning Organization

Updated July 2013 Adopted September 2013

Working Together in Northeast North Carolina:

Rural Planning Organizations (RPO'S) and the development of Locally Coordinated Plans (LCP's)

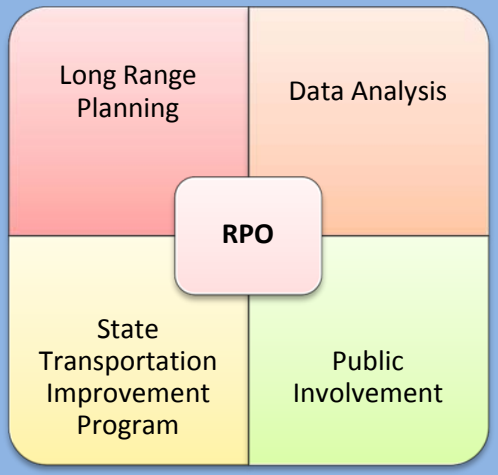
Thursday January 30, 2014

RPO 101

Raleigh, N.C.

Where do RPO's and Public Transit Interact???

- Duties of the RPO include:
  - Develop long range transportation plans
  - Collect and analyze transportation data
  - Develop and prioritize STIP projects
  - Provide a forum for public involvement



- Opportunities for Collaboration
  - Route mapping
  - Safety workshops
  - Service area studies
  - Facilitation
  - Marketing & outreach
  - Collaborative projects
  - **Locally Coordinated Plan Review/Update**

What is a Locally Coordinated Plan???

- A coordinated plan should maximize transit programs' collective coverage by minimizing duplication of services and should include representatives from public, private and non-profit transportation and human services providers, and participation by the public.

- FTA proposed the following key elements be contained in each coordinated plan:

  - An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with limited incomes;

  - An inventory of the available services that identifies areas of redundant service and gaps in service;

  - Strategies to address the identified gaps in service;

  - Identification of coordination actions to eliminate or reduce duplication in services and strategies for more efficient utilization of resources ;

  - Prioritization of implementation strategies.

What is a Locally Coordinated Plan???

- Enacted in 2005, SAFETEA-LU required that projects selected for funding in FY 2007 under the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (5310), JARC (5316), and New Freedom (5317) programs be derived from a locally developed coordinated transportation plan and that the plan be developed through a process that includes representation from the public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers, as well as the general public.

- In 2012, Congress enacted a new two-year federal surface transportation authorization, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), which retained all of the coordinated planning provisions of SAFETEA-LU. Under MAP-21, JARC and New Freedom are eliminated as standalone programs, and the Section 5310 and New Freedom Programs are consolidated under Section 5310 into a single program, Grants for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities, which provides for a mix of capital and operating funding for projects. This is the only funding program with coordinated planning requirements under MAP-21, beginning with Fiscal Year 2013 and currently authorized through FY 2014.

What is a Locally Coordinated Plan???

- At the current time FTA has yet to update its guidance concerning administration of the new consolidated Section 5310 Program, but the legislation itself provides three requirements for recipients. These requirements would apply to NCDOT Public Transportation Division in distributing any Section 5310 funds for which it might serve as designated as recipient under MAP-21:

    1. That projects selected are "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan";
    2. That the coordinated plan "was developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers, and other members of the public"; and
    3. That "to the maximum extent feasible, the services funded … will be coordinated with transportation services assisted by other Federal departments and agencies," including recipients of grants from the Department of Health and Human Services.

- Under MAP-21, only Section 5310 funds are subject to the coordinated-planning requirement. Sixty percent of funds for this program are allocated by a population-based formula to large urbanized areas, 20% is allocated to small urban zone areas, and 20% is allocated to the Rural areas. (See 49 U.S.C. Section 5310 (e)(2) / MAP-21 Section 20009).

Where did we begin???

- Following a Rural Transit Workshop in Boone in July 2011, it was apparent that RPO's and Transit Providers within the Peanut Belt RPO and Mid-East RPO were unaware of the benefits that one could provide for the other.
  - Several Transit Providers did not know what the RPO was, what it did, or that it existed
  - On the flip side, the RPO's were unaware of the potential for collaboration and assistance that existed between themselves and transit providers.

Bringing everyone to the table…

- In the month following the Rural Transit Workshop, Peanut Belt RPO and Mid-East RPO Planners began discussing ways to bridge the gap between the RPO's and Transit Providers

- The RPO's chose to put together an RPO/Transit Provider Workshop, bringing together RPO Planners, Transit Providers, Area Agency on Aging representatives, and other stakeholders recommended by transit providers.

- The first RPO/Transit Provider Workshop took place in October of 2011 in Washington, NC.

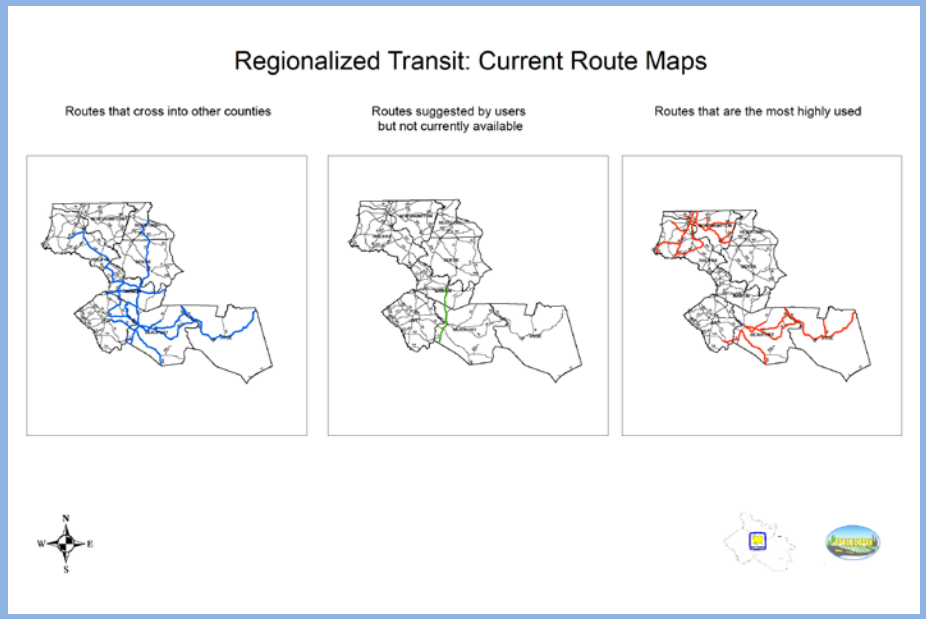
Workshop #2

- Following the October meeting, the Mid-East, Peanut Belt, and Albemarle RPO's distributed maps to transit providers who participated in the first RPO/Transit Workshop

- On these maps, transit providers were asked to mark routes based on three criteria:
  - Routes that cross into other Counties
  - Rider Suggested Routes that do not currently exist
  - Routes that are most highly utilized

- Based on the returns, these routes were put into GIS and mapped, creating a base map for transit in the region

- A second workshop was held in April of 2012. At this meeting, transit providers were able to provide further, more in-depth feedback on routes as well as communicate with neighboring county providers regarding routes and user needs.



Workshop #2

In addition to reviewing and commenting on the Route Maps, providers, planners, and other stakeholders:

- Set Long-Term and Short-Term Goals
- Discussed cooperative grant/funding opportunities
- Discussed updates to Locally Coordinated Human Service Plans
- Discussed additional stakeholders/invitees

Around this time, the NCDOT PTD released their Regionalization Study. From this study….

- PTD will develop a framework for regional action that identifies a continuum of integration activities ranging from communication, coordination, collaboration, to consolidation

- Local systems will use the framework to develop Regional Action Plans (RAP) for their Regional Service Area (RSA). All transit systems are expected to provide a RAP to NCDOT within three years

- PTD will evaluate its internal practices and policies to eliminate barriers to regional transit actions, and to increase the incentives for regional actions.

Workshops 3 & 4

- Knowing what was coming down the pipeline, transit providers and planners added the Locally Coordinated Plan update to their Long Term Goals.

- At the third workshop, recognizing that a the RPO/Transit Provider Workshops provided the platform to build the Locally Coordinated Plan Update off of, and knowing that regionalization was the goal of PTD, RPO Planners in the Peanut Belt, Mid-East, and Albemarle RPO areas began discussing the idea of approaching the Locally Coordinated Plan as a 3-RPO, 17 County, Northeast Regional Locally Coordinated Plan.

- After talking with NCDOT PTD staff, they were invited to workshop four in early 2013 to discuss the Locally Coordinated Plan process, covering how changes in MAP-21 would affect the development of the update.

Locally Coordinated Plan Development

- The planning process for the development of the Northeast Regional Locally Coordinated Plan, while unofficially having been underway since the inception of the workgroup, officially kicked off in March of 2013.

- 17 Counties were included in the plan, including:
  - Camden
  - Chowan
  - Currituck
  - Dare
  - Hyde
  - Gates
  - Pasquotank
  - Perquimans
  - Tyrrell
  - Washington
  - Bertie
  - Halifax
  - Hertford
  - Northampton
  - Beaufort
  - Martin
  - Pitt

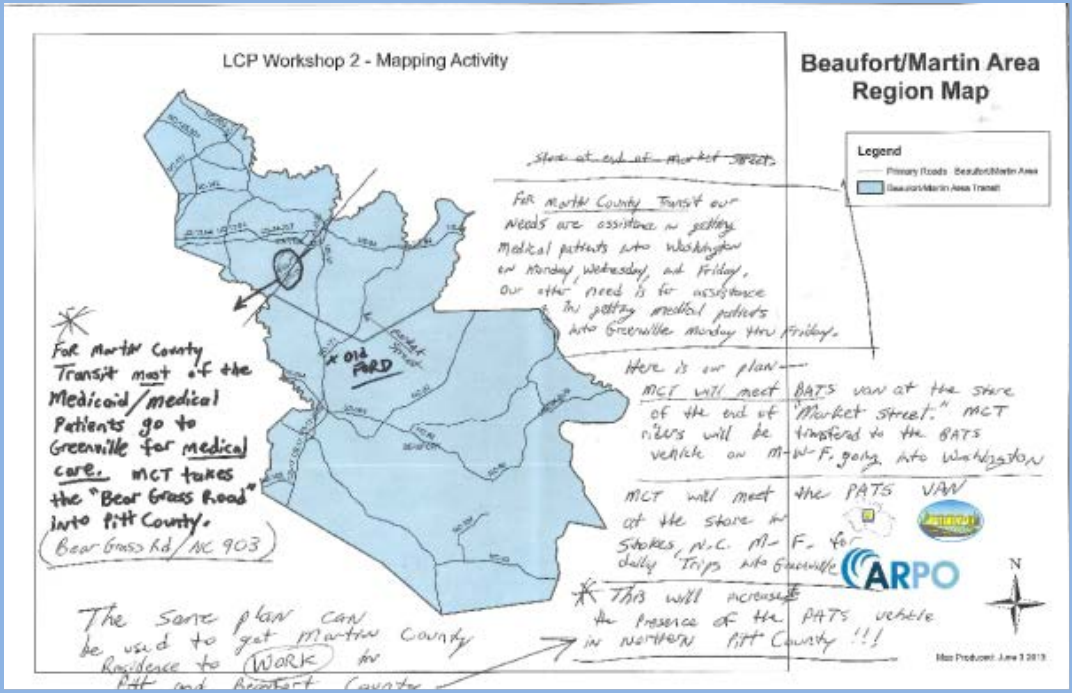
Locally Coordinated Plan Development

- The RPO's held LCP Workshops in both March and June of 2013. Given the large geographical area comprised in the Plan, two workshops were held in both March and June, with one being held in Washington, NC and the other in Elizabeth City, NC. The goal behind the 2 meeting locations was to elicit as much stakeholder participation as possible. The information presented in the plan is based on the input provided at these meetings.

- In an attempt to attract a diverse representation of stakeholders to participate in the NERLCP, invitations requesting participation in the NERLCP stakeholder committee meetings, workshops, and group exercises were sent to public and private transit providers, each County's Social Services Director, county Planning Directors, Area Agency on Aging staff, and Senior Center staff members.

Locally Coordinated Plan Development

- Gaps Analysis
  - A gap analysis exercise was completed at both the Washington and Elizabeth City workshops. Participants used maps of their specific region, as well as a larger full region map, to mark any unmet transportation needs. Participants were separated into different groups based on the region in which they were geographically located. At that point they were instructed to draw on the maps, identifying where there were gaps in services and where future service may be beneficial. No instruction was given to the groups as to how they should depict their thought and therefore each map was developed differently than the others.



Locally Coordinated Plan Development

- Needs and Strategies Matrix Exercise
  - A needs and strategies matrix exercise was completed as part of the NERPOLCP public workshop. The attendees of the workshop were divided into groups and provided a matrix describing several possible needs of a coordinated transit system and several strategies to accomplish them. Each matrix provided to the groups contained additional space to identify items the participants felt were important although not already identified. The collaboration by the workshop participants on identifying strategies to help accomplish each need not only allowed for participatory problem solving but helped further identify existing gaps, inadequacies, barriers, and opportunities for coordinated services that were previously unrecognized.

Needs/Strategies	Fixed Routes Deviated	Evenings	Weekends	Broker Trips	Van Pools	Express Services	Door to Door	Volunteer Drivers	Increased Visibility	Agency Operated	Medical Express Service	Park and Ride	Feeder Service	Vouchers	Older Adult Rider Aid	Tourism Trolly	Out of County (State) Service	Food Pantry
Increase service to fill gaps	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Better inter-connections and/or coordinated services		√	√	√			√	√	√		√		√	√	√		√	
Services for individuals not on Medicaid	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√		√		√	√	√		√	
Bus System - Fixed Routes																		
Low Fares	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Servies County-Wide	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√		√	√
Stops with ammentities - i.e. lighting, benches, audible signs, sidewalks	√	√	√									√				√		
Customer Service Improvements; On Time Service		√	√			√	√		√	√	√		√				√	
Services to Medical Facilities		√	√	√			√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√			
Services to Educational Facilities		√							√	√			√				√	
Services to Employement Centers		√	√		√			√	√			√						
Services to Shopping		√	√				√		√	√		√			√			
Travel training for inexperienced/hesitant, i.e. for elderly, limited english, etc.	√	√	√			√			√		√	√	√	√	√			√
Remove barriers for mobility impaired	√					√					√	√	√		√			
Senior Centers	√		√				√	√	√				√	√	√			√
Inter City Bus		√	√			√			√		√	√	√	√	√		√	
Increased Demand & Response	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√		√	√	√	√	√			√
Mobility Management	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√			√

Locally Coordinated Plan Development

- Prioritization of Strategies
  - In the final exercise of the LCP workshops, participants were asked to rank the strategies they individually found most appropriate for their clients or the interests they represented. This was done by asking the participants to allocate an imaginary $100 spread over the strategies they had recommended in the prior exercises. They were reminded to be creative and not consider current budgetary restrictions in their allocation of their $100.

PRIORITY	SHOPPING LIST	TOTAL DOLLARS SPENT
1	Weekends Service	$135.00
2	Out of County Service	$125.00
3 (Tie)	Agency operates own vans	$120.00
3 (Tie)	Increased Visibility	$120.00
4	Medical Express Service	$105.00
5	Evenings service	$90.00
6	Food Pantry	$85.00
7 (Tie)	Volunteer drivers	$70.00
7 (Tie)	Door To Door	$70.00
7 (Tie)	Older Adult Rider Aide	$70.00
7 (Tie)	Feeder Service	$70.00
8 (Tie)	Van Pools	$65.00
8 (Tie)	Express Services	$65.00
9	Vouchers	$55.00
10	Broker Trips	$40.00
11	Tourism Trolly	$30.00
12 (Tie)	Fixed Routes	$25.00
12 (Tie)	Park and Ride Program	$25.00
13	Deviated Fixed Route	$20.00
14	Bigger Vehicles	$10.00
15	Transit Pass	$5.00

Locally Coordinated Plan Development

- Upon the completion of the LCP Workshops, RPO Planners began the process of evaluating and analyzing the results of exercises. Additionally, planners collected additional relevant information for the document, including:

  - Demographic Data (population; disabled population; vehicle access; income)
  - Transit Provider Annual Statistics
  - Unmet Needs Assessment (determined at RPO/Transit Provider Workshop in lieu of Survey)

Locally Coordinated Plan Development

- Once evaluation and analysis was completed, planners began the process of drafting the plan document.

- The Draft Document was then sent to the transit providers as well as the Public Transit Division for review.

- Once all comments were received and edits were addressed, then plan was sent to the transit providers for approval by their governing board.

Recommended actions for RPO Planners

- Read the Locally Coordinated Plan in your area – select some gaps/needs that interest you
- Attend a Transportation Advisory Board meeting of your local Community Transit System
- Book a ride and ride the system sometime.
- Go to the NCDOT-Public Transportation page and open up ‘Grants News’ – read the application overviews
- Open your Community Transportation System website and test it for user friendliness.

Questions?