GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transit Planning Services

RURAL AND HUMAN SERVICES
TRANSPORTATION STUDY – PHASE II
TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

April 2012

HNTB

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

SECTION I: TECHNICAL COORDINATING GROUP AND STATE MOBILITY MANAGER

Chapter 1 STATE-LEVEL COORDINATION

The first phase of Georgia's Rural and Human Services Transportation (RHST) Coordination Plan 2.0, a 'Top Down' and 'Bottom Up' approach was recommended to facilitate successful coordination within the state, recognizing the dual efforts required at the state and regional level to implement sustainable coordination strategies. 'Top Down' strategies refer to direction or guidance the State of Georgia (GDOT among other state agencies) can take to ensure coordination requirements are established and implemented consistently throughout the state. 'Bottom Up' strategies refer to steps that can be taken at the regional level, recognizing that each region is unique and these regions vary in the current state of coordination. This technical memorandum focuses on the state-level 'Top Down' implementation strategies that were advanced as a part of the Georgia RHST coordination effort. This includes two key elements including a State Mobility Manager and implementation of a state-level working group, now known as the Technical Coordinating Group (TCG).

Figure 1.1: Developing a Balanced RHST Model
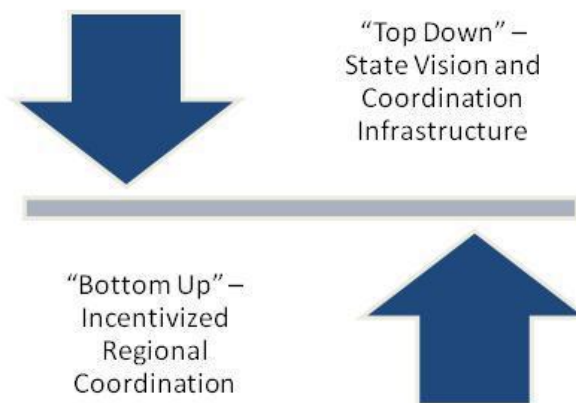
1.1 Technical Coordinating Group

1.1.1 RHST Committee and Subcommittee Legislation

In 2010, the Georgia Legislature passed House Bill 277, requiring the Governor's Development Council (GDC) to provide legislative reporting regarding RHST coordination through the Georgia Coordinating Committee for RHST (RHST Committee) and the State Advisory Subcommittee of RHST (RHST Subcommittee). The RHST Committee is comprised of five Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) Board Members, each appointed by the Governor. The RHST Subcommittee has the following composition:

- Chair – Commissioner, Department of Transportation (GDOT);
- Governor's Development Council (GDC);
- Commissioner, Department of Community Health (DCH);
- Commissioner, Department of Human Services (DHS);
- Commissioner, Department of Labor (DOL);
- Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs (DCA);
- Superintendent, Georgia Department of Education (DOE); and
- Commission, Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD).

During the first quarter of 2011, the RHST Subcommittee began meeting to determine next steps for statewide RHST coordination. Beginning in January 2011, the TCG began meeting based on the RHST Phase I Coordination Plan 2.0

report recommendations. These meetings were on a voluntary basis illustrating the goodwill of state agencies to implement statewide RHST coordination.

1.1.2 June 2011 (Half Day Workshop)

In June 2011, the TCG organized a half-day workshop and included the RHST Advisory Subcommittee agencies along with other state agencies that may have a vested interest in RHST. The list of agencies attending the workshop includes:

- GDOT;
- DHS;
- DBHDD;
- DCH;
- GDEcD;
- DOE;
- GRTA; and
- GDC.

At the meeting, examples of state coordination from other states across the country were shared with attendees, including:

- Establishment of a permanent TCG;
- Establishment of a State-level Mobility Manager;
- Establishment of Regional Coordinating Councils and Regional Mobility Managers;
- Institutionalization of a coordinated infrastructure through legislation, Memorandums of Understanding or Executive Orders; and
- Identification of funding sources both in the short- and long-term.

The half-day workshop included interactive voting, using automatic voting tools, to encourage discussions among the state agencies and determine the priorities for RHST in Georgia. Each question presented in the meeting was voted upon through the electronic voting and then the group discussed the results of the vote and issues surrounding each topic. Table 1.2 outlines each of these questions, the voting response and any discussion items that followed. Appendix A provides the meeting summary from the workshop.

Table 1.2: TCG Half Day Workshop Interactive Voting Responses and Discussion

Question	Response	Discussion Items
Should a permanent TCG be established to oversee / guide / foster the coordination of RHST on an ongoing basis?	Yes: 100% No: 0%	- Need to differentiate the role of the RHST Advisory Committee and Sub-Committee versus the TCG.
If a permanent TCG were to be create, would you / or organization wish to be a member?	Yes: 86% No: 14%	- No discussion followed this question.

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Question	Response	Discussion Items
Should the TCG be broadened to be more inclusive?	Yes: 100% No: 0%	– Agencies felt that consumer advocates should be involved at the state-level to create a partnership between the providers and the consumers. – Discussion regarding the inclusion of MPOs and regional transit organization, but the majority of participants felt that they would be better represented on a regional level. – Some agencies felt that including the Department of Economic Development is important and provides a benefit to the state.
Which other agencies, divisions and / or organizations would you like to see represented on the TCG as voting members?	All: 0% Some: 88% None: 13%	– Discussion began around which agencies should be present at the TCG meetings and which agencies should have a vote within the TCG. – It was asked for all of the participants to fill out a paper ballot indicating which agencies (in addition to those already serving on the RHST Advisory Sub-Committee) that should have a vote within the TCG: • Department of Economic Development; • Business Community; • Regional Commission Representative; • Governor's Office; • Veterans Service; and • Consumer Representative.
Should a State-Level Mobility Manager position be established?	Yes: 100% No: 0%	– Discussions around states that are coordinated that do not have a Mobility Manager in place. Yes, this is the case in some states and the DOT typically acts as a de facto Mobility Managers. Consultants can also be Mobility Managers in lieu of state employees.
Do you think it is a good idea to establish RHST regions, each with a Regional Coordinating Council and Mobility Manager?	Yes: 100% No: 0%	– No discussion followed this question.
Do you think it is a good idea to use the 12 DHS / Regional Commission Regions as the RHST Regions?	Yes: 100% No: 0%	– Discussion regarding the ability to move trips beyond the regional boundaries. The goal is to move beyond these boundaries and the boundaries should only be intended as boundaries for organizational structure. – This would be a big change for DCH and their current structure and operations. IT may be difficult to transition to another structure although they are open for discussion.

Question	Response	Discussion Items
Does it make sense to have Plan A in the short-term and evaluate Plan B as a possibility for the future, whereas Plan A has the state agencies contract separately with Regional Mobility Managers (each with 12 contracts) and Plan B creates or designates an existing state agency or commission to house a State Mobility Manger which would contract with each Regional Mobility Manager (one set of 12 contracts)?	Yes: 88% No: 0%	–Discussion regarding the elimination of jobs if voting for "yes". Many agencies stated they would feel better about a yes vote of they could be reassured that the structure could be reorganized where no one would have the potential of losing their jobs.
Where should a State-level Mobility Manager be housed?	DHS: 13% GDC (GRTA): 25% DCA: 13% Other: 50%	–Many of the agencies would prefer a 3rd party to coordinate transportation at the state-level. –The state needs a champion to lead coordination efforts at the state and regional levels. –The State Mobility Manager should fall where the state places the RHST office. One suggested that GDC could be the impartial party since they would not be a voting member of the TCG. –Others felt that consultants would be the best Mobility Managers, and this led to questions of who would be responsible for the procurement of the consultant. There was a suggestion that all of the agencies could throw in funds to hire a Mobility Manager that would only answer to the TCG. –Another vote was made on which agency should be the lead for a consultant procurement: 13% DHS, 13% GDOT, 25% DGC, 13% DCA and 38% Other. Because there was no consensus, this will be a topic that is further researched and discussed.
Once the State Mobility Manager is in place, what state-level effort would you like to see the Mobility Manager pursue first?	Top two projects include: Establishing a one-call number for accessing information / trip planning (38%) Developing a uniform set of operating, reporting, policies and procedures (25%)	

Question	Response	Discussion Items
Would you be willing to pool your existing transportation funding into a Coordination Fund, which would serve as a repository for funds that could be used to leverage additional federal funding?	Yes: 25% No: 75%	– Many of the agencies were uncomfortable with the idea of pooling their funding and required no discussion.
Are there additional opportunities to privatize elements of RHST Service Delivery?	Yes: 100% No: 0%	– GDC has to report on the potential to increase the privatization of RHST. Ideas were asked to be sent to GDC.
What should be institutionalized by way of Executive Order, Legislation or MOU? Establishment and Role of Permanent TCG; TCG Membership; Establishment, Role and Home of State Mobility Manager; Regional Mobility Managers; and / or Establishment and Role of Regional Coordinated Councils.	All: 43% Some: 57% None: 0%	• Participants were asked to provide topics on paper ballots: · Establishment and Role of TCG (5 votes); · TCG Membership (4 votes); · Establishment, Role and Home of State Mobility Manager (5 votes); · RHST Regional Mobility Managers (5 votes); and · Establishment and Role of Regional Coordinated Councils (4 votes).
Which do you think would be the best way to institutionalize the coordination infrastructure?	State Legislation Only: 43% MOU Only: 15% MOU as a bridge to Executive Order: 15% MOU as a bridge to State Legislation: 29%	• State legislation is the preferred option in the long-term.

From these discussions, the future vision of the TCG was established. The group agreed to create a State Mobility Manager position to champion coordination at the state level who would present ideas and solutions to the TCG to discuss. The results from this half-day workshop informed the development of tasks that the Consultant Team would begin to implement as the acting State Mobility Manager as outlined in Chapter 2 and explained in detail in Phase II Technical Memos Two through Five.

1.1.3 TCG Purpose and Goals

An overriding vision is vital to establishing a permanent, sustainable solution to address statewide RHST coordination activities. The vision and supporting activities should be driven by agencies and stakeholders with a vested interest in the outcomes. To that end, the state agencies worked to develop a statewide coordination infrastructure driven by a committee with representation from key agencies statewide in support of the overall RHST mission. The State Mobility Manager worked to support the development and implementation of the RHST TCG. The goal of TCG coordination was to develop a committee who actively work to implement the RHST mission statement as well as provide a state-level framework to support mobility management programs at the state and regional levels. This group is an informal group that is guided by the RHST Committee and Subcommittee and focuses on the GDC RHST Mission Statement:

"To identify methods to increase current coordination among RHST agencies and to provide the State legislature with fact-based, consensus-developed policy recommendations that increase the cost-effectiveness of RHST delivery in Georgia while maintaining or improving existing levels of service".

In order to be an all-inclusive group, the state agencies already a part of the TCG voted to expand the membership of the TCG to include other stakeholders including:

- Regional Commission Representative – Georgia Association of Regional Commission (GARC);
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations – Georgia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (GAMPO);
- Rural Transit Agency Representative – Georgia Transit Association (GTA);
- Business Community Representative – Georgia Chamber of Commerce;
- Aging Representative – The Coalition of Advocates for Georgia's Elderly (CO-AGE);
- Disabilities Representative – disABILITY LINK;
- Georgia Department of Veterans Services (VS); and
- Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD).

1.1.4 TCG Meeting Summaries

As aforementioned, the TCG began meeting in January 2011 to discuss potential coordination implantation actions. Following the half day workshop in June, the TCG has met on a monthly basis since September 2011 and continues to meet and discuss various coordination techniques that may be applicable to Georgia. The State Mobility Manager provides regular updates on work tasks and on-going coordination efforts around the state. Table 1.3 outlines each TCG meeting and the discussion items and tasks for each of the meetings. The full meeting summaries from each meeting can be found in Appendix A.

Table 1.3: TCG Monthly Meetings

Date	State Mobility Management Task Updates	Major Items
January 2011	N/A	Reviewed the recently completed documentation. Reviewed outcomes from regional workshops. Agencies discussed their roles in RHST and discussed potential high-level coordination efforts such as combining funds. Implementation of potential pilot regional Mobility Management projects.
February 2011	N/A	Discussed items from RHST Committee meeting. Concerns of lack of public outreach and public involvement. Discussions regarding RHST presentations to agency commissioners. Discussions regarding short-term RHST strategies including one-call centers, regional Mobility Managers, cost sharing, and taxi subsidies.

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Date	State Mobility Management Task Updates	Major Items
March 2011	N/A	Discussions regarding feedback from Regional Commissions on Regional Mobility Management. Presented state-level actions and recommendations. Final feedback on Commissioner's briefing Discussed priorities for GDC initiative.
September 2011	One Call Number: coordinating with GRTA and developing a provider list Unified Policies: reviewing all documents and reports for state agencies. Regional Mobility Management: applications submitted for JARC grant. Education and Outreach: developing printed materials.	Agencies agreed upon adopting the GDC Mission statement as the statement for the TCG. Introduced the concept of performance measures to track at the state level. Expanding the TCG membership with additional state agencies and stakeholders. TCG structure and formality of the group.
October 2011	Final deliverables and the delivery dates were established for all of the tasks with the intention of all tasks being either completed or ready to hand off to a permanent State Mobility Manager in March 2012.	Approved the preliminary list of performance metrics. Discussed TCG structure and that the RHST Advisory Committee needed to be informed of the TCG activities. Discussed expanded membership and agreed COAGE should become the consumer representative. Invitations would be sent out prior to the January meeting.
November 2011	One-Call Number: GDOT and GRTA currently reviewing provider list Unified Policies: creating a comparison matrix for agency requirements Regional Mobility Management: training scheduled for December 15, 2011 Education and Outreach: materials have been revised and provided regional inserts.	Discussed and revised the performance measures, particularly how to track administrative costs Discussed the permanent State Mobility Manager funding in which the Consultant Team provided a matrix of funding options.
December 2011	One-Call Number: provider list remains under review Unified Policies: meeting with state agencies regarding the matrix Regional Mobility Management: preparing for training on the 15th. Education and Outreach: revising materials based on comments	Finalized the performance metrics at the state level Discussed hiring vs. not hiring a permanent State Mobility Manager. The majority of participants would like a permanent Mobility Manager sooner rather than later.

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Date	State Mobility Management Task Updates	Major Items
January 2012	All of the tasks are working on final documentation for the work and developing next steps.	Continued discussions for funding a permanent State Mobility Manager. Developed a timeline for hiring a State Mobility Manager Presented cost allocation models for the state to consider moving forward Reviewed the draft unified reporting forms and materials
February 2012	One Call Number: finalized database, developed a script and protocol, developed short-term action plan, developed a provider update form; developed long term strategy. Unified Policies: completed comparison, developed draft reporting document; created a binder that contains new blended documents Regional Mobility Management: preparing for second training session, continuing technical assistance as needed Education and Outreach: Finalized printed materials, created companion presentations, and developed a roll out plan to disseminate information	Provided an update on the State Mobility Manager process
March 2012	One-Call Number: funding section was added to the documentation. Unified Policies: conducting a final meeting with GDOT on March 19. DCH would prefer the forms to be voluntary, but are willing to meet with brokers to go over the forms. Regional Mobility Management: reviewed outcomes of training session, beginning preparations for third training session. Education and Outreach: conducted a webinar presentation of the materials to regions and will be printing and providing regions with copies of materials.	Discussed the next steps for the State Mobility Manager. The group agreed to await the outcome of the GDC RHST Report in July to make a determination. The TCG agreed to invite someone to represent the disabled community – Ken Mitchell with Disability Link. Reviewed March Mobility Management training outcomes and discussions. GDC provided an update on their reporting progress.

1.1.5 Performance Metrics and Benchmarking Process

One of the priority tasks of the TCG is developing and implementing performance metrics to understand the impacts of RHST coordination in future years.

Performance Measures Objectives

The purpose of tracking and measuring performance metrics is to determine whether RHST coordination efforts are cost-effective and maintain or increase customer levels of service. There are a number of metrics that can be monitored and measured to determine overall success of coordination efforts; however, determining a few key metrics will effectively measure performance without requiring an overwhelming amount of data collection.

Developing Key Performance Metrics

The State Mobility Manager researched typical performance measures from best practices around the country. The State Mobility Manager then presented these measures to the TCG to develop a list of metrics that would most accurately reflect the overall goals of increasing cost-effectiveness and maintaining or increasing customer levels of service. The TCG and State Mobility Manager initially agreed on six key metrics:

- Increase Cost-Effectiveness
  - Increase Cost Efficiency;
  - Decreased Administrative costs; and
  - Increase Service Effectiveness (Vehicle Utilization).
- Customer Levels of Service
  - Expanded Hours / Days of Service;
  - Increase System Productivity (Areas Served); and
  - Diversified Trip Purposes Served.

The Consultant Team took the performance metrics and developed quantified measures to track on a continuous basis to determine, over time, the benefits of RHST coordination.

Increased Cost Effectiveness

Increased Cost Efficiency

Cost efficiency refers to how much it costs to produce a unit of service. This is considered one of the most important measures to track for RHST coordination. In many cases, these measures are already being tracked by providers, systems and agencies, but the units of measurements are not necessarily the same across the state. Therefore, it is recommended that the three major transportation agencies (GDOT, DHS and DCH) agree upon one performance measure to track moving forward for better agency and system comparison. GDOT recommends that the measure be the following:

- Cost per Trip;
- Cost per Mile; or
- Trips per Mile.

Decreased Administrative Cost

Administrative costs at the agency, region, system and provider levels are a large percentage of the overall operating costs for RHST services. Both GDOT and DHS budget 20 percent of their operating costs towards administrative tasks. It is thought that by coordinating RHST services, the administrative tasks will become more efficient, thus lowering administrative costs. Therefore, it is recommended that agencies, regions, systems and / or providers begin tracking time allocated towards RHST administrative tasks to develop baseline costs. From this baseline, managers can determine what areas reflect a reduction in time allocated as related to coordination. The State will work with entities to develop a system to track and monitor various administrative tasks and the frequency of the tracking and reporting.

Increased Service Effectiveness

One of the major concerns of the TCG is monitoring the vehicle utilization of providers. Vehicle utilization refers to the number of people in the seats at various time periods throughout the day. Additionally, this metric intends to reveal service duplications by tracking the number of vehicles making similar trips.

Therefore, there are a number of metrics that the State could consider to measure service effectiveness, including:

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

- Number of Passengers per Number of Vehicle Seats;
- List and Count Origins and Destinations;
- Passengers per Hour; and
- One-Way Passenger Trips (OWPT) per Hour.

Customer Levels of Service

Expanded Hour / Days of Service

In order to increase levels of services, it was agreed by the TCG that systems and providers may be able to expand hour and / or days of service once RHST coordination takes place. Therefore, GDOT recommends that the days and hours of service be tracked for each system to determine, if over time, the amount of service provided increases.

Increased System Productivity

Another metric to determine an increase of levels of service is the size of the service area. After coordination is implemented, providers and systems may be able to serve more people within the service area, thus expanding levels of service. Therefore, GDOT recommends that agencies track system productivity by calculating:

- Number of Annual Passengers / Service Area Population

It should be noted that this calculation will need to take into consideration the limitation of service areas for various transportation systems. For example, rural systems cannot operate within urbanized systems and vice versa. Therefore, the service area population needs to reflect these limitations. However, DHS transportation services may cross service area boundaries, and may be coordinated with rural trips; therefore, it will be important to take this into consideration to avoid a double counting of passengers.

Diversified Trip Purposes Served

In some rural areas, RHST providers only serve certain trip purposes. One of the goals of RHST coordination will be to diversify trip types and combine trip purposes on vehicles. Therefore, in order to measure the success of this initiative, GDOT recommends that providers, systems and agencies monitor the distribution of trip purposes for vehicles by calculating:

- Number of Passengers per Trip Purpose

Coordination will be successful if the trip purposes are more equally distributed in future time periods.

Additional Detailed Performance Measures

As aforementioned, the performance measures outlined in the previous section are key measures that the TCG has agreed upon using to indicate the success of RHST coordination. Additionally, there are a number of other measures that can be utilized on the state, region, and system-level to determine the overall success. Therefore, GDOT recommends that the regions, in particular, examine all metric options and determine the measures that are best suited for their transportation service area.

Operations:

- Revenue Vehicle Miles (or Hours) per Vehicle; and
- Passengers per Vehicle.

Costs:

- Total System Cost per OWPT.

Component Costs:

- Maintenance Cost per Revenue Vehicle Hour (or Mile) of Operation; and
- Administrative Cost per Revenue Vehicle Hour (or Mile) of Operation.

Ridership / Effectiveness

- Number of OWPT per Revenue Vehicle Mile (or Hour).

Financing:

- Passenger Revenues / Total System Costs;
- Passenger Revenues / Revenue Vehicle Miles (or Hours);
- Total Government Subsidy / Number of Passenger Trips;
- Total System Cost / Total Service Area Population; and
- Number of OWPT per Total Vehicle Hours.

Baseline Data Requirements

In order to measure the performance metrics outlined above, the agencies, regions, systems and providers will need to collect and track series of data on a continuous basis in order to gauge the success of RHST coordination at the various levels. In some instances, the data is already being collected per reporting requirements. In other cases, entities will need to begin tracking data in order to establish a baseline. Figure 1.4 illustrates the baseline data flowchart that entities can follow in order to ensure efficient and accurate data tracking.

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Figure 1.4: Baseline Data Tracking Flow Chart
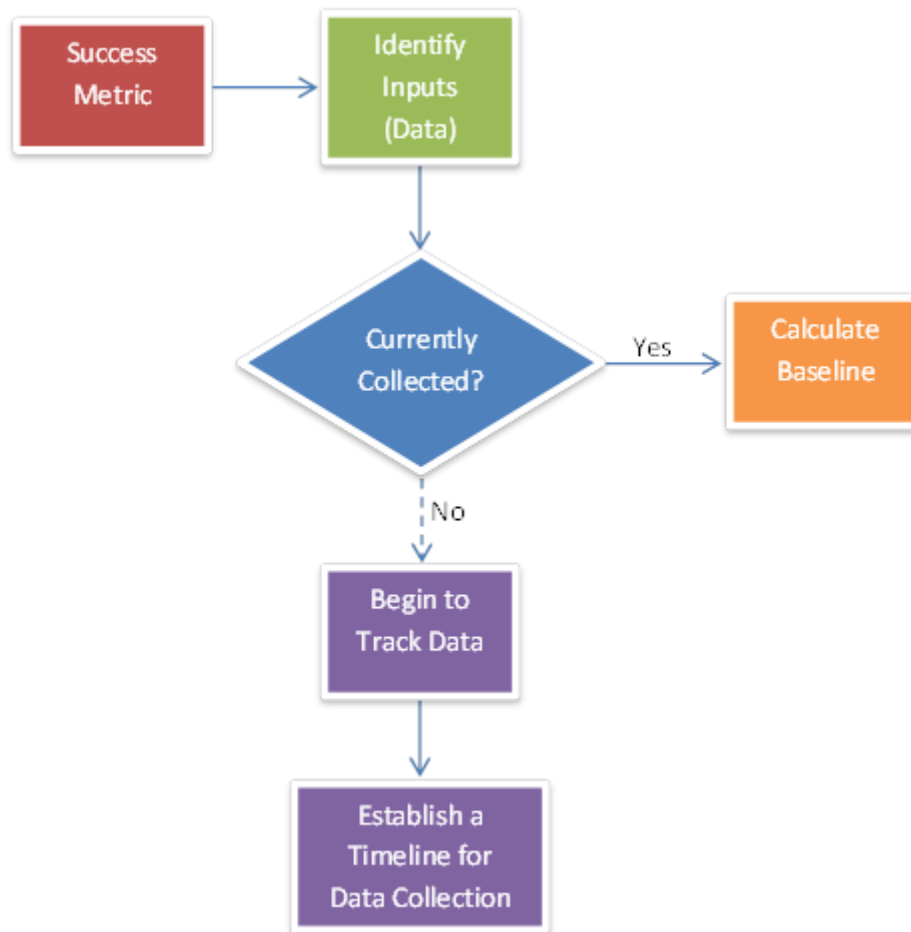
Table 1.5 outlines the necessary data for the performance measure tracking and determines if the data is already being collected.

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Table 1.5: Existing Performance Measure Tracking

Performance Metric	Performance Measure	Required Data	Already Collected (Yes / No)
Increased Cost Efficiency	Cost per Trip	All Associated Costs	Yes
		Number of OWPT	No
	Cost Per Mile	All Associated Costs	Yes
		Miles of Service	Yes
	Trip per Mile	Number of OWPT	No
		Miles of Service	Yes
Decreased Administrative Costs	Administrative Time Allocation	Hours of Time	No
		Cost of Time	No
		Total Administrative Cost	Yes
Increased Service Effectiveness	Passengers divided by Seats	Number of Passengers	Yes
		Number of Vehicle Seats	No
	Origin and Destination Counts	Origins	No
		Destinations	No
	Passengers per Hour	Number of Passengers	Yes
		Hours of Service	Yes
	Passenger Trips per Hour	Number of OWPT	No
		Hours of Service	Yes
Expanded Hours/Days of Service	Hours and Days of Service	Hours of Service	Yes
		Days of Service	Yes
Increased System Productivity	Annual Passengers divided by Service Area Population	Number of Passengers	Yes
		Service Area Population	Yes
Diversified Trip Purpose	Passengers per Trip Purpose	Number of Passengers	Yes
		Trip Purposes	Yes

To calculate the additional performance measures, the following data will need to be collected in addition to the items outline in Table 1.5:

- Vehicle Hours;
- Revenue Vehicle Miles;
- Total Passenger Revenues; and
- Total Government Funding.

While GDOT is making initial performance recommendations, these performance measures may be refined and implemented as the GDC continues their annual RHST coordination reporting.

1.2 Next Steps

The goal of the TCG is to continue regular discussions and meetings regarding RHST coordination in Georgia. The group intends to meet with the State Mobility Manager monthly and continue current coordination tasks as well as create new tasks that will promote further coordination across the state. The TCG will review performance metrics to ensure that the goals outlined in the GDC RHST mission statement are fulfilled and make any necessary revisions to the coordination plan in order for the mission of cost-effectiveness and increased levels of service are met.

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
Working together to move people from point A to point B, easily and efficiently.

Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Chapter 2 STATE MOBILITY MANAGER

The State Mobility Manager functions as the lead person(s) responsible for facilitating RHST coordination activities at the state level. To begin the implementation process, the state agencies agreed that the GDOT RHST Consultant Team would act as the State Mobility Manager until a more permanent solution could be implemented. During the consultant's contract period, the TCG would seek out a more permanent agency location for the State Mobility Manager and hire a qualified professional to serve as the State Mobility Manager as the lead staff dedicated to overseeing the mobility management responsibilities.   The State Mobility Manager would be unbiased and work with the members of the TCG to refine policies, procedures, requirements and reporting to facilitate transportation coordination at the state level.

2.1 Goals, Purpose, and Objective

The vision for the State Mobility Manager is an impartial professional to serve as the administrative staff and champion for RHST and the TCG. The State Mobility Manger is the point person for planning, implementing, managing and evaluating state-level RHST programs and other TCG initiatives. The State Mobility Manager will be the lead for providing technical assistance to the Regional Mobility Managers.

GDOT's RHST Phase I Plan Update 2.0 planning process included a statewide assessment of RHST needs and gaps, an analysis of potential alternative solutions to fill those gaps, and ultimately recommended a series of short- and long-term actions to support the development and implementation of a coordinated RHST infrastructure in Georgia. This coordinated infrastructure supports the broader RHST mission for the state – increasing current coordination among Georgia's RHST agencies in order to increase the cost-effectiveness of RHST delivery while maintaining or improving existing levels of service.

2.2 State Mobility Management Tasks

The Consultant Team (acting as State Mobility Manager), as directed by the TCG, outlined specific tasks and action items to implement as the initial steps in support of the RHST mission. Each task was a direct result of the Phase I analysis – through statewide data collection and analysis, stakeholder outreach, and alternatives analysis of potential solutions. The first year of the State Mobility Management implementation processed outlined four major tasks that the Consultant Team undertook throughout 2011 and the first quarter of 2012.

- Statewide One-Call Transit Number;
- Regional Pilot Project Initiation and Technical Assistance;
- Unified Policies, Reporting and Procedures; and
- Education and Outreach Materials.

Near the end of each fiscal year, the permanent State Mobility Manager will outline a work plan for the subsequent year based on previous work completion and feedback from both the GDC and TCG.

The following subsections provide an overview of each of the tasks the Consultant Team completed as the acting State Mobility Manager. Technical Memos Two through Five provide in-depth details regarding each of the tasks as well as outline necessary next steps to continue moving coordination forward at the state level.

2.2.1 Transit Provider Directory / Statewide One-Call Number

GDOT's RHST Phase I Plan Update 2.0 Needs Assessment Technical Memorandum found that consumers throughout the state face confusion regarding transportation contacts and eligibility requirements when requesting a trip. Therefore,

the needs Assessment concluded that Georgia citizens would benefit from a one-stop information resource or a one-call center providing transit information.

The goal of a one-call center is to help Georgians and visitor access information about available transportation resources more easily and efficiently through the development of a single number for the entire state of Georgia that anyone could call from any location within the state. The primary consumers for the one-call center are potential riders, beginning with those who are in the most need for human service transit including:

- Aging;
- Persons with disabilities;
- Persons with low income;
- Medicaid eligible populations; and
- Other riders including students, visitors, commuters and the general public.

Implementation of a one-call center would involve staffing an information and referral line, possibly harnessing the 511 and / or 211 program that is already in existence as an initial point of contact. Yet another model would be to provide a toll-free number that automatically distributes calls (based on the area code and exchange of the caller) to the reservations intake point of the region that the call is originating. Both models could be supported by a website, where the database of transit providers is stored and accessible to all providers across the state, where they can update their listings. This database would be accessible to the public as a searchable online directory.

The One-Call Center Technical Memo has additional information regarding the research and implementation of a one-call system in Georgia including case studies, transit provider contact information, call center scripting and protocol and long-term visions and goals.

2.2.2 Regional Pilot Projects

The State Mobility Manager provided oversight to the development and implementation of a regional Mobility Manager pilot project in three regions (Middle Georgia Regional Commission, River Valley Regional Commission and Three Rivers Regional Commission). The goal of the pilot projects is to promote regional coordination to help reduce costs and expand or enhance level of service. The State Mobility Manager was responsible for providing on-going technical and administrative support to the regional Mobility Managers to ensure that the pilot projects develop a strong foundation and become a sustainable program that other regions, in future years, can model. Support was also provided to other regional commissions who currently do not have funding for mobility management but may be interested in additional information on future mobility management or regional coordination opportunities. The following subtasks were developed to support the regional efforts:

- Section 5316 JARC Grant Application Development and Support – The State Mobility Manager worked with the three pilot project regions to draft and submit Section 5316 Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) Grant applications to fund the Mobility Manager pilot project within each of the regions.
- On-Going Technical Support – The State Mobility Manager provided on-going technical advisement to the regional Mobility Managers to support the successful implementation of the regional work plan tasks and deliverables. Additionally, the State Mobility Manager provided guidance on various tasks as well as developing the regional work plans for subsequent years.
- Facilitate Regional Mobility Management Activities – The State Mobility Manager facilitated two regional mobility management training sessions to give an introduction of mobility management and provide initial resources as the regions begin coordination work.

The goal of this task is to help provide a sustainable foundation for regional mobility management that can be replicated across the state moving forward. The desired outcomes for this task include:

- Sustainable regional framework to support long-term state mobility management efforts; and
- Regional service enhancement (improve cost-effectiveness and level of service).

The Regional Mobility Management Technical Memo provides additional details regarding the specific subtasks associated with the regional pilot projects. This task will extend through September 2012 and the Consultant Team will provide a Technical Memorandum on this task at the end of September.

2.2.3 Unified Policies and Procedures Manual

The State Mobility Manager worked with the three state agencies (GDOT, DHS and DCH) to determine redundancies and gaps within the current reporting structures. The consultant compared the reporting requirements and procedures of each agency to determine where the agencies could streamline and deliver providers and regions with a unified policy and procedures manual with more simplified reporting requirements.

The primary goal of this task is to produce recommendations for a streamlined reporting manual that will assist RHST agencies gather the required information and help providers with a simplified reporting process. The State Mobility Manager believes that by streamlining policies, procedures and reporting among the three state agencies, there would be measurable outcomes associated with these activities. There were four main tasks associated with the report:

- Review State Agency Policy Manuals and Programs – perform a comprehensive review of programs for each agency and develop a draft summary document that illustrates the requirements of each program.
- Agency Comparison Matrix – develop a matrix for comparing the respective programs that illustrates the similarities and differences between the documents and will help to identify and regulatory mandates related to a policy.
- Unified Reporting Documents – develop a series of reporting forms and documents that blend the mandates and requirements of each of the agencies.
- Implementation Recommendation – produce recommendations for implementing the blended reporting documents within each of the three state agencies to the individual service providers.

The Unified Policies and Procedures Technical Memo provides additional details regarding these various subtasks and copies of the proposed unified reporting documents.

2.2.4 Education and Outreach

The State Mobility Manager was tasked with developing:

- RHST education and outreach materials;
- A Roll Out Plan for the materials' presentation and distribution; and
- An outline for a website that would promote RHST to the general public and serve as a repository for information and materials.

The primary goal is to provide professionals statewide with materials to help build regional and local RHST champions. There were two primary audiences identified for the education and outreach materials, including the local, regional and state government leaders and decision-makers that are likely to fund, purchase or directly operate RHST services. For these audiences, the intent of the materials is to illustrate:

- The need for mobility among those who rely on RHST

- How those needs are currently being accommodated;
- The number of consumers who take advantage of these resources and the difference these services make in their lives;
- The effectiveness of RHST coordination between transit agencies;
- The need for more services across the state; and
- The greater economic development opportunities.

The Education and Outreach Technical Memo provides additional details of the educational and outreach materials along with the corresponding PowerPoint presentations that are tools that regions can use to educate and promote RHST across Georgia, with the intent of increasing RHST funding for more coordinated RHST services.

2.2.5 GDOT Website and Mobility Management Resource Center

The State Mobility Manager coordinated with GDOT and GDC to develop and implement an RHST webpage through the GDOT website. The website presents a general overview of RHST efforts across the state and provides educational resources for the public.

The website also offers a repository of information and materials available to regional Mobility Managers and Regional Commission staff (and other stakeholders as determined) through a password-protected area in the website.

The website is available at http://www.dot.ga.gov/rhst.

2.3 State Mobility Management Transition Plan

The state-level recommendation is the creation of a permanent State Mobility Manager to streamline and coordinate policies, procedures, requirements, and reporting across the transportation funding programs managed by GDOT, DHS and DCH. The State Mobility Manager serves to plan, implement, manage and evaluate RHST information. The TCG is currently working to identify the best solution to a new permanent State Mobility Manager for Georgia that will work on behalf of the TCG and state agencies.

SECTION II: STATEWIDE ONE-CALL INFORMATION CENTER

Chapter 1   INTRODUCTION

Background

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) initiated the Georgia Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0 in 2010 to build upon concepts identified in the original 2007 plan, and to identify opportunities to enhance statewide, regional, and local opportunities to coordinate the delivery of human services transportation for the benefit of all transportation providers, and most importantly, consumers of Rural and Human Services Transportation (RHST) delivery in Georgia. This coordinated infrastructure supports the broader RHST mission for the state –*increase current coordination among Georgia's RHST agencies in order to increase the cost-effectiveness of RHST delivery while maintaining or improving existing levels of service*.

The RHST Phase I planning process included a statewide assessment of RHST needs and gaps, an analysis of potential alternative solutions to fill those gaps, and ultimately recommended a series of short- and long-term actions to support the development and implementation of a coordinated RHST infrastructure in Georgia. Based on the assessment of RHST needs and gaps, it was found that consumers of RHST services throughout the state face confusion as to transportation contacts and eligibility requirements when requesting a trip. As part of the action plans and the RHST Phase II tasks, the State Mobility Manager in conjunction with Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) has developed a statewide one-call center plan to provide enhanced transit information to citizens across the state so that they can better find information about their transportation options.

Project Purpose and Tasks

The purpose of this document is to provide a roadmap for the implementation of a one-call center for transit information services in Georgia. This technical memorandum envisions that the one-call center would initially provide callers with contact information on various transit providers in each of the 12 Georgia regional commission regions through Georgia 511 program. Eventually, the one-call number could re-route calls to regional mobility managers based on a caller's geographic location and trip needs.

This technical memorandum follows a series of tasks completed during Phase II:

- Review 511 profiles and implementation strategies of existing regional 511 systems;
- Review existing Georgia transportation information services / systems (i.e., 511 and 211);
- Identify a short-term action plan for the one-call center through the Georgia 511 program that can be deployed quickly and relatively easily, including:
  - Develop transit provider database to include Section 5311 public transit providers, DHS regional coordinators and DCH Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) brokers,
  - Develop a 511 call center transit script for operators,
  - Develop procedure for continual transit provider knowledge-based updates, and
- Develop a long-term one-call center strategy and implementation plan.

Contents

The remainder of this technical memorandum is organized as follows:

- **Chapter 2**: Provides an overview of the one-call center vision and the benefits of implementing a one-stop information resource for statewide transit information as well as reviews current technologies available for these systems.

- o **Chapter 3**: Reviews 511 and 211 profiles and implementation strategies of existing 511 and 211 systems around the nation that include regional transit information. Further, Chapter 3 reviews the characteristics of these systems and summarizes their structure and characteristics for purposes of comparison.
- o **Chapter 4**: Reviews existing transportation information resources in Georgia with focus on the current structure and capabilities of Georgia's 511 and Atlanta's 211 systems.
- o **Chapter 5:** Provides a short-term action plan for a statewide one-call center. Through the potential coordination between GDOT and GRTA, the current 511 travel information call-center could be utilized to provide statewide transit information to citizens. The existing call center is thought to provide an avenue for transit information to be deployed quickly and relatively easily, building momentum and awareness of the transit services throughout the state in a relatively short time.
- o **Chapter 6**: Reviews and recommends several new strategies for transit information dissemination for long-term implementation, including coordination with regional call centers, coordination with Atlanta's 211 system, outreach techniques, and web-based options.

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Chapter 2 ONE-CALL CENTER OVERVIEW

2.1   One-Call Center Vision

The RHST Phase I Needs Assessment Technical Memorandum found that consumers throughout the state face confusion regarding transportation contacts and eligibility requirements when requesting a trip. The Needs Assessment concluded that Georgia citizens would benefit from a one-stop information resource or a one-call center providing transit information. The goal of a one-call center is to help Georgians and visitors access information about available transportation resources more easily and efficiently through the development of a single number for the entire state of Georgia that anyone could call from any location within the state.

Implementation of a one-call center would involve staffing an information and referral line, possibly harnessing the 511 and / or 211 program that is already in existence as an initial point of contact. Yet another model would be to provide a toll-free number that automatically distributes calls (based on the area code and exchange of the caller) to the reservations intake point of the region from which the call is originating. Both models could be supported by a website, where the database of transit providers is stored and accessible to all providers across the state, where they can update their listings. This database would be accessible to the public as a searchable online directory. This aspect of the one-call center vision is elaborated on in the case studies referenced in Section 3.4 and 6.5 of this document.

2.2   Benefits of a One-Call Center

Creating a one-call center would simplify the RHST services and provide additional benefits from several perspectives[1]:

From the Community Perspective

- Uses community resources (e.g., funding, vehicles, technology) more effectively,
- Reduces duplication of transportation services,
- Removes transportation as a barrier to accessing key community services,
- Demonstrates consumer-friendly delivery of community services,
- Enables broader community values to thrive, such as community livability and aging in place, and
- Establishes a united voice for future transportation initiatives.

From the Customer Perspective

- Provides one location to obtain a ride for a variety of programs,
- Makes it easier to obtain information on a wide range of transportation options,
- Streamlines the eligibility process for multiple programs, and
- Provides a place to receive counseling assistance such as advocacy services.

From Community-Based Agencies Perspective

- Helps participating community-based agencies be more efficient by allowing agencies to reallocate resources, and
- Allows communities to identify customer needs and gaps in availability. Supplying data about customer needs and requests for service is useful for planning and funding new or additional transportation services and allocating resources appropriately.

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[1] Chapter 3 of *Guide to Beginning One Call – One Click Transportation Services*, published by CTAA
http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/Guidebook_Chap3.pdf

From Transportation Agencies Perspective
- Increases ridership by filling empty seats in existing vehicles, and
- Reduces duplication of services by combining riders in a single vehicle.

2.3 One-Call Center Technology

The one-call center requires utilization of technology to help transportation providers operate more effectively, provide better customer service and coordinate their activities[2]. Advanced Traveler Information Systems (ATIS) and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) can enhance transportation service quality, efficiency and accessibility, enabling the one-call center to assist agencies in matching riders with appropriate travel options, reducing "no shows" and improving rider experience with automated reminder calls and arrival estimates.

In Table 2.3.1 and Table 2.3.2 below, the most common call-center and advanced technologies are reviewed.

Table 2.3.1: Call Center Technology

Call Center Technology	Description
Basic Technologies	
Automatic Call Distribution (ACD)	A technology that automatically distributes incoming calls to customer agents in a call center. ACD sends calls to the next available phone operator based on a routing strategy that is configured in the ACD software.
Voicemail	A commonly used technology that can be employed by customers to leave a message when their call cannot be answered by a telephone operator. Advanced technologies such as Computer Technology Integration (CTI) allow telephone operators to view these messages in their mailboxes.
Voice Recording	A technology used by call center operators to record telephone conversations between customers and call takers for quality control and future analyses.
Advanced Technologies	
Interactive Voice Response (IVR)	This Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephone technology detects and responds to customer requests through either voice or use of a touch keypad on a phone. IVR systems are usually installed in call center environments to filter customers based on the type of information being requested. IVR systems also assist in operating an automated call center during non-business hours.
Guided Speech IVR	An advanced IVR technology in which a live operator monitors customer prompts and helps the IVR system understand the customer responses to those prompts since customer responses can sometimes be misinterpreted by a computer system.
Call Center Technology	Description

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[2] Transportation Cooperative Research Program; *Transit, Call Centers, and 511: A Guide for Decision Makers*

Computer Telephony Integration (CTI)	A technology that integrates a telephone system with computers. This allows telephone operators to use their computers to manage phone functions such as monitoring incoming and outgoing calls; answering, hanging up or conferencing phone calls; and monitoring call queue lists.
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	A technology used by call centers to manage customer information and their relationships with customers. CRM helps transit agencies automate various call center functions such as building a contact database of customers, storing and analyzing customer data to determine customer needs and preferences, and performing marketing and sales activities.
Customer Interaction Management (CIM)	CIM is a technology used by call centers as an integrated portal for communicating with customers. CIM technologies are installed with a CRM system and allow a variety of modes of communication such as e-mail, telephone, fax, chat, and voice chat (using the customer information stored in the CRM database) from a single user interface.
Text to Speech (TTS)	Also known as speech synthesis, TTS is a technology used to produce human language speech from text inputs. Transit call centers use TTS to provide information through their IVR systems during non-business hours.
Speech Analytics	An automated process to extract specific information from telephone conversations. This technology can help agencies determine customer needs and preferences in an automated fashion.

Source: CTAA, One Call-One Click Profiles: Lower Savannah Council of Governments, Aiken, SC[3]

Table 2.3.2: Intelligent Transportation Systems Technology

Online/ITS Technology	Description
Route Match Software	This application database is used to provide, track and report on demand-response transportation services through a transportation web portal.
Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVL) and Mobile data computers (MDC)	Real-time vehicle location system. MDCs allow providers / dispatchers to view real-time status and location of the vehicles. Dispatchers can send trip information electronically to the driver. Drivers can electronically submit when trips are performed, cancelled at the scene, and "no shows." MDC can help providers expand same-day service and utilize the closest, most appropriate vehicles to increase efficiency and decrease costs.
Information Kiosks	Kiosks allow remote access to the one-call website or online database / scheduling feature from selected high-visibility locations in the service area.
Advanced Fare Collection (AFC)	AFC is a system of "smart" fare cards and onboard card readers intended to give customers an enhanced pre-paid fare option.
IVR Integration	IVR integration can use the telephone system to make outbound calls for appointment reminder calls the day before or same day and gives callers the option to confirm or cancel scheduled trips.
Computer-Aided Dispatch	This dispatch provides real-time tracking and schedule adherence for fixed-route services.

Source: CTAA, One Call-One Click Profiles: Lower Savannah Council of Governments, Aiken, SC[4]

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[3] http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/CaseStudy_LSCOG.pdf
[4] http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/CaseStudy_LSCOG.pdf

Chapter 3　Transit and 511 / 211 Call Systems

Implementation of a one-call center could involve staffing an information and referral line, possibly harnessing the 511 and / or 211 program that is already in existence as an initial point of contact. In order to provide an assessment of the potential roles of the 511 and 211 telephone services in coordinating with a transit one-call center, this chapter provides necessary background information on these call systems, reviews other national examples of 511 and 211 implementation strategies and several case studies of existing 511 and 211 systems that include regional transit information.

3.1　511 Background and Implementations

511 is the national 3-digit telephone number for travel information, similar to 411 and 911 in that it is an easy way to access information on highway conditions, transit agencies and other important travel information. Regardless of the size and nature of a 511 service area, there is typically more than one public transportation service provider. Ideally, 511 should be properly coordinated with all existing agencies' communications methods in order to assist public transportation operators in better serving customers.

The principal purpose of the transit portion of 511 is to offer transit customers general provider and service information, communicate service disruptions and changes, and plan transit trips. Callers can further be directed to locations and phone numbers where they can obtain more detailed information. Below outlines the general characteristics of transit 511 call numbers:

- Provides information on all transit agencies and operators in the service area;
- Works in conjunction with transit customer service centers (although 511 is not intended to replace these operations) and provides direct access to customer service centers;
- Minimizes additional customer service center overload via automated messages, not direct access to the service center;
- Requires agencies to either directly provide or ensure the accuracy of the provider contact information; and
- Provides easily understandable information to visitors or persons new to the calling system.

The basic structure of a 511 telephone system design matches public transportation operations. Provider information is usually accessed through a call system "menu tree" that is navigated by voice commands or keypad entries until a caller reaches their desired destination within the system and gets a voice message or possibly a live operator. In complex or large areas, the 511 service area may be segmented in sub-areas to simplify agency identification. Once the 511 service knows specific transportation agency inquiry, the system then provides the caller with a report of the relevant basic information including contact numbers, operational information, etc.

511 systems typically include the following basic information:

- **Geographic sub-area**: In large 511 service areas, the service area can be subdivided, such as by travel corridor, geography or common name or nickname of a given sub-region;
- **Agency**: Each agency in the 511 service area or sub-area should provide at least a single automated report. For agencies with complex operations, basic content should be provided in its own menu tree or "layers" by mode or by region;
- **Content**: Each single automated report should have the following content:
  - Brief description of the agency's operations – "XYZ Transit agency, providing bus service in the greater ACME region",
  - Major service disruptions, changes or additions,
  - An option to be transferred to the agency's customer service center, and

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

- o Other information (agency's discretion): Fare and pass information, real-time information, parking availability, Internet address
  - Agencies may add more layers to reports at their discretion.

In addition to the basic information, the following implementation recommendation addresses a content topic that has been demonstrated to provide value to callers, but is recognized as difficult to uniformly implement. Thus, providing the following content is recommended, but not explicitly part of the basic content package for public transportation.

- **Regional or Corridor Specific Transit Information**: In areas served by multiple public transportation providers, allowing callers to request information based on location (allows callers to make wiser travel choices and / or access status information about usual routes more quickly):
  - o Enables search / sort by region or corridor in addition to by agency; and
  - o Arrival times or travel times.

3.2 Profiles of 511 Services[5]

As of 2011, more than fifty (50) 511 services are available to the traveling public operating in more than 30 states, as illustrated in Figure 3.2.1.

Figure 3.2.1: Locations with 511 Services (2011)
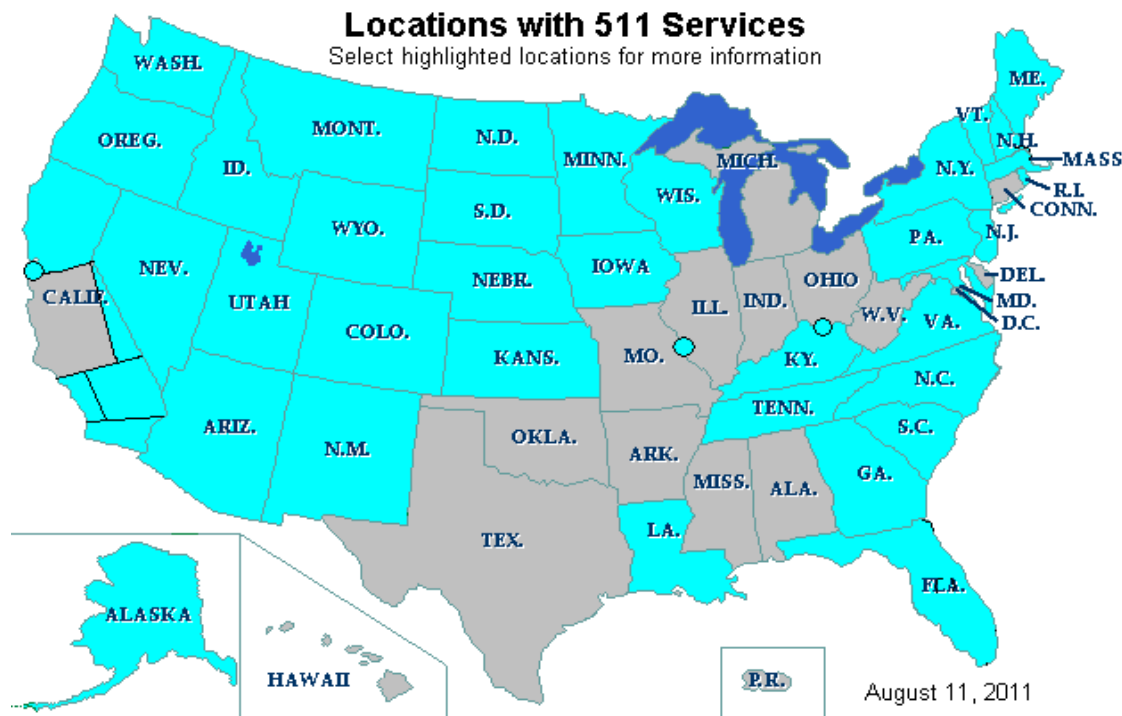
Source: 511 Deployment Coalition

Among all the 511 services, there are over 20 systems with some form of transit information included, two (2) have only general transit information (e.g., list the phone number for a transit agency), seven (7) have only an option to transfer to

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[5] 511 Deployment Coalition Report: Profiles of 511 Traveler Information Services
http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/Profiles_of_Traveler_Information_Services_Update_2009.doc

transit agencies, nine (9) have both general transit information and call transfer options, and three (3) include real-time transit information. The level of transit system information available in each 511 system is illustrated in Table 3.2.2.

Table 3.2.2: Transit Participation on Active 511 Systems

511 System/ Service Area	Type of Transit Information/Options		
	General Info (Service disruptions, fares, etc.)	Call Transfer to Transit Agency	Real-Time Transit Info
Cincinnati/North Kentucky	X	X	
Nebraska	*N/A*		
Utah	X	X	
Arizona	X	X	
Orlando/Central Florida		X	
Minnesota	X	X	
Southeast Florida	X	X	
Iowa	*N/A*		
South Dakota	*N/A*		
Kentucky, Statewide	*N/A*		
San Francisco Bay Area	X	X	X
Montana	*N/A*		
Vermont	*N/A*		
North Dakota	*N/A*		
Alaska	X	X	
Maine	X		X
New Hampshire	*N/A*		
Washington State	X		
Oregon	*N/A*		
Kansas	*N/A*		
North Carolina		X	
Sacramento/Northern CA		X	
Tampa Bay, FL	X		
Colorado			
Virginia	X	X	
Rhode Island	*N/A*		
Florida, Statewide	*N/A*		
Idaho	*N/A*		
Wyoming	*N/A*		
Tennessee	*N/A*		
Nevada	*N/A*		
Louisiana	*N/A*		
Jacksonville/Northeast Florida		X	
San Diego, CA		X	X
Southwest Florida		X	
St. Louis, Missouri	*N/A*		
California, Eastern Sierra	*N/A*		
Georgia		X	
New Jersey	*N/A*		

511 System/ Service Area	General Info (Service disruptions, fares, etc.)	Call Transfer to Transit Agency	Real-Time Transit Info
Boston/Eastern Massachusetts		X	
New Mexico	*N/A*		
New York	X	X	

Source: Transit, Call Centers, and 511: A Guide for Decision Makers

3.3   511 System Case Studies

Four case studies (Arizona, North Carolina, Virginia, and Southeast Florida) are summarized below with focus on each call resources' structure and characteristics related to transit information.

3.3.1   Arizona

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) operates and maintains the statewide Arizona 511 system. Prior to the conversion to a 511 system in March 2002, the call center operated as a toll-free highway / traffic-only, statewide telephone information system. The 511 system was expanded between 2003 and 2005 to add a transit option to the main menu. The newly expanded system also includes sub-menu options for Phoenix area transit (Valley Metro), Tucson SunTran, Native American transit providers, and more than one dozen other rural / regional transit providers statewide. An automatic call transfer to customer service function was provided for each transit agency. Each transit agency was also provided the opportunity to use whatever pre-recorded information they desired. For example, recordings for service area and hours of operation, as well as a voice recording for "floodgate" messages like those used for service interruptions. Table 3.3.1 below outlines the menu structure of the Arizona 511 system.

Table 3.3.1: Arizona 511 Telephone System Structure

ARIZONA 511 SYSTEM
Phone Number: 888-411-ROAD (7623)
Co-branded Website: www.az511.com
OPENING GREETING
"Welcome to the Arizona 511 system. If you prefer to use our touch tone system press the star '*' key now, otherwise, you may make your selection by saying one of the following: roads, transit, airports, tourism or a quick report on the metro region." Which one would you like?"
911 Citation? No
BASIC MENU
1.   Roads, press one '1'
2.   Transit, press two '2'
3.   Airports, press three '3'
4.   Tourism, press four '4'
5.   Quick Report [on the metro region], press five '5'
6.   "To leave a comment at any time, press eight '8'"
TRANSIT MENU
1.   Phoenix Valley Metro
"Here is information provided by Phoenix Valley Metro Transit. If you'd like to be transferred to Valley Metro's customer service line, press the pound '#' key at any time during recording."

2. Tucson Sun Tran System
"Here is information provided by Tucson Sun Tran Transit. If you'd like to be transferred to Sun Tran's customer service line, press the pound '#' key at any time during the recording."
3. Native American Transit:
a.   Hopi Tribe Transit System, press one '1'
b. Navajo Transit System, press two '2'
c.   Salt River Pima America Transit Service, press three '3'
4. Rural Areas - North
Bull Head Area Transit System. press one '1'
Cottonwood Area Transit System, press two '2'
Lake Havasu City Transit, press three '3'
ShoLo Pinetop Four Seasons Transit, press four '4'
Kingman Area Regional Transit, press five '5'
Sidona Road Runner Transit System, press six '6'
Helping Hands Agency Express, press seven '7'
5. Rural Areas - South
City of Bisbee Transit System, press one '1'
Coolidge Express, press two '2'
Miami Transit, press three '3'
Pima County Transit, press four '4'
Sierra Vista's Vista Transit, press five '5'
Sunsites Transportation in the City of Pierce, press six '6'
Catholic Community Services, press seven '7'
WEATHER INFORMATION
No—Arizona 511 Website contains no weather information.
Connection/Referral to Transit Systems?
Yes, both summary information and option for direct connection to transit exists.
Ability to Navigate up the Menu?
Automatically transferred back to the Main Menu for no response.
Transfer to other 511 systems?   No
Transfer to what other systems?   N/A

Source: "Profiles of 511 Traveler Information Services Update 2009"

3.3.2   North Carolina: Charlotte Area Transit System

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) operates the North Carolina statewide 511 system and became operational in August 2004.

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS), a transit service operated by the City of Charlotte, is one option in the 511 main menu for public transportation. CATS provides fixed-route bus service, demand response and vanpools in

Charlotte, six surrounding suburban towns surrounding Charlotte, and four cities and towns in surrounding counties. The service area is 445 square miles, with a population of about 681,000.

Information and options related to CATS are limited to a short, recorded message identifying the phone number and hours of operation for CATS' own staffed customer service phone line and an option to transfer to that service. In addition to their staffed customer service, CATS operates their own IVR system. CATS reports that 90 percent of their total incoming customer service calls are handled by the IVR, with only 10 percent requiring attention from a live call center representative. CATS IVR information includes scheduled bus arrival times, information on transit hubs and the routes they serve, information on the guaranteed ride home (general description and arranging a ride), and information on other transit services (vanpool, paratransit, fares and passes, locations of printed bus schedules, and lost and found). Table 3.3.2 below outlines the menu structure of the North Carolina 511 system.

Table 3.3.2: North Carolina 511 Telephone System Structure

NORTH CAROLINA 511 SYSTEM
Phone Number: 877-511-INNC [4662]
Co-branded Website: www.ncsmartlink.org/511
OPENING GREETING
"Welcome to the North Carolina 511 travel information line brought to you by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Say 'main menu' to return to this menu, or say 'help' for assistance. You can also press '88' or 'TT' for touch tone at any time. When you hear the option you want, just say it. Now would you like highways, public transportation, weather, other services or other states."
911 Citation? No
BASIC MENU
1.   For traffic, press one '1'
2.   For public transportation, press two '2'
3.   For weather, press three '3'
4.   For other agencies that serve travelers, press four '4';
To be connected to 511 systems in neighboring States, press five '5'; or
Press the pound '#' key to tell us what you think.
You can get Help by pressing zero '0'.
To return to this menu, press nine '9' at any time.
TRANSIT MENU
A. *BUSES.* Currently, information is available for the following areas. For Charlotte Area Transit, press one '1'; for Triad Area Transit, press two '2'; for Cabarrus County Transit, press three '3'; for Iredell County Transit, press four '4' or enter the city or county code for which you would like transit information. The code for Cities are CI or 24 and the first four letters of the city name followed by the star '*' key. The code for counties are CO or 26 and the first four letters of the county name followed by the star '*' key. You can find a complete list of the cities, counties, roads, and metro areas we cover on our website at [www.nc511.com].
1.   Charlotte Area Transit. "The Charlotte Area Transit System uses a live agent Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. At other times automated information is available. I can transfer you to CATS at: 866-799-CATS [2287] press one '1'. If you do not want to be transferred, press two '2'.
2.   Triad Area Transit.

a.   For Hi-Tran in High Point.
"I can transfer you to Hi-Tran at: 1-336-889-7433.
Press one '1' if you want to be transferred; press two '2' if you don't."
b.   For Guilford County Transportation.
I can transfer you to Guilford County Transportation at: 336-641-4848.
Press one '1' if you want to be transferred; press two '2' if you don't."
c.   For PART (Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation).
"I can transfer you to PART at: 336-883-PART [7278].
Press one '1' if you want to be transferred; press two '2' if you don't."
d. For Greensboro Transit Authority.
"I can transfer you to Greensboro Transit Authority at: 336-335-6499.
Press one '1' if you want to be transferred; press two '2' if you don't.
e.   For Winston-Salem Transit Authority.
"I can transfer you to Winston-Salem Transit Authority at: 336-727-2000.
Press one '1' if you want to be transferred. Press two '2' if you don't."
3.   Cabarrus County Transit. "I can transfer you to the Cabarrus County Transportation System at: 704-920-7433. Press one '1' if you want to be transferred; press two '2' if you don't."
4.   Iredell County Transit. "I can transfer you to the Iredell County Area Transportation System at: 704-873-9393. Press one '1' if you want to be transferred; press two '2' if you don't."
B.   *RAIL.* "I can transfer you to: 800-BY-TRAIN [800-298-7246]. Press one '1' if you want to be transferred; press two '2' if you don't."
C. *FERRIES.* "I can transfer you to the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Ferry Division; your gateway to the Outer Banks at: 800-BY-FERRY [800-293-3779]. Press one '1' if you want to be transferred; press two '2' if you don't."
WEATHER INFORMATION
Yes—North Carolina Website provides eight tabs; the last one is Weather. This screen accesses weather data for five State regions. Weather information is updated daily at any time as weather conditions warrant. A seven day forecast is also provided.
Connection/Referral to Transit Systems? Yes
Ability to Navigate up the Menu? Yes
Transfer to other 511 systems? Yes
Transfer to what other systems? Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia

Source: "Profiles of 511 Traveler Information Services Update 2009"

3.3.3   Virginia: Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) operates the statewide 511 system and became operational in 2005. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA)'s Metrorail and Metrobus (Metro) is included in the Virginia statewide 511 system. Metro information is located within the public transportation main menu option.

The information and options for Metro are limited to an option to transfer to Metro's customer service line and a listing of the Metro customer information phone number. For some other transit agencies on the Virginia 511 system, additional information is provided. Metro operates their own IVR system, which is where all incoming customer service calls are directed. The Metro IVR is extensive, and contains a wide variety of information arrayed under five main menu options. Among the information provided under the trip schedule option are real-time bus arrival time estimates and service disruption announcements.

Metro is the second largest rail transit system and the fifth largest bus network in the United States. The transit zone consists of the District of Columbia, the suburban Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George's and the Northern Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church. Table 3.3.3 below outlines the menu structure of the Virginia 511 system.

Table 3.3.3: Virginia 511 Telephone System Structure

VIRGINIA 511 SYSTEM
Phone Number: 800-578-4111
Co-branded Website: www.511virginia.org
OPENING GREETING
"Welcome to 511 Virginia, sponsored by the Virginia Department of Transportation—the options have changed. Main Menu: Please say the name of the interstate, bridge, tunnel or metro area for which you would like traffic information. To request traffic information for a city, county, or other roadway please say 'traffic'. You can also say 'bridges and tunnels, public transportation, weather or more choices'. Say 'feedback' to tell us what you think. Say 'main menu' to return to this menu. To return to the main menu press '9.' You may interrupt any menu with your choice at any time.
911 Citation: No
BASIC MENU
1.   Traffic
2.   Public Transportation
3.   Weather
4.   More choices
a. Other States
b. Planned Construction
c. Rest Areas
+   "Say 'feedback' to tell us what you think."
TRANSIT MENU
"Which city, county, commuter service or transit agency do you want to hear about? "
1.   Northern Virginia-Washington, D.C. Metro Area
Fairfax Connector Customer Service Office 703-339-7200
Commuter Connections Systems Customer Service 800-745-7433
Fairfax CUE Customer Service 703-385.7859 "I can transfer you. Do you want transferred?"
WMATA.   "I can transfer you to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's Customer Service Department at 202-637-7000. Do you want transferred?"
Alexandria DASH Customer Service 703-370-3274
Arlington Regional Transit - ART Customer Service 703-228-7433

Virginia Railway Express Customer Service 703-684-1001
Loudoun County Customer Service 703-771-5665
Purcellville Connector System Customer Service 877-777-2708
Fairfax County RideSources Customer Service 703-324-1111
PRTC OmniRide & Omnilink System Customer Service 703-730-6664
Alexandria Rideshare Customer Service 703-838-3800
George Transit Customer Service 202-637-7000 "I can transfer you. Do you want transferred?"
2.   Valley Metro. (Valley Metro offers bus service for the Greater Roanoke Area.) "I can transfer you to the Valley Metro Transit System at 540-982-2222. Do you want to be transferred?"
3.   Smart Way Bus System.   "I can transfer you to the Smart Way Bus System at 800-388-7075. Do you want to be transferred?"
4.   Richmond.   "I can transfer you to the GRTC transit system at 804-358-4782. Do you want to be transferred?"

5.   Blacksburg/Christiansburg Transit.   (Blacksburg transit offers bus service for Virginia Tech and the Town of Blacksburg).
    a. "I can transfer you to the Blacksburg Transit System at 540-961-1185. Do you want to be transferred?"
    b. "I can transfer you to Smart Way Bus System at 800-388-7005. Do you want to be transferred?"
    c. "I can transfer you to Ride Solutions 540-342-9393."

6.   Harrisonburg Transit. (Harrisonburg Transit offers bus service for the City of Harrisonburg and for James Madison University).   "I can transfer you to the Harrisonburg City Transit System at 540-432-0492. Do you want to be transferred? "
7.   Winchester Transit. (Winchester Transit offers two public transportation services to the City of Winchester—a fixed route service and a paratransit service.)   "I can transfer you to the Winchester Transit System at 540-667-1815. Do you want to be transferred? "
WEATHER INFORMATION
YES—Virginia Website provides nine tabs; the eighth tab is Weather. Click on Weather and type in a zip code for a 5-Day Weather Forecast for that location.
Connection/Referral to Transit Systems? Yes
Ability to Navigate up the Menu? Yes, "Press nine '9' or say 'main menu' at any time."
Transfer to other 511 systems? Yes
Transfer to what other systems? North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee

Source: "Profiles of 511 Traveler Information Services Update 2009"

3.3.4   Southeast Florida

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Miami-Date Expressway Authority, and the Sun Guide Partners provide the South Florida 511 Traffic and Transit Information Service. FDOT provided the initial capital investment and the four transit agencies (Broward County, Miami-Dade, Palm Tran and Tri-Rail) share responsibility for ongoing operating and maintenance costs. FDOT added transit to the original highway contract in FY 2004 and obtained federal funds to help cover the capital costs. Program development took two years and deployment costs were $2.8 million. The

South Florida Regional Transportation Organization (now SFRTA) envisioned 511 as a multimodal, one-stop shop for traveler information. The system provides highway and transit information for Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties.

The Southeast Florida 511 system is one of just a handful nationwide 511 systems that includes the option of speaking to a live 511 operator. Callers may select public transit from the main menu. This option allows callers to select one of the following four transit organizations or the regional ridesharing service. The schedule option provides static schedule information based on customer input. An IVR guides customers to enter details about origin, destination, time of day, and travel direction. The IVR system returns information about the next scheduled vehicle that meets the customer's travel requirements. Customers selecting South Florida Ridesharing and Emergency Ride Services from the main transit menu can choose between general prerecorded information and an option to transfer to an agent. Table 3.3.4 below outlines the menu structure of the South Florida 511 system.

Table 3.3.4: Southeast Florida 511 Telephone System Structure

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA 511 SYSTEM
Phone Number: 866-914-3838
Co-branded Website: http://www.southflorida511.com
OPENING GREETING
"You've reached the Sun Guide traffic and public transit travel information service for South Florida--brought to you by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority. [Para Espanol---Spanish text insert]. Please note that our system has changed. If you already know your route code, enter it followed by the pound '#' or number sign key instead of the star '*' key. Now you can choose to hear information about: highways, public transit, other services or other 511 systems. Which would you like? "
911 Citation: No
BASIC MENU
[Note: Press eight-eight '88' to switch to touch tone only mode]
"Press one '1' for highways; press two '2' for public transit; press three '3' for other services; press four '4' for other 511 systems. To give feedback press the pound '#' key and press the star '*' key to hear your options again."
1.   Highways
2.   Public Transit
3.   Other Services
4.   Other 511 Systems
'#*' Feedback
TRANSIT MENU
"Welcome to the Sun Guide public transit travel information service line. If you need instructions say 'help'. You can press eight-eight '88' or 'tt' for touch tone. Press one '1' for Broward County Transit, press two '2' for Miami-Dade, press three '3' for Palm Tran, press four '4' for Tri-Rail or press five '5' for South Florida's Ride Sharing and Emergency Ride Services. Press the star '*' key to hear your options again."
1. Broward County Transit
a.   Schedule, press '1'
b.   Fares, press '2'

c.   General Information, press '3'
1.   For the Lost and Found Department, press '1'
2.   For Special Events, press '2'
3.   To talk to an agent who can assist you with trip planning, press '3'
4.   To make a comment, complaint or suggestion, press '4'
5.   For More Options, press '5'
a. To learn about taking your bicycle on the bus or wheelchair accessibility,   press '1'
b. For maps and schedules by mail, press '2'
c. Or to learn about TOPS [Transportation Options] for those with disabilities that prevent them from using regular fixed route bus transportation, press '3'
6.   Or to select another transit system, press '6' now
7.   To choose another transit authority, press'4'
8.   To return to this menu, press '9' at any time
2.   Miami-Dade Transit
Schedule, press '1'
Fares, press '2'
General Information, press '3'
1.   For the Lost and Found Department, press '1'
2.   For Special Events, press '2'
3.   To talk to an agent who can assist you with trip planning, press '3'
4.   To make a comment, complaint or suggestion, press '4'
5.   For More Options, press '5'
a. To learn about taking your bicycle on transit, press '1'
b. To hear about wheelchair accessibility, press'2'
c. For maps and schedules by mail, press '3'
d. Or to learn about special transportation services for those who cannot use   regular public transportation, press '4'
6.   Or to select another transit system, press '6' now
7.   To choose another transit authority, press '4'
8.   To return to this menu, press '9' at any time
3.   Palm Tran
1.   Schedule, press '1'
2.   Fares, press '2'
3.   General Information, press '3
a.   For the Lost and Found Department, press '1'
b.   For Special Events, press '2'
c.   To talk to an agent who can assist you with trip planning, press '3'
4.   To make a comment, complaint or suggestion, press '4'
5.   For More Options, press '5'
a. To learn about taking your bicycle on the bus and wheelchair accessibility, press '1'
b. For maps and schedules by mail, press '2'
c. Or to learn about special transportation services for those who cannot use regular public transportation, press '3'
6.   Or to select another transit system, press '6' now
7. To Choose another Transit Authority, press '4'

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

8. To return to this menu, press '9' at any time
4: Tri- Rail
1. Schedule, press '1'
2. Fares, press '2'
3. General Information, press '3'
a. For the Lost and Found Department, press '1'
b. For Special Events, press '2'
c. To talk to an agent who can assist you with trip planning, press '3'
4. To make a comment, complaint or suggestion, press '4'
5. For More Options, press '5'
a. To learn about taking your bicycle on the train or wheelchair accessibility, press '1'
b. For maps and schedules by mail, press '2'
c. Or to select another transit system, press '6' now
6 To Choose Another Transit Authority, press '4'
7. To return to this menu, press '9' at any time
5: South Florida's Ridesharing and Emergency Ride Services
"Commuters who use transit at least three times a week are eligible for the emergency ride home program. It will provide free taxi service in emergency situations for registered commuters in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. I can transfer you to the customer service center at 1-800-234-RIDE [7433] twenty-four hours a day. Would you like to be transferred? Press '1' for yes or '2' for no."
WEATHER INFORMATION
Southeast Florida Website contains six tabs. Weather alerts provided when needed.
Connection/Referral to Transit Systems? Yes
Ability to Navigate up the Menu? Yes
Transfer to other 511 systems? Yes
Transfer to what other systems? Central Florida, 511 Tampa Bay, Florida Statewide

Source: "Profiles of 511 Traveler Information Services Update 2009"

3.4 211 Background

211 is the national 3-digit telephone number for providing information on basic human needs and physical and mental health, as well as referrals to human services organizations, and is coordinated by United Way of America and the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems.

The first 211 service in the U.S. was launched by the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta in 1997 and, currently, 211 systems are available across the nation. While services vary, 211 systems typically provide callers with information and referrals to the following types of services:

- **Basic Human Needs Resource**: Food banks, clothing, shelters, rent assistance, utility assistance;
- **Physical and Mental Health Resources**: Medical information lines, crisis intervention services, support groups, counseling, drug and alcohol intervention, rehabilitation, health insurance programs, Medicaid and Medicare, maternal health, and children's health insurance programs;

- **Employment Support**: Unemployment benefits, financial assistance, job training, transportation assistance, and education programs;
- **Support for Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities**: Home health care, adult day care, congregate meals, Meals on Wheels, respite care, transportation, and homemaker services;
- **Support for Children, Youth and Families**: Quality childcare, Success by Six, after school programs, Head Start, family resource centers, summer camps and recreation programs, mentoring, tutoring, and protective services; and
- **Volunteer opportunities and donation information**.

United Way 211 has been described as a one-on-one, interactive human communication for individuals who may not be sure where to turn, what service might meet their needs, or what programs are available. It allows users to describe their specific needs, allowing operators and call center agents to understand these needs and suggest creative alternatives drawing from the large knowledge base of public programs and services that is maintained by United Way 211. As of October 2011, 211 systems serve over 260 million Americans (86.6 percent) covering all 50 states plus Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. The service is funded by local United Way branches, community foundations, and federal and local government funds.

3.4.1 211 and Mobility Management

The FTA has studied the utilization of 211 call centers as a viable part of human services transportation coordination. The report, *211, 511, and Human Services Transportation*[6], states that: "211 is a logical choice for a service oriented toward the transportation-disadvantaged and others who are having difficulties meeting their basic needs." The report also states that "the databases used by 211 services already include the vast array of small-scale, often informal, transportation services…these database entries would be extremely useful 'building blocks' for the development of the consolidated scheduling module envisioned by United We Ride and Mobility Services Across America." However, there are currently no formal guidelines that define how 511 systems should interface or relate to 211 systems, other than suggesting that they should at least reference one another because many RHST transportation services are coordinated by the agencies referenced in 211 systems.

In the case of public and human services transit, 211 providers maintain structured databases with information about the human and social services offered in their coverage area, including basic information such as the name and telephone number of transit agencies, days and hours of operation, service area, and fares. For Para-Transit services and other services that provide transportation or financial assistance, the databases also include information on eligibility for the program, such as age, disability, income, place of residence, and trip purpose. In general, 211 agents already serve as pseudo-coordinators of human services transportation information. Unlike 511, the databases often include small-scale, informal transportation services that are run by charitable and non-governmental organizations.

For 211 calls, transportation makes up a small share of overall calls, but it is often a secondary need. In the study aforementioned, 211 managers who were interviewed stated that "a caller's need for transportation is often only highlighted once information on the initial need has been provided," such as when a person seeking substance-abuse treatment may need to find a way to get there. In this way, 211 shares the same intended audience as human services transportation agencies, call centers, or coordinators.

While 211 holds significant opportunity to assist in statewide mobility management and information dissemination, compared to most 511 systems, which are capable of handling many calls at once, 211 systems are more labor-intensive and cannot easily handle call surges because of live operators and one-on-one service. 211 system access is also not as dependable as it is often deployed regionally instead of statewide, so the coverage is less contiguous geographically.

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[6] *www.**unitedweride**.gov*

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April 2012

The FTA study suggests a utilization of both 211 and 511 for human service transportation coordination. 211 could be used to provide initial information on available programs and then provide transportation information in that context. In general, 211 is a better fit for transit providers that accommodate individuals who have a particular issue or problem. 511 is better utilized for reserving and scheduling routine trips, as it can process larger numbers of requests for transit trip planning and paratransit scheduling. However, the success of such a partnership would be subject to the capabilities of each system.

3.4.2   211 System Case Studies

Four case studies (California, Broward County, Florida, Maryland and Washington State) are summarized below with focus on each call resources' characteristics related to transit information.

California

California currently operates a 211 system through partnerships between California Alliance of Information & Referral Services (CAIRS), United Way of California (UWCA), Volunteer Centers of California, Governor's Office on Services and Volunteerism and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services. This call center typically handles more than 925,000 calls annually.

California found that the 211 system was a better opportunity compared to the 511 system for providing human services transportation information. The study *211 California Rural Mobility Management Planning Study* states that "because [211] allows users to describe their concerns in their own words, 211 is more able to develop a holistic understanding of the callers' needs in all of their complexity, and where necessary, to suggest creative alternatives when no programs are available"[7]. Because the 211 system already provides other human services information, the callers are familiar with the programs and how to problem-solve with the available programs depending on specific individuals' needs.

The state operates county-wide 211 systems across the state and currently covers 91 percent of the state's population. Callers are directly connected to a live customer service representative to help with their individual needs. Across the state, the call centers received 1,430,000 calls in 2010 collectively. Of that, 22,125 calls were transportation-related, accounting for approximately one percent (1%) of the total calls[8].

Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization, Florida

Broward County, Florida was the recent recipient of FTA Grant as a part of a South Florida Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative. With this grant, Broward plans to integrate transportation service information into the existing 211 system to serve as a one-call / one-click human service center.

The Broward 211 system directly connects callers to customer service representatives to listen and understand the caller's needs and then connects the caller to agencies that can help address these needs. Once transportation services are integrated into the system, it is understood that the callers will be directly connected to transportation service providers within the county.

Maryland

The Central Maryland Regional Transit Corporation (CMRT) has recently implemented a one call–one click model which utilizes a toll-free 800-number that will be tied into 211, called the Transportation Resource Information Point (TRIP) system. TRIP began as a transit information resource for the Baltimore metropolitan region, which includes a seven-county area and Washington D.C. and Annapolis. It is currently undergoing an expansion into a statewide program that

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[7] http://www.cairs.org/211/docs/MobilitymanagementPlan090331.pdf
[8] http://www.cairs.org/211.htm

will make transit, HST and private transportation information available at public kiosks, a one-call number, and online. The statewide TRIP system will also be tied into a statewide 211 system, "2-1-1 Maryland," and allow the users of the kiosks to access to the 211 database. The project for building coordination between existing public transportation and human service transportation providers has received a federal grant to expand the program statewide.

Washington

Washington State began the Washington Information Network 2-1-1 (WIN 211) in 2002. WIN is a coalition of existing local referral services and United Ways from each of seven regions covering the state that incorporated as a single non-profit corporation. As a non-profit, WIN secured funding from United Way to support 2-1-1 planning and development of the statewide 211 system. Within each region, the call centers support the local human service programs for the residents in that area. Human Services Transportation is a core component of the WIN 211 call system and online database, which offers clients direct access to basic information about local services – name and location of agency, hours of operation, nature of services offered, and eligibility requirements.

Additionally, in Washington State, the Puget Sound United We Ride initiative has successfully utilized both 211 and 511 as partners in its effort to coordinate special needs transportation services. It utilizes 211 for providing initial information on available programs and 511 for scheduling and reserving specific trips. Below, Figure 3.4.1 illustrates Puget Sound's vision of a regional coordinated transportation system, where callers can plan, reserve, and pay for a trip with one phone call or website visit.

Figure 3.4.1: Puget Sound United We Ride
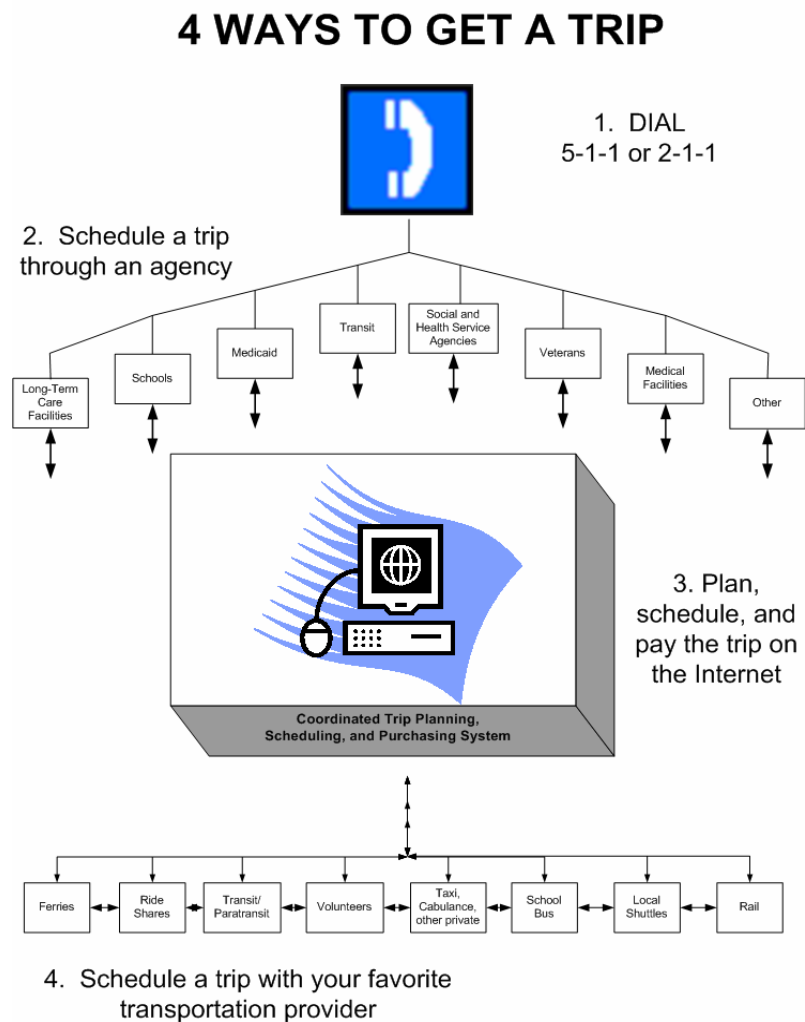
Source: United We Ride in Puget Sound
Vision of a regional coordinated transportation system:
Plan, reserve, and pay for a trip with a single phone call or website visit.

Chapter 4   EXISTING GEORGIA TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION SYSTEMS

4.1   Georgia's 511 System

The Georgia 511 system was officially launched August 2007, making Georgia the 30th state to deploy 511. It reached one million calls within the first year of operation and recently reached the 5 million mark in August 2011. The system features automated voice recognition for general information requests and transfers, and callers can reach live operators to report accidents, request roadside assistance or get additional information. The Georgia 511 website (www.511ga.org also known as NaviGAtor) and mobile application provide real-time traffic information. Table 4.1.1 below outlines the menu structure of the Georgia 511 system.

Table 4.1.1: Georgia 511 Telephone System Structure

GEORGIA 511 SYSTEM
Phone Number: 877-MYGA511 (694-2511)
Co-branded Website: [http://www.511GA.org]
OPENING GREETING
"Welcome to the Georgia Navigator 511 traveler information system, a service of the Georgia Department of Transportation. Please note you can always return to the previous question or menu at any time by saying "No". To report an Incident, Accident, or Request Hero Motorist Assistance in Metro Atlanta press or say one "1"; for Highway Information press or say two "2"; for Transit or Ride Share Information press or say three "3"; for Airport Information press or say four "4"; for Tourism Information press or say five "5"; for Surrounding States press or say six "6"; to speak with a Traffic Operator at any time press or say nine "9"."
911 Citation? No
BASIC MENU
Report Incidents, Accidents, Request Hero Motorist Assistance in Metro Atlanta
2.   Highway Information
3.   Transit or Ride Share Information
4.   Airport Information
5.   Tourism Information
6.   Surrounding States
9.   Speak with a Traffic Operator
TRANSIT MENU
For MARTA Information press or say one "1"; for Other Transit Information press or say two "2" (connecting to GRTA call center); for Ride Share Information press or say three "3"; for AMTRAK Information press or say four "4"; for Greyhound Information press or say five "5"; to leave a Comment press or say seven "7"; to return to the Main Menu press or say star "*".
WEATHER INFORMATION
Yes—Georgia 511 Website provides up-to-date weather information for three major cities in the State: Atlanta, Macon, and Savannah.
Connection/Referral to Transit Systems? Yes

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April 2012

Ability to navigate up the Menu? Yes
Transfer to other 511 systems? Yes
Transfer to what other systems? Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee

Under the main menu, option '3' directs callers to transit information. Currently, the option only represents two transit agencies in the state, MARTA and GRTA Xpress Bus, and callers are transferred to either of these agencies' call centers. After selecting option '3,' callers wanting public transit information are given a choice between MARTA and "other transit," whereby requests for all other transit are transferred to GRTA's call center. Because requests for other transit information are transferred to GRTA's call center, once transferred, callers must also navigate the GRTA telephone system. Figure 4.1.2 below illustrates the decision tree of the current 511 telephone system and GRTA customer service system.

Figure 4.1.2: Georgia 511 / GRTA Telephone System Current Scenario
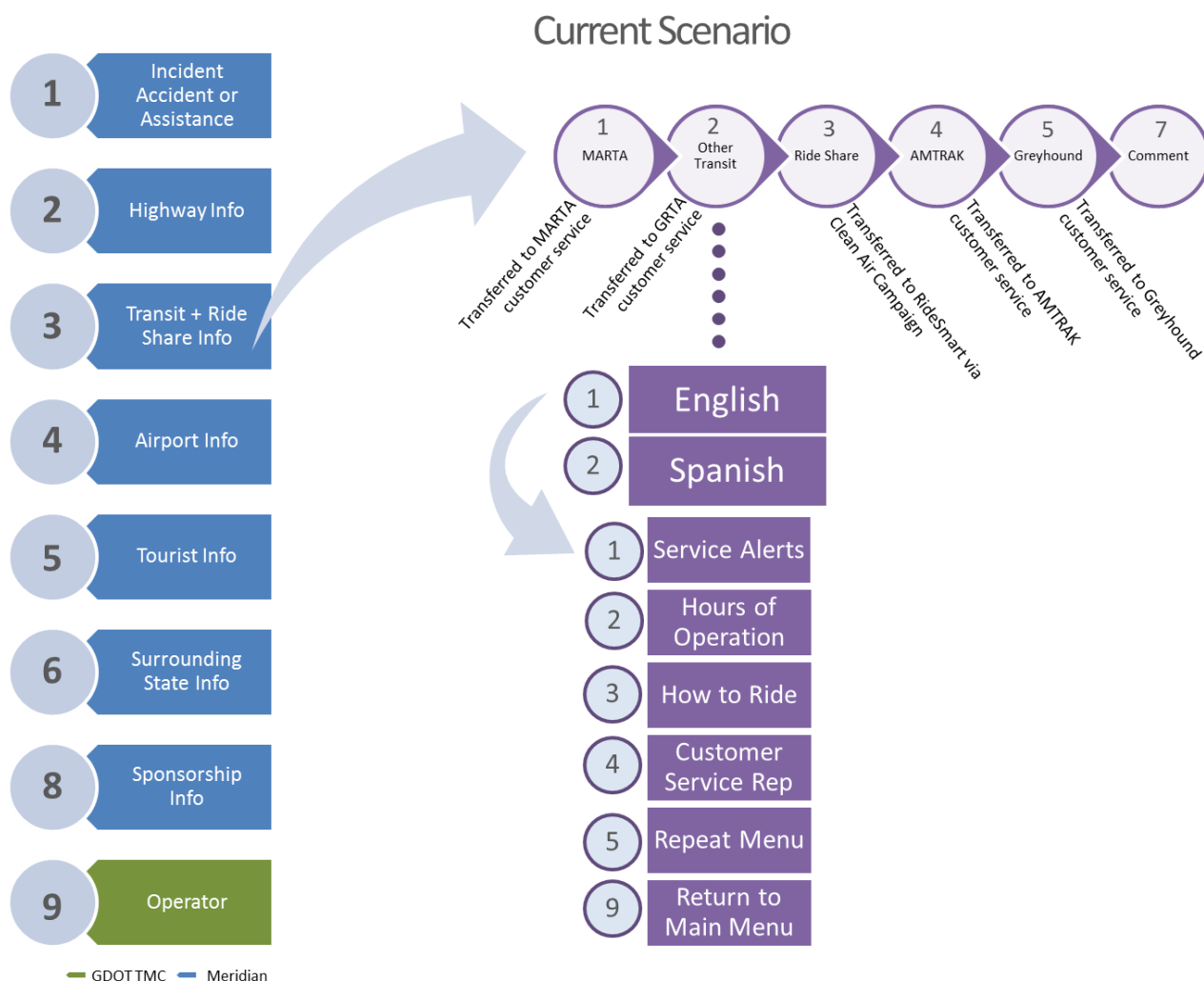
It is important to note that the Georgia 511 system was developed by Meridian Environmental Technology, a North Dakota-based firm, which currently operates and maintains the system. Meridian delivers all the weather and road condition reports for the Georgia 511 system, as well as for 511 systems in several other states. Meridian currently provides Georgia's 511 service free of charge through a public-private partnership (P3) with GDOT. Under the P3,

Meridian obtains payment for its services through revenues generated from the system's sponsorship program, which allows GDOT to provide 511 services without special funding or a 511 operating budget. Because of the zero budget / funding contribution from GDOT, any changes to the structure of the current Georgia 511 telephone system or the website or mobile app must be negotiated with Meridian.

4.2   Georgia's 211 System

United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta operates the Georgia 211 service. In 1997, the organization's information and referral service, "First Call For Help," was assigned the 211 telephone number and renamed United Way 211. It operates 24 hours a day, primarily serving the 13 metro counties, shown in Figure 4.2.1.

However, some resources are available for outlying counties. According to recent reports, United Way 211 answers approximately 31,000 calls a month. The basic menu structure is illustrated in Table 4.2.2.

Table 4.2.2: Atlanta United Way 211 System

4.2.1: Georgia 211 Service Area

Atlanta United Way 211
OPENING GREETING
"Welcome to the United Way 211. You may search our online database directly at http://211online.unitedwayatlanta.org. Or to continue stay on the line."
BASIC MENU
If you are homes or calling on behalf of someone who is homeless, press or say one "1"?
If you would like to volunteer or donate items, press or say one "2"?
If you are the victim of a natural or community disaster, press or say one "3"?
All other requests remain on the line to speak with an agent

The information provided comes from the organization's comprehensive database, the Metro Atlanta Resource Guide. The database has over 250 service terms of information for the 13 counties, including transportation services and assistance. Non-profits, government programs / entities can have programs and services listed by requesting to be listed through an application process. For-profit must pay an annual fee to be listed. Listed agencies can access their database listing online and are responsible for updating their information in the database.

To obtain information on public transit, Para-Transit, DHS or DCH services, ride share information or other transportation services, information seekers can call 211 or search the online database, http://211online.unitedwayatlanta.org.

For calls to 211, callers must speak with an agent to request information and on-hold times can be long. The online database is searchable by city or zip code and then by category. It should be noted that there is a significant amount of information available for cities outside the 13-county area. When searching the online database, RHST information is found under the Transportation Services / Assistance category, which is divided into two sub-categories: Transportation and Transportation Assistance Service. Within these two sub-categories are more sub-categories (see Table 4.2.3). Users must click on one to get information on agencies offering these services. Many of these categories are redundant and link to the same information, which is typically a phone number, physical address, and web address for a provider.

Table 4.2.3: United Way 211 Transportation Information Categories and Subcategories

Transportation	Transportation Assistance/Service
- Disability Related Transportation	- Adapted Vehicles
- Drinking/Drug Impaired Driver Transportation	- Automobile Purchase Loans
- Emergency Road Service	- Bus Fare
- General Paratransit/Community Ride Programs	- Disability Related Transportation
- Homeless Family Reunification Services	- Drinking/Drug Impaired Driver Transportation
- Local Bicycle Transportation	- Emergency Road Service
- Local Bus Transportation	- Homeless Family Reunification Services
- Long Distance Bus Passenger Services	- Local Bus Transit Services
- Medical Appointments Transportation	- Medical Appointments Transportation
- Mercy Transportation	- Mercy Transportation
- Park and Ride Facilities	- Park and Ride Facilities
- Rail Passenger Services	- Public Transit Authorities
- Return to Point of Origin	- Return to Point of Origin
- Ride Sharing Programs	- Senior Center Bus Services
- Senior Center Bus Services	- Specialized Information and Referral
- Specialized Information and Referral	- Transportation Issues
- Transportation Issues	- Transit Customer Service Centers
- Workshops/Symposiums	- Vehicle Adaptation Services
- Transportation Issues	

Chapter 5   SHORT-TERM ACTION PLAN

The short-term action plan identifies the following three specific actions needed in order to utilize the current 511 travel information call center to provide transit information to citizens:

- Develop a statewide transit provider database;
- Develop 511 transit script for call center operators; and
- Develop procedure for regular knowledge-based updates.

5.1 Transit Database Development

Currently, no single information source provides details for various transit services and providers within Georgia. Some public transportation services independently distribute their contact information, hours of operations, services through printed brochures and / or agency websites. Other transportation services have no website. Therefore, the first critical element to the deployment of a one-call center for transit information is the creation of a central and comprehensive transit service and provider database from which all transit information will be organized.

As part of the short-term action plan, the State Mobility Manager developed a comprehensive transit database for the state of Georgia on a county basis. The transit database was categorized under the following three categories:

- Public Transit Services (Section 5311 and 5307 Rural and Urban transit);
- Department of Community Health Transportation (DCH) Medicaid NET Services; and
- Department of Human Services Transportation (DHS) Coordinated Transportation System.

The database includes detailed contact information, hours of operations, category of services for public transit services, contact information for the five (5) DCH regional brokers and 12 DHS regional coordinators. A data key (Table 5.1.1 below) was developed to facilitate the use of the transit database. The data key describes the data fields used in the database to help operators understand how the information is organized and what information is included.

Table 5.1.1: Data Key of Georgia Transit Database

PUBLIC TRANSIT - Field Descriptions	
Order	Unique value assigned as a key based on alphabetical order of counties. Those with a decimal point mean that there is more than one distinct service type for that county, so these are listed separately.
County	County that service is based in or originates from. Sometimes service is limited to that county's residents
City	If city is listed in this column, the service area is only within the city.
Hours of Operations	These are broad operation hours for the services. Specific hours for certain lines or services may differ.
Category of Service	Public Transit, Rural Public Transit, Urban Public Transit, Para-Transit and Regional Vanpool. "Public Transit" is given as default when the provider does not distinguish between urban and rural. Para-Transit is service specifically for those with disabilities.
Type of Service	Scheduled and Unscheduled. Scheduled: riders must call to schedule their service/pick-up; Unscheduled: service operates on fixed routes at predictable times. Riders need not call to schedule a pick-up.

PUBLIC TRANSIT - Field Descriptions (continued)	
Description of Services Provided	Details of the service are listed in this field in this order: 1. Category (Demand Response/Fixed Route); 2. Service area (within city, within county, etc.); 3. For Scheduled: Advanced notice/eligibility requirements; 4. For Unscheduled: Notes on obtaining Route and Schedules
Service Provider Name	Name of the City/County Transit Service or, if contracted to an independent operator, name of that business.
Contact Number for SVC Inquiries	For Scheduled: Number for scheduling service; For Unscheduled: Number for route details or to plan a trip
Website	For Scheduled: Provider website with service/contact details; For Unscheduled: route maps and/or service details
Region	Name of Georgia Department of Human Services Transportation Service Region County is nested in.
Region Number	Number of Georgia DHS Transportation Service Region County is nested in.
Contacts	Contact name of an administrator at the service provider's office.
DCH - Field Descriptions	
Order	Unique value assigned as a key based on alphabetical order of counties.
County	County that service is based in or provided to. Service may be limited to the county or region's residents.
Description of Services Provided	Details of DCH service are typically similar in all regions; Specifics can be obtained when scheduling.
Service Provider Name	Name of the DCH Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) provider. NET Services across the state are subcontracted to independent operators.
Street, City, Zip	Address of the DCH main office in Atlanta
Contact Number for SVC Inquiries	Contact number(s) for the DCH Regional Office
Alternate Contact for RTC	Customer Service line for the DCH Main Office - to register complaints or answer questions.
Website	Main webpage for the Department of Community Health Non-Emergency Transportation statewide program.
Region Name	Name of DCH NET Service Region that the county is nested in.
Region Number	Number of DCH NET Service Region that the county is nested in.
DHS - Field Descriptions	
Order	Unique value assigned as a key based on alphabetical order of counties.
County	County that service is based in or provided to. Service may be limited to the county or region's residents.
Description of Services Provided	Details of DHS service are typically similar in all regions; Specifics can be obtained when scheduling.
Service Provider Name	Name of the DHS Transportation Regional Office
Contact Number for SVC Inquiries	Contact number(s) for the DHS Regional Transportation Coordinator
Alternate Contact for RTC	Email, pager or alternative phone number for the DHS Regional Transportation Coordinator

DHS - Field Descriptions (continued)	
Website	Weblink to an information sheet for the DHS Regional Transportation Office
Region Name	Name of Georgia Department of Human Services Transportation Service Region County is nested in.
Region Number	Number of Georgia DHS Transportation Service Region that the county is nested in.
Contacts	Name of the DHS Regional Transportation Coordinator (RTC) and Administrative Coordinator

The complete transit database can be found in Appendix A. This database was provided to GRTA 511 by which GRTA operators can use and inform callers inquiring about public (5311 and 5307) transit programs and / or DCH and DHS services in their region / county.

5.2 GRTA 511 Transit Script Development

Because the call center operators are unfamiliar with most other transit agencies and services, the State Mobility Manager worked to establish a script for the call center to streamline the operating process. The State Mobility Manager also helped to develop a protocol for how to determine what information to provide based on the caller's input. In addition, a protocol for searching the provider database will be established to easily and quickly narrow the database down in order to provide accurate information in a timely manner.

Figure 5.2.1 below illustrates how providing the call center operators with this list of public transit providers, script and data key create a short-term solution to statewide public transit information dissemination through Georgia's existing 511 telephone system. Figure 5.2.2 is the first script and protocol for providing basic transit information, contact information and transfers.

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Figure 5.2.1: Georgia 511 Telephone System Short Term Solution

Short-Term Solution Scenario

1 Incident Accident or Assistance
2 Highway Info
3 Transit + Ride Share Info
4 Airport Info
5 Tourist Info
6 Surrounding State Info
8 Sponsorship Info
9 Operator

— GDOT TMC — Meridian

1 MARTA — Transferred to MARTA customer service
2 Other Transit — Transferred to GRTA customer service
3 Ride Share — Transferred to RideSmart via Clean Air Campaign
4 AMTRAK — Transferred to AMTRAK customer service
5 Greyhound — Transferred to Greyhound customer service
7 Comment — Directed to GDOT voicemail

1 English
2 Spanish

Message changed to indicate availability of statewide transit info

1 Service Alerts
2 Hours of Operation
3 How to Ride
4 Customer Service Rep
5 Repeat Menu
9 Return to Main Menu

Statewide Public Transit Information Gatekeeper

- "Do you know what transit system you need information about?"
- "Which city and county are you traveling from?"
- Statewide Public Transit general details and contact information
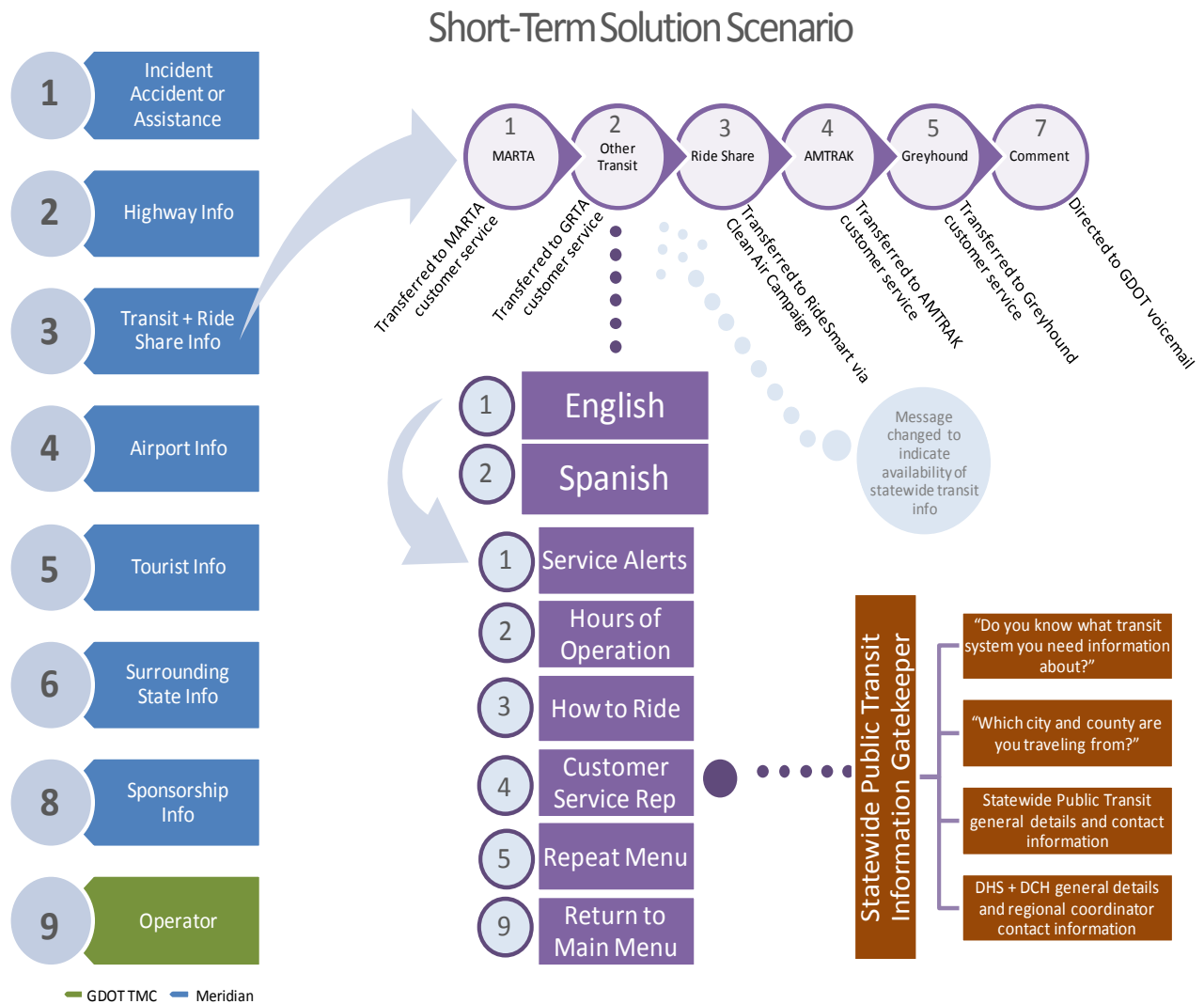- DHS + DCH general details and regional coordinator contact information

Figure 5.2.2: 511 Transit Services Telephone Scripting

GEORGIA STATEWIDE PUBLIC TRANSIT INFORMATION
Transit Services Telephone Scripting
Purpose: This script will take operators through the call flow process to ensure well-managed and controlled calls and consistent information dissemination.
[STANDARD GREETING]
[BASIC QUESTIONS]
1 "Do you know which transit system you need information about?"
a. [IF NO PROCEED TO 2]
b. [IF CALLER ASKS FOR DCH INFO] "Which county are you traveling from?" [THEN SKIP TO 3]
c. [IF CALLER ASKS FOR DHS INFO] "Which county are you traveling from?" [THEN SKIP TO 4]
d. [IF YES] "The number for [NAME OF PROVIDER] is XXX-XXX-XXXX. Would you like more details?"
[To give a general description of service, use details in the "Description of Service and Hours of Operation" fields
Ex: "Coweta County Transit provides service for Coweta County residents and operates M-F 8am-5pm. Service must be scheduled 1 day in advance. You will need to call to get specific details about the service area. Would you like the number again?"
[PUBLIC TRANSIT OPTION DETAILS]
"Which county are you traveling from?"
[IF PUBLIC TRANSIT OPTIONS EXIST] "There is / There are [X] public transit option(s) in your county." (This could include some city transit services)
[IF ONLY 1 OPTION] "There is one option in your area - [NAME OF PROVIDER]. The number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. Would you like more details?"
[IF YES, give a general description of service using details in the "Description of Service and Hours of   Operation" fields]
Ex: "Coweta County Transit provides service for Coweta County residents that operates M-F 8am-5pm. Service must be scheduled 1 day in advance. You will need to call to get specific details about the service area. Would you like the number again?"
[IF 1+ OPTION] "There are X options in your area - [NAMES OF PROVIDERS]. The phone number for [NAME1] is XXX-XXX-XXXX and the number for [NAME2] is XXX-XXX-XXXX? Would you like more details?"
[IF YES, give a general description of service using details in the "Description of Service and Hours of   Operation" fields]
Ex: "There is a bus service that operates M-F 6am-10pm within the city of Athens and an ADA Para-Transit Service. You will need to call to get details about the service and eligibility requirements. Would you like one of the numbers again?"
[IF NO PUBLIC TRANSIT OPTION EXISTS] "Unfortunately there are no public transit providers in your county. There may be Medicaid and / or Human Services Transportation services in your area provided by the Department of Community Health (DCH) and Department of Human Services (DHS), which only provide transportation services to customers that meet their eligibility requirements. Would you like to know more about Medicaid or Human Services Transportation?" [IF YES THEN SKIP TO 3 AND 4]
"In addition to the public transit provider(s), there may be Medicaid and / or Human Services Transportation services in your area provided by the Department of Community Health (DCH) and Department of Human Services (DHS), which only provide transportation services to customers that meet their eligibility requirements. Would you like to know more about Medicaid or Human Services Transportation provided in the county?

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

[IF YES PROCEED TO 3 AND 4]
3   [DCH OPTION DETAILS]
"Are you an eligible Medicaid member?" [IF NO] "You can apply for Medicaid by contacting the Right from the Start Medicaid (RSM) project at 800-809-7276."
[IF YES] "The number for [NAME OF DCH Regional Broker] is XXX-XXX-XXXX. The broker can answer questions about service details and schedule trips."   "You will need to contact the broker three days in advance of your appointment to schedule appropriate   transportation. Urgent care situations can be arranged more quickly. Appointments can be scheduled Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m."
4   [DHS OPTION DETAILS]
"Would you like the number for your DHS Regional Coordinator? The coordinator can help determine what programs you may be eligible for and provide further details about their services." [IF YES] "The number for [NAME OF DHS Regional Coordinator] is XXX-XXX-XXXX."
"This is all the information available about transit in the county you requested. Would you like information for a different county?"[IF YES BEGIN BACK AT 1].
[STANDARD GOODBYE]

5.3 Develop Procedure for Regular Knowledge Base Update

In order to provide for a sustainable statewide transit call center, it is vital for the call center to regularly research and update the service provider information database. New transit providers could be added into the rural and human services transportation systems across the state, especially after the implementation of the statewide coordination plan. Therefore, the one call center will need to establish a plan for updating this information on a regular basis (e.g., every year) and reach out to each of the regions to include any new provider programs.

As aforementioned, the State Mobility Manager worked with GDOT, GRTA, DHS, and DCH to compile a transit provider database by county to be used in an electronic database for the 511 call center. In order to maintain this database with the most current and accurate information, this technical memorandum recommends regular updates to the database for each type of transit service.

5.3.1 GDOT Public Transit Services (Section 5307, 5311, 5316 and 5317)

This memorandum recommends that, at a minimum, contact information for existing and new public transit services be updated on an annual basis. More than likely, this will occur during each Section's annual application process. However, while updates should occur every year, the memorandum encourages providers to update information on an as-needed basis (whenever there is a change to the contact information or service details). Figure 5.3.1 illustrates the form that service providers will be required to fill out any time information changes on their particular service. Again, at a minimum, this form will be completed annually in conjunction with the grant funding application.

Figure 5.3.1: Service Provider Contact Information Form

GRANT APPLICATION
(SECTION 5307, 5311, 5316 AND 5317)
CONTACT INFORMATION SHEET

County: _____   Regional Commission: _____

Application Prepared By: _____   Phone: _____

Application Period (FY): _____

Service Details

Name of System: _____

Hours of Operation: _____
(These are broad operation hours for the services.)

Category of Service: ☐ Urban Public Transit   or   ☐ Rural Public Transit
                        ☐ ADA Para-Transit   or   ☐ Regional Vanpool
(Please check all that apply.)

Funding Source: _____
(Please specify funding source for which you are applying.)

Type of Service: ☐ Scheduled   or   ☐ Unscheduled
(Scheduled: riders must call to schedule their service/pick-up;
Unscheduled: service operates on fixed routes at predictable times.)

Description of
Services Provided: _____
(Please include category, service area, and advanced notice/eligibility
requirements. For example: XX County Transit Service is a demand response
system; call for service area; advanced notice required; available to all citizens.)

Contact Information

Service Provider Name: _____
Street: _____
City: _____
Zip: _____
Contact Number: _____
Website: _____

5.3.2   DHS Services (Section 5310)

As outlined in Section 5.1, the 511 call center database will contain the 12 DHS regional transportation coordinator contact information for each county. The call center will not be tasked with determining eligibility for human services transportation, and all eligibility questions will be referred to the coordinator offices. Each year, DHS updates the DHS Transportation Service Section Staff Directory. Within the directory, the information includes contact information for Regional Transportation Office and the associated Regional Coordinators. This technical memorandum recommends that the State Mobility Manager work with DHS staff to ensure that the Mobility Manager receives the updated Staff Directory, at a minimum, on an annual basis when the directory is updated. However, the memorandum further recommends DHS providing staff updates on an as-needed basis as staff resources change.

5.3.3   DCH Services (Medicaid NET)

Similar to DHS, the transit provider database only provides regional information for the DCH Medicaid NET. There are five (5) DCH regional brokers (some of which broker for multiple regions). The information in the database is organized, again, by county. DCH Medicaid NET Broker contracts are five-year contracts. Therefore, this technical memorandum recommends that, at a minimum, the broker contact information be updated every five years in conjunction with the broker bidding and re-contracting. However, it is encouraged to update the contact information on an as-needed basis in the case of broken or updated contracts. The State Mobility Manager and DCH will need to remain in contact during the five-year time periods to ensure that the contact information remains up to date.

5.4   Potential Concerns and Issues

GRTA is evaluating the feasibility of providing information services through the current 511 call center as an in-kind contribution to the state and the RHST coordination initiative. However, the current 511 system is limited in its resources, and therefore, has some concerns surrounding the new transit information system. The first major concern is the potential for increased call volumes after integration of the transit database.

As seen in Section 3.3 of this document, the State Mobility Manager reviewed a variety of 511 transit system case studies from across the nation which included overall impacts after the initiation of transit information into the call system. Overall, of the systems that were reviewed, none saw a substantial impact to their call volumes or to the current work load of their employees:

- **Arizona**: No transit providers that were interviewed in the report citied any significant issues or concerns. Their experiences were either unaffected or viewed positively. Arizona 511 system noted they did not experience a change in call volume due to transit participation in 511.
- **North Carolina – Charlotte Area Transit System:** North Carolina 511 system estimates that less than one percent (1%) of their total incoming 511 customer service calls is transit-related.
- **Virginia - Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority**: The Metro call center perceived no impact in call volume resulting from their participation in 511.

In addition to the national case studies, the regional call systems in Georgia were surveyed to understand their current transit-related call volumes. The Three Rivers Regional Commission (TRRC) reported that public transit related calls were too low to even report on a regular basis. Further, they take DHS-related calls on a trip basis, and therefore, DHS-related calls are not received on a daily basis. The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (SWRC) operates a Medicaid NET call center. They reported that they have fairly high levels of call volumes on a monthly basis (approximate average of 16,000 calls). However, most of these calls are related to eligibility. Further, most residents of that area are aware of the call center and would more than likely continue to contact the regional call center rather than utilizing the statewide 511 call center.

The second concern by GRTA (as related to the first concern of call volumes) is the associated costs with the increased volume. Because GRTA is already providing 511 services at no cost to GDOT, there is concern of the need for additional call center resources (e.g., customer service representatives) and a potential need to seek and secure funding to continue to provide the transit 511 call services.

Of course, the need for additional resources will be directly dependent upon the current call volumes. GRTA stated that the current transit-related call volumes are very low (approximately 1-2 calls per month). The national case studies as well as the Georgia regional call centers were reviewed to understand cost implications as they related to transit-related information. On a national level, because the call volumes were insignificant, the costs were also miniscule. On a regional level, SWRC reports that their customer service representatives take, on average, eight (8) calls per hour. Their representatives get paid $8.50 per hour, equating to an associated call cost of about $1.00 per call. Therefore, because the increase in call volume is expected to be minimal, the associated cost, if using the regional estimate, is not expected to adversely affect GRTA call center operations.

Chapter 6   LONG-TERM STRATEGY AND NEXT STEPS

In the short-term, GRTA is evaluating the feasibility of providing 511 transit service as an in-kind contribution towards the effort, as the current call volumes are low and do not overwhelm their operators. However, the agency has expressed concern about consequences following significantly increased call volumes. In this situation, GRTA has noted that it would not have the capacity to continue providing this free service. Therefore, the State Mobility Manager has a set of recommended long-term strategies that will help alleviate these concerns and provide a foundation for call center growth in future years.

Ideally, the State of Georgia and its regions should strive for a fully integrated transit information system that utilizes technology to provide the most current transit provider information and allows customers to access and contact transit information and providers easily and quickly. One example that Georgia could use as a model is the growing statewide network in Idaho, I-Way, discussed in Section 6.5, whose goal is to connect statewide transportation options with users. I-Way's website has a directory searchable by city, accommodations and eligibility, and several other metrics. It also allows login-access to the directory by providers to manage their listings

6.1   Coordination with Regional One-Stop Mobility Management Call Centers

As a long-term strategy, it will be important to collaborate and integrate the statewide one-stop mobility management call center with regional call and information centers to ensure customers are receiving the most up-to-date and accurate transit information available since information will be more likely to be accurate on a regional level with the implementation of regional mobility managers.

Georgia has an opportunity in the long-term to develop a statewide 1-800 number that can automatically transfer callers to regional call centers throughout the state to answer transit mobility questions. Typically, these systems base the transfer of the call on the caller's location by determining the area code and telephone exchange. Additionally, calls from cell phones would be transferred depending on the nearest cell tower to the caller. Indeed this system can be complex and takes careful planning and initiation, but can be a lower cost alternative to a statewide call center operation as well as a more accurate and efficient means to providing transit provider information to citizens.

While initiating regional transit call and information centers will take time, there are four (4) regions that have already started or are beginning to start call centers and / or numbers for scheduling and / or general information within their regions. These include Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), Coastal Regional Commission (CRC), Southwest Regional Commission (SWRC) and Three Rivers Regional Commission (TRRC).

6.1.1   Atlanta Regional Commission

The ARC is one of 55 recipients of a Federal Transit Administration's Veterans Community Living Grant Initiative. ARC will use the funds to develop software that lays the foundation for a regional one-click / one-call center, as outlined in the Regional Transportation Sales Tax Referendum project list[9]. This project intends to link older adults, persons with disabilities and persons of limited income with more transportation options in the Atlanta region.

Funding from this grant will support the region's short-term goal to develop software that will link partner agencies such as the Veterans Service, hospitals, senior centers, agencies serving disabled persons, among others, to access a common database of transportation services in the 10-county Atlanta region and improve mobility options for the residents of the Atlanta region.

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[9] http://www.atlantareigonalroundtable.com

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

This project will create a fully integrated and functioning mobility management call center as outlined in ARC's 2008 Atlanta Regional Transportation Management Coordination Center Feasibility Study[10]. This Center will offer three components: shared information, coordinated public and private transportation services, and integrated vehicle and service delivery with a one-stop call center and corresponding web-based information system. The management center will create a physical system to allow for centralized scheduling, dispatching, vehicle tracking and trip booking and ultimately provide a fully integrated human service transportation system providing seamless access to the transportation network across the 10-county region.

This project is the first step in the establishment of a fully-integrated multi-disciplinary one-stop Mobility Management Call Center. As the region's population ages between now and 2030, the demand for transportation options will continue to grow. The Mobility Management Call Center will provide comprehensive information on transportation services and trip planning assistance that matches older adults, persons with disabilities and low-income citizens with the most efficient and least expensive travel option. The center will create a physical system that allows centralized scheduling, dispatching, vehicle tracking and trip booking, while ultimately providing a fully integrated, human service transportation system across the 10-county region.

6.1.2 Coastal Regional Commission

The CRC currently operates a coordinated 10-county transit system covering all of the regional commission counties via Coastal Regional Coaches. The CRC is the recipient of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funds that were utilized to purchase computers, software and other related expenses to establish the Transit Call Center. Future funding for the Transit Call Center will come from FTA Section 5317 New Freedom funds, as well as general revenue from providing service.

The Coastal Regional Coaches Transit Call Center provides trip scheduling for all citizens, including public transit and human services. The CRC established a toll-free number in which the caller selects the starting destination (county) on the keypad of the telephone from a list of counties. Based on the numeric entrance, the caller is then transferred to a local dispatcher who asks for specific information to book the trip and determine any eligibility for human services transportation services. While this call center does not provide general information, the Coastal Regional Coaches provides contact information for information and general inquiries regarding the transit program, as listed on their website.

6.1.3 Southwest Georgia Regional Commission

Southwest Georgia currently operates a highly sophisticated call center to manage and dispatch Medicaid Non-Emergency Transit (NET) for the region. Because Southwest currently holds the DCH Medicaid contract, the call center had to include state-of-the art technology with emergency and natural disaster plans in place. The Regional Commission was the recipient of federal funds to construct the call center facility and operates the call center through DCH Medicaid NET fund reimbursements as the broker for the 40-county region.

The facility employs over 35 customer service representatives operating on a 24 hour / 7 days a week schedule to meet the Medicaid demand for the 40-county region. The call center received 21,800 calls in December 2011, with an average of 8 calls per hour. Callers typically inquire about eligibility and scheduling in which the center booked over 565,000 trips in December (19,700 unduplicated passengers). Callers are directly connected to a live representative, and are not connected through any caller prompts. Average call times are 2 minutes, 56 seconds. Based on the hourly wage of the customer service representatives and the monthly call volume, the average cost per call is approximately $1.00, costing Southwest Georgia Regional Commission around $22,000 per month ($264,000 per year) for direct labor expenses, not including administrative or overhead costs (IT, management costs, utilities, etc.).

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[10] http://www.atlanta.regiona.com/transportation/human-services-transportation/hst-technology-feasibility-study

Calls and customer service representative logs are monitored continuously and records are backed-up electronically every hour. SWRC has an emergency and natural disaster plan in place in order to be fully operational within four (4) hours of a disaster to meet Medicaid NET requirements. SWRC call center does not currently provide public transit information and scheduling, although the regional commission is currently looking into integrating those services into the call center operations. As of now, callers contact the public transit providers directly in each county and are booked through the third party operators.

SWGA has expressed their interest in supporting GRTA and GDOT for the statewide transit information call center. They stated that they have the capacity to handle large call volumes and already have trained customer service representatives under employment. However, in the short-term the GRTA call center will provide the service as an in-kind contribution, and funding will have to be secured for SWRC to support the call center initiative. This technical memorandum recommends continued coordination between SWRC, GRTA and GDOT to plan the best alternative moving forward and to begin identifying and securing funding, if necessary.

6.1.4   Three Rivers Regional Commission

TRRC operates a five-county coordinated transit system within the region including Butts, Lamar, Pike, Spalding and Upson counties. Specifically the TRRC works closely with the Council on Aging Transportation Services (C.O.A.T.S) to provide both demand-response public transit as well as transit for aging populations for a variety of purposes.

TRRC operates a regional one-call number to provide trip scheduling as well as general information, complaints, and suggestions. The one-call number operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, excluding holidays. Callers are directly connected to the various transit contractor dispatchers who take caller information, determine eligibility, check the status of vehicles, and answer questions.

According to the TRRC, the public transit call volumes are very low, and most of the calls are related to DHS human services transportation trips. However, DHS trips are done via trip orders, so calls do not come in every day. Currently, TRRC does not track individual data pertaining to call volumes, call lengths, types of inquiries, or associated costs since the cost burden is on the contractors rather than the regional commission.

6.2   Coordination with 211

While the 211 call center of Metro Atlanta provides information on a very broad range of human services, as noted in the FTA study[11], it represents potential for enriching the overall information and avenues that users of RHST have available to them through statewide coordination. The center answers more than 1,000 calls per day and all calls are answered by live operators who deal with callers' personal concerns, one-on-one.

According to reports from the Metro Atlanta United Way, transportation represents a small portion of the information provided; however a need for transportation is often ancillary to the need for medical care, employment assistance, or other human services and therefore reports may not accurately reflect how many callers received transportation information after the information for their initial request was supplied.

Compared to 511, which is automated, equipped for large call volumes, and targeted to callers seeking specific transportation-related information, 211 is a resource specifically targeted to callers who have limitations and special needs, offering assistance in helping them work through their needs and finding the right type of service(s), including transportation. Additionally, while the target client base of 211 and RHST are in many ways similar, the Metro Atlanta

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[11] *2-1-1, 5-1-1, and Human Services Transportation*

United Way reports that nearly 50 percent of callers to the call center are single women with children. This may signify a general lack of awareness in the larger community of 211 and the spectrum information it offers, suggesting that coordination with 211 as part of the effort to coordinate RHST information statewide has the potential to increase awareness of the 211 call center to a broader human services client base while enriching the information available to RHST clients.

While Metro Atlanta 211 primarily provides information for the 13-county metro area, the database contains a significant amount of information from other areas around the state. Also, the database is made available to referral centers, other call centers and service or community centers throughout the Atlanta region in a printed directory format called the "Metro Atlanta Resource Guide." There are numerous focused directories, including the Job Resources directory, the Affordable Housing directory and the Resources for People with Disabilities directory, and customized guides are available. They generate revenue for the United Way and, and while it is unclear how thorough or regularly the database is updated, the general assumption is that United Way makes significant effort to provide reliable information and is perceived as the go-to source for this type of information in the region.

6.2.1   Recommended actions for coordination of 211, 511 and the statewide one-call number:

- Make 511 and 211 systems self-referencing so that clients may dial 511 or 211 to reach the one-call number to get information for their area and schedule a ride;
- Educate Metro Atlanta 211 operators on utilizing the statewide one-call center and in assisting their clients in ride scheduling;
- Include listings or direct connection to regional coordinators or mobility managers within the 211 system for regions outside the Atlanta service area;
- Educate regional RHST coordinators on utilizing Metro Atlanta 211's database and other similar referral services around the state to take advantage of their non-profit/non-governmental transit providers as an alternative to state or municipal-provided transportation options;
- Make the 511 system database accessible to 211 operators or sync transportation database with 211's database in which there is a shared data center co-managed by the State Mobility Manager, GRTA and United Way;
- Link both systems via website and potentially allow online scheduling; and
- Provide funding contributions from GDOT to United Way for after-hours management of the one call center to provide clients with around-the-clock access to RHST information.

6.2.2   Basic Coordination Strategy

It is recommended as part of a long-term strategy, coordination of the statewide one-call center with 211 should begin as an effort to connect with the United Way of Metro Atlanta 211 call center to promote awareness within their organization of the one-call center and to add it to the 211 database. Building on this coordination, learning more about the scope of the 211 call center and frequency and methods of updating the database would be useful in understanding the reliability and thoroughness of the 211 database for transportation services. This would be particularly relevant regarding non-profit and non-governmental transportation services, which would likely not be included in the statewide RHST database, making 211 the single viable resource for this collected information.

Additionally, awareness of 211 resources and scope should be included in training and educational efforts of the regional coordinators in the state. United Way of Metro Atlanta, as one of its professional services offers call center skills training, quality training and telephone support services, may have knowledge of call centers operating throughout Georgia that offer similar services for different regions of the state, such as non-profit or non-governmental transportation and social service agencies or organizations.

Thirdly, enabling a direct transfer to Metro Atlanta 211 from Georgia 511's transit menu would effectively bridge 511 callers in need of transportation information and allow 511 to accommodate callers who have a particular issue or problem in mind by offering basic information on and a transfer opportunity to 211. This would also promote awareness of 211 to a larger audience who may be able to take advantage of the information referrals it offers. Additionally, the co-promotion or co-branding of a one-call center with 511 and 211 makes efficient use of marketing and communications budgets while promoting broader awareness of each. In the reverse situation, with 211 referencing 511 or the statewide one-call number, 211 operators can assist callers in scheduling their rides. An example of such an effort is mentioned in Section 3, the Puget Sound United We Ride case study, which recommends utilizing 211 for providing initial information on available transportation and 511 for scheduling and reserving specific trips.

6.2.3   Partnership Opportunities

As previously mentioned, Metro Atlanta 211 offers telephone support services, skills training and quality training to call centers. These services may be contracted to assist regions currently or planning to establish regional RHST call centers in training operators and with technical assistance. The telephone support services include 24-hour call answering to keep call centers operating after-hours, which includes call recording, monitoring and monthly statistical reports. This service creates the potential for all regional call centers to be serviced after-hours by Metro Atlanta 211, and this scenario would support either centralized or decentralized consolidation of call center functions of the statewide one-call number operating from a single statewide RHST database.

While expanding the reach of Atlanta's 211 to statewide is beyond the scope of this project, it should be understood that several statewide RHST coordination efforts have utilized existing 211 call centers as foundations for expansion of RHST information through a one-call center strategy. This is mentioned only to highlight the advantages of establishing collaboration and coordination with 211 early on in the coordination of RHST in Georgia as it may provide foundation for further coordination of other human services down the line, recognizing that any expansion of 211's reach in the state ultimately expands one-on-one consultation and referrals for clients in need of human services, including transportation options.

Offering Metro Atlanta 211 access to a statewide database of transit service providers, or syncing this database with their own database would expand the reach of 211's transit information to the entire state. As in the case study on the Washington Information Network 211 mentioned in Section 3, the benefit of creating a partnership with 211 and incorporating regional coordinators or mobility managers as a single non-profit associated with 211 opens up opportunities for non-profit grants as a funding source, which could dually be supported by the local governments and the United Way.

6.3   511 Menu Change

While retaining the core structure of the current 511 system, there is opportunity to increase the efficiency and operability of how transit information is made available. By removing the Amtrak and Greyhound options from Option '3' of the main menu, this would create more flexibility in the menu tree below Transit + Ride Share Info without adding more sub-menu options.

First, as Amtrak and Greyhound are primarily regional and national transportation providers rather than public transit providers of trips within or between cities and small regions, information for these options are most often sought by callers seeking to travel further distances than callers seeking information on public transit. Therefore, classifying them alongside Hartsfield Airport in the main menu would be more effective in delivering the appropriate information to callers seeking information on regional or national travel.

Secondly, in reorganizing the information listed under Option '3' the focus is to make the menu more representative of statewide information. The two transit agencies in the state that are currently represented under this option, MARTA and GRTA, are both located in the Atlanta region. By creating an option for the Atlanta Metro, this sub-menu can include both of these as well as connections to Gwinnett and Cobb County transit systems. Georgia's other urban public transit systems located in cities outside of the Atlanta area can then be classified together under the second sub-menu option. The one call number can create two similar umbrella categories, one for rural and other demand-response transit that serve areas outside of urban centers, and another for DHS and DCH services. Rideshare and Comments remain the same. Figure 6.3.1 below illustrates the menu tree as described in this long-term solution option.

Thirdly, as discussed in section 6.2, enabling a direct transfer to Metro Atlanta 211 from Georgia 511's transit menu would allow 511 to accommodate callers who have a particular issue or problem in mind by offering basic information on and a transfer opportunity to 211 where 211 operators can assist callers in scheduling their rides.

Figure6.3.1: Long-Term Solution Scenario
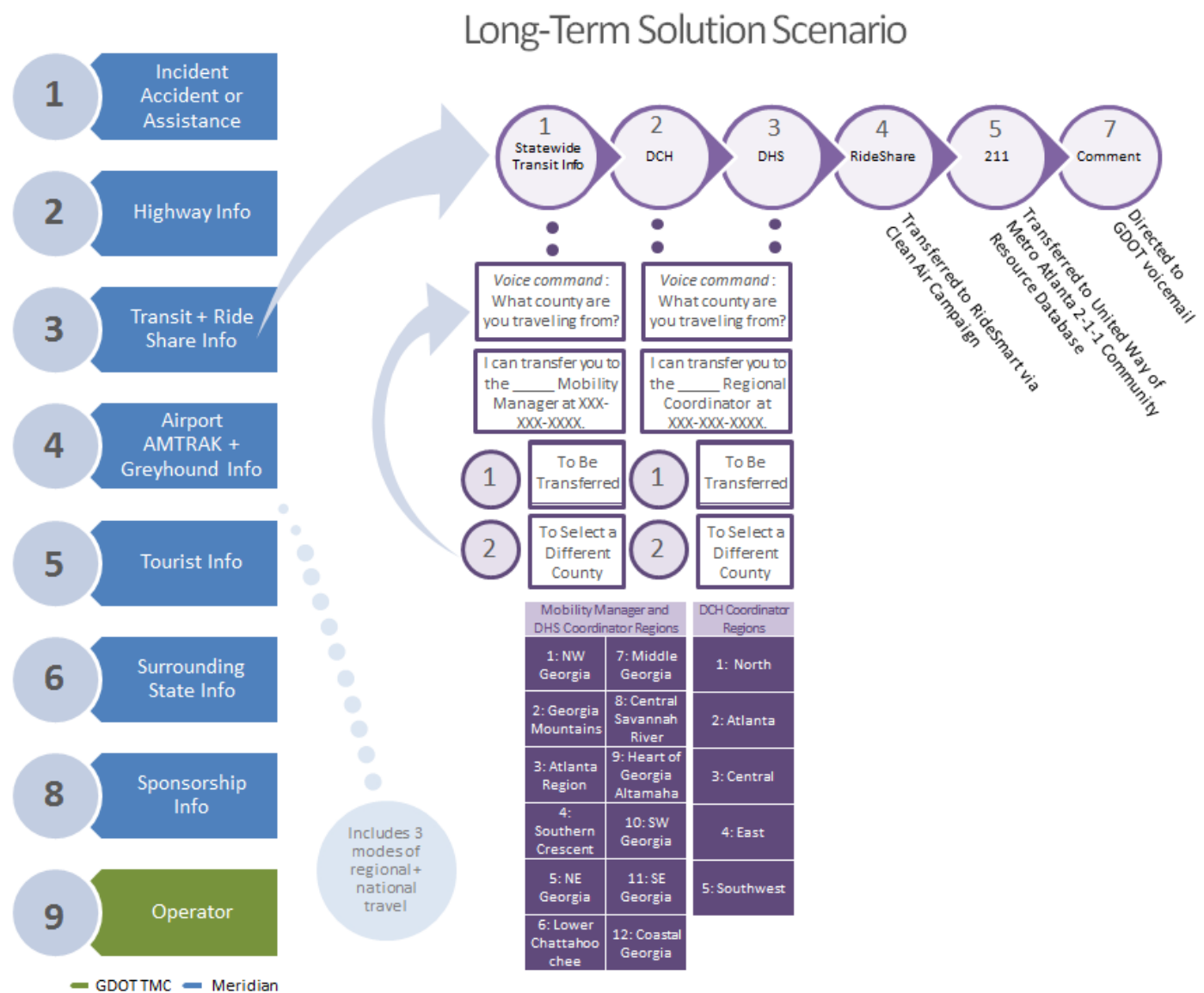
6.4   Statewide Marketing and Co-Branding

As stated in the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) report, Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services, marketing a one-call number is a way to provide information to stakeholders and members of the public about the services that are available to them. Transportation marketing is primarily about providing good information to assure users that they have made the right decision to ride. Another important emphasis of transportation marketing is to attract new riders[12].

In relation to transportation coordination, the report notes that marketing and public information play various roles, from building public support for coordination to increasing ridership. Depending on the level of coordination and the extent of the services being provided, coordination can provide several marketing-related benefits, such as:

- A unifying theme and image for public information (e.g., shared vehicle design and bus stops);
- A one-stop shop for informational resources about transit services (e.g., a single informational brochure, web site, or customer service number);
- A shared advertising campaign (e.g., joint marketing efforts, newspaper advertisements, and radio spots); and
- The identification of resources that may have the greatest benefit for the coordinated transportation programs.

This technical memorandum recommends a number of methods GDOT and/or GRTA should consider to effectively advertise transit-related information and one-call calling service in the long-term.

Create One-Call Brochures

GDOT should design and print brochures that provide an overview of the system and its services. Particularly, the brochure should include information regarding transit information available to the public. The brochure should also include some introduction to the three types of transit (public, human services, and Medicaid NET) including eligibility requirements. These brochures should be printed and distributed throughout the state at key locations including senior centers, community facilities (grocery stores, drug stores / pharmacies, etc.), public service offices (e.g., city halls, police and fire stations), among others.

Printed Transit Service Directory

GDOT should create and print a transportation service directory to be distributed to the major state agencies and regional commissions as a reference to all available transit systems across the state of Georgia. This directory should include contact and service information for all 5311/5307 systems, as well as coordinator information for DHS regional coordinators and DCH service brokers. This directory should be formatted in such a way for easy updates on a regular basis (e.g., annually), and redistributed after updates are complete. This directory will allow all state agencies related to RHST to have a provider resource to reference.

Information Kiosks

Informational kiosks should be available in prominent community areas such as senior centers, county health departments, other county service offices, and community events to allow people to access information regarding call centers at their convenience. These kiosks could be electronic, or could provide printed materials for distribution.

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[12] http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_101.pdf

Other Measures

In order to effectively advertise and market the one-call system as a provider of transit-related information, a number of other measures can be taken to ensure that the message and information is disseminated to a variety of populations, include transit-dependent populations such as aging, disabled, and low-income populations. The Community Toolbox provides resources for information on community building, including outreach techniques to reach target populations and increase access to services. The Community Toolbox provides "40+ ways to reach people"[13] that includes strategies for reaching a variety of target populations. For the purposes of advertising or promoting a statewide one-call transit information center, the following techniques are thought to provide the most effective results for RHST in Georgia.

- Identify and target "gatekeepers" affecting the target population's ability to participate. For example, to inform the aging population of transportation services, reaching out to their children and families will help provide the information to the aging populations.
- Take advantage of community organizations (Area Agency on Aging, Regional DHS Coordinators, Mobility Managers, Community Service Boards, etc.). These groups can help spread the word through their continued work within the community and with target populations.
- Utilize appropriate channels of communication for target audiences, including:
  - o Inserts in local and regional newspapers. Many older adults continue to get the majority of their information through printed periodicals as compared to television or internet.
  - o Place inserts into utility bills. All target populations typically receive water and electricity bills that can be used to include one-call transit information.
  - o Create a window display in prominent areas. This can include displays at senior centers, bus stations, community facilities, parks, among many other areas within a community.
  - o Advertise on radio and cable TV stations within the community. Depending on the target populations, one can determine particular channels and stations to advertise information.
- Interact at community events and health fairs. Transit-dependent populations can often be found at community events, especially health fares.
- Sponsor everyday activities in the community including youth sports and programs, senior activities (e.g., Bingo and Bridge).
- Provide the one-call center information to police. Police come in contact with all types of people in the community and may be a valuable resource to provide information to transit-dependent populations.
- Utilize pharmacies and other specialists to help support the one-call center cause by providing information within their place of business.

The most important aspect of advertising and outreach is being proactive in providing information regarding the one-call center to populations across the state of Georgia, especially those that are transit dependent and live in rural areas where they may not be aware of transit services in their community. It will be important that mobility managers seek partnerships with regional and local community leaders and activists to effectively communicate their message to locals.

6.5   Web-Page Development

This technical memorandum recommends developing a single website providing 24/7 online access to the statewide RHST services that serves as the "face" of the one-call number, synced visually with marketing and branding imagery, in in order to make connecting to information about statewide RHST services seamless to clients as well as transportation

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[13] http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_tools_1876.aspx

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

providers. Further, enabling regional coordinators and the mobility manager as well as 211 partners in using the website to access the statewide RHST database would make efficient use of funding for the database management and website as combined activities. Combining these two elements also makes the database easily searchable to clients by county or provider.

The two primary functions of the website are:

- A publicly available, centrally managed website that will enable users to directly access basic information about local services; and
- A private intranet site that will be used by regional coordinators and the mobility manager and 211 partners as a resource to contain and manage the database system.

Figure 6.5.1 through Figure 6.5.3 below illustrates how clients in need of transportation services might interact with the online directory and how that interaction may be designed visually. Figure 6.5.1, Washington State's Department of Transportation website, illustrates a simple way to organize the directory in a visual way by providing a map of the state's regions and listing links to transportation providers within those regions.

Figure 6.5.1: WDOT Transit Agencies Listings
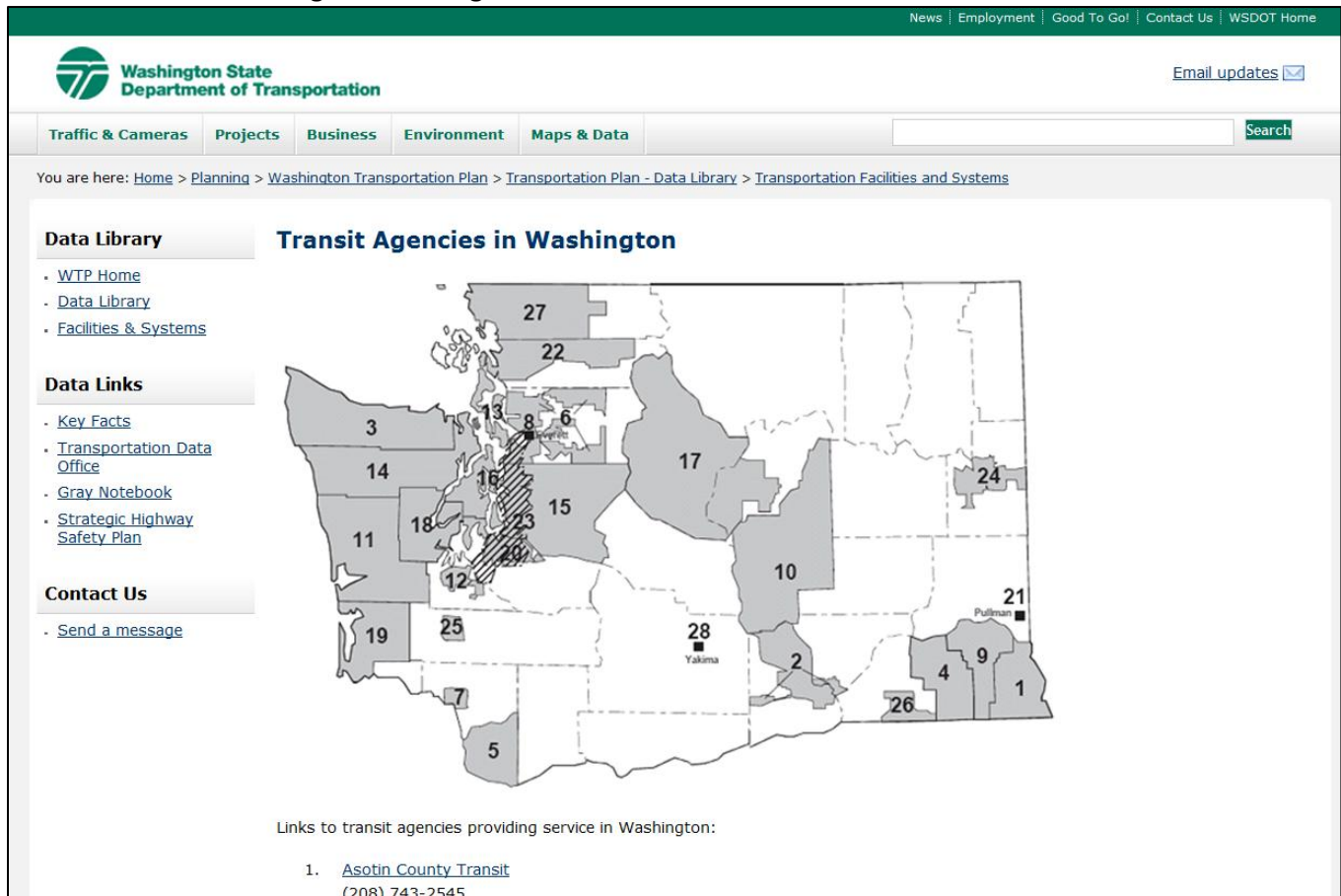
Figure 6.5.2 is TRIP, Maryland's Transportation Resource Information Point. TRIP is an online and call center resource for transit information in the Baltimore metropolitan region. The system provides public transit, human services and information on private providers and non-governmental organizations offering transit services. The website's counterpart is a one-call center. TRIP is managed by the Central Maryland Regional Transit Corporation, who has

Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Plan 2.0
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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

received a federal grant to expand the transit and human services coordination program statewide. The statewide system is also being coordinated with a statewide 211 call center, as previously mentioned in Section 3.4.

Figure 6.5.2: TRIP Transit Directory

Figure 6.5.3 is a growing statewide network in Idaho initiated by a non-profit organization, the Community Transportation Association of Idaho, whose goal is to connect statewide transportation options with users. I-Way's website has a directory searchable by city, accommodations and eligibility, and several other metrics. It also allows login-access to the directory by transportation providers to manage their listings and update information and supports cross-organizational communications by providing those entities with the opportunity to create and subscribe to email updates regarding service changes and other developments in their organizations.

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Figure 6.5.3: I-Way Provider Search

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Recommendations for website and database development and management:

- Incorporate a directory of all statewide human service transportation providers, searchable by county, type of service, and eligibility;
- Include the following information for each provider: *service description, service area, eligibility information, contact information, hours of operation, with link to website if applicable;*
- Allow providers, regional coordinators, 211 and non-profit partners and mobility manager login-protected access to database / directory for use in their referral services, as well as for updating;
- Link to 511, 211 and all major transit provider websites and unifies them under a statewide "umbrella" brand for a one-call / one-click number and website; and
- Design is synced with the branding of the statewide one-call number materials and all printed outreach materials are available for download via website.

Chapter 7   FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Financing the capital and operating cost of a one-call center might require several funding sources. For example, the Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative funds can only cover capital costs associated with transportation one-call centers, it is important for applicants and grantees to identify other funds to support the operation of these centers.

This Chapter provides an overview of the programs that could be utilized for funding the capital and operating costs of the one-call center. Eligibility requirements vary from program to program.

7.1   Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

The U.S. Department of Transportation FTA offers several assistance programs for rural public transit providers for planning, staff training, capital investments and operating expenses. Many HST-related FTA programs are authorized under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005. SAFETEA-LU provides the majority of funding for HST services and permits funding received from other non-DOT programs to be used to meet matching requirements for these programs.

FTA's Rural (5311), Job Access/Reverse Commute (5316), New Freedom (5317) and Elderly and Disabled Persons (5310) programs allow "mobility management" as an eligible capital expense under the above programs. One-call operations are specifically included in the definition of mobility management.

7.1.1   Rural Public Transportation (Section 5311)

Section 5311 is a Federal grant program that provides funding for operating and capital expenses to transit providers in both rural and small urban areas. Funding is provided on the condition of a local match, where other funds can come from a variety of sources, even other Federal funds, as long as they are not other funds from the U.S. DOT. Those eligible are public entities, non-profit organizations, and public transportation providers; however, only one 5311 provider may be funded per service area and coordination with other service areas may be required. *Local Match 50:50 for operating, 85:15 capital, 80:20 maintenance, 80:20 administrative.*

7.1.2   Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC 5316)

JARC provides funding to states and "designated recipients" to develop and maintain projects that increase job accessibility for welfare recipients and low-income individuals. All transportation projects that help this population more easily get to and from work or to and from employment-related activities are eligible. Reverse-commute projects that transport workers in urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities are also eligible. *Local match 80:20 for capital expenses, 50:50 operating expenses.*

Funds can be applied towards capital and operating costs of transportation services that address the needs of the target population that are not met by other transportation services.

7.1.3   New Freedom Program (Section 5317)

This program provides funds for public transportation services beyond the minimum requirements of the American's With Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Services and strategies directed at filling the gap or meeting an unmet transportation need of persons with disabilities are eligible. *Local match required.*

7.1.4   Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)

Under the 5311 grant program, rural transit providers can apply for training programs and professional development assistance as long as the purpose of the training is to benefit the rural public transit system. *No match required.*

7.1.5   Planning and Research (Section 5303/5313)

Both urban and rural transit providers can apply for grants to plan, develop and improve comprehensive public transportation systems. Section 5313 covers rural planning and technical studies and the funds are available to rural transit agencies to finance planning and technical support for developing and improving transit systems.

7.1.6   Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) (Section 5309/5312)[14]

The VTCLI program is collaboration between the Department of Transportation and the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Labor, Defense, and Health and Human Services to improve transportation options and mobility for veterans, service members, and their families. Projects eligible for funding under the VTCLI must focus on the implementation of One-Call/One-Click Centers and related transportation coordination. Projects may have two elements, a capital grant (5309) and a research grant (5312).

Eligible capital expenses include those related to establishing a One-Call/One-Click Center, such as: hardware purchases, in-vehicle technology, software, facility-related capital, design and engineering, including consultant costs, and project administration (less than 10 percent). Research grants may be used to cover non-capital expenses which help demonstrate the successful implementation of the One-Call/One-Click Center, such as: marketing and outreach programs, coordinated planning exercises, training materials.

Research expenses must be directly related to the implementation of the capital grant. The FY 2012 application **deadline is April 19, 2012**. Grant applicants can request:

- Up to $2 million for capital costs
- Up to $50,000 for support costs such as marketing, outreach and coordinated planning.
- Requests for S5312 funding will not be considered without a S5309 capital project proposal. *Local match 80:20*.

7.2   Other Federal

In addition to FTA program funding, there are other federal government funding programs. Some of these programs are administered by state or local government agencies; it is possible that one or more of these programs could be used as revenue sources to help fund the capital and operation of the one-call center.

7.2.1   Medicaid

Medicaid programs utilize call center technology for various aspects of program delivery. In Georgia, Medicaid relies on brokers or other intermediaries to arrange for the non-emergency medical transportation (NET). Medicaid is a state-federal partnership, with federal payments made to states from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Medicaid offers transportation funding for its NET program, the target population being low income persons. As a state administered program, each state sets its own guidelines regarding eligibility and services. In Georgia, the Department of Community Health (DCH) operates the NET program. DCH utilizes a broker system to provide Medicaid recipients with non-emergency transportation services. DCH selects a vendor in each of the State's five NET regions through a competitive bidding process in order to select a contractor to provide and administer NET services. *Match based on state's respective per capita income; Georgia 60:40.*

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[14] http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/sitemap_14332.html

7.2.2 Administration on Aging (Title III-B)

Title III funds the nationwide network of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), with III-B being specifically earmarked for transportation. Funding from Title III is used to provide transportation services to elderly Georgians. Priority is given to those with the greatest social and economic need, with emphasis on persons who fall in the categories of low-income, minority, limited English speaking, rural and/or functionally impaired. Essential Trips for the Division of Aging, listed in order of priority, are trips to and from Senior Centers, medical appointments, shopping, work/employment, field trips, and bill payment. The majority of the services statewide are provided by DHS through the Coordinated Transportation System, although some AAAs contract directly with their counties to provide transportation. *Local match required.*

7.2.3 Administration for Children and Families

Head Start: The purpose of the Head Start program is to provide services to disadvantaged preschool-aged children. Some funds can be used for transportation, as Head Start agencies must provide transportation to the program for as many families as possible or give reasonable assistance for families to arrange for transportation. This can include purchasing and operating vehicles, contracting with transportation providers, or coordinating with local education agencies. *Match 80:20.*

Social Services Block Grants (Title XX): Federal block grant funds may be used to provide services directed toward one of the following five goals specified in the law: (1) To prevent, reduce, or eliminate dependency; (2) to achieve or maintain self-sufficiency; (3) to prevent neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and adults; (4) to prevent or reduce inappropriate institutional care; and (5) to secure admission or referral for institutional care when other forms of care are not appropriate. *No Match required.*

Community Services Block Grants: These grants provide assistance to states and local communities, working through a network of community action agencies and other neighborhood-based organizations, to revitalize and support the self-sufficiency of low-income communities in rural and urban areas. There are many eligible uses, including both the capital and operating costs associated with one-call services.*No Match required.*

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): TANF provides support to eligible families to achieve economic self-sufficiency by obtaining and retaining employment. TANF recipients are eligible for transportation programs that assist in this goal, including the reverse commute initiatives, direct subsidies and the Wheels-to-Work program. Any transportation use to accomplish a purpose of the TANF program is allowed. *No Match required.*

7.2.4 Department of Health and Human Services – HRSA Maternal and Child State Block Grants

This grant, offered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s Maternal and Child Health bureau, supports direct service delivery to families, as well as support for the health delivery infrastructure, including the use of one-call/one-click solutions. The conceptual framework for the grant is a four-tiered pyramid of services for mothers and children. The third tier, Enabling Services, includes transportation[15].

7.2.5 Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation - Vocational Rehabilitation Grants to States

The purpose of these grants is to assist States in operating comprehensive, coordinated programs of vocational rehabilitation and to develop and provide vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities so they may engage in competitive employment. Among many other non-transportation related services, vocational rehabilitation services include transportation to secure vocational rehabilitation services, and other goods and services necessary for an individual with a disability to achieve an employment outcome. *Local match required.*

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[15] http://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs/index.html

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

7.3 State and Others

7.3.1 State of Georgia Community Based Funds

The Georgia Department of Human Services uses Community Based Services funds to augment the delivery of services through the Coordinated Transportation System.

7.3.2 State of Georgia Transitional Support Service Funds

Through the Coordinated Transportation System, DHS uses Transitional Support Services funding to pay for or reimburse the cost of childcare, transportation and incidental expenses to an applicant or recipient who becomes ineligible for cash assistance due to employment, or who declines ongoing TANF cash assistance to stop the TANF clock. Transitional Support Service support is available for a period of six-months from the date of ineligibility for cash benefits under the TANF program.

7.3.3 United Way 211

Metro Atlanta 211 offers telephone support services, skills training and quality training to call centers. Through a partnership or coordination with 211, these services may be solicited as in-kind donations to assist regions currently or planning to establish regional RHST call centers in training operators and with technical assistance. Additionally, the United Way's telephone support services could also be solicited as a partnership or donation, which would create 24-after-hours operation for the one-call center, which includes call recording, monitoring and monthly statistical reports.

Collaboration and coordination with 211 on the statewide database of transit service providers, or syncing this database with their own database, would provide incentive for donated services as it would expand the reach of 211's transit information to the entire state, laying a foundation for statewide expansion of other types of information referrals.

SECTION III: UNIFIED POLICES AND REPORTING

Chapter 1 UNIFIED POLICIES PROCEDURES AND REPORTING

The goal of the Rural and Human Services Transportation (RHST) unified reporting task is to make recommendations for a streamlined reporting system that will improve operational efficiencies at the agency and/or the service provider level and reduce administrative costs. These recommendations are a beginning point for a unified reporting system based on a common approach to reporting that has the highest potential of support from the participating agencies.

1.1 Task Description

There were three steps in the development of this work area recommendation:

1. Collect and review relevant documents to reporting policies and procedures for the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS), and the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH),
2. Compare commonalities and differences between reporting requirements for the respective agency programs, and
3. Develop a unified reporting recommendation that satisfies the requirements of all agencies.

The work effort involved and the summary recommendation that resulted from the work are described more fully in the subsequent sections.

1.2 General Approach

As grantees of RHST funds, it is the responsibility of the state agency to design and manage a program that conforms to the federal guidelines. FTA Circular 9040.1F, "Non-urbanized Area Formula Program Guidance and Grant Application Instructions" provides direction regarding GDOT's Section 5311 transportation responsibility for program administration:

> *"…FTA gives the States maximum discretion in designing and managing the Section 5311 program to meet its rural public transportation needs. Where possible, FTA defers to a State's development of program standards, criteria, procedures and policies to provide the State with the flexibility it needs to standardize its management of FTA assistance and related State programs."*
> (FTA Circular 9040.1F, page II-2 and II-3)

GDOT, as well as DCH and DHS, have operations manuals that describe their respective grant management processes. The focus of this work is to review these state agency manuals and make a comparative analysis of the reporting requirements for each agency.

In the review of the manuals and sample reporting documents that are included, the State Mobility Manager looked for common elements that could provide a basis for unified reporting. During the analysis, it became clear that a unified set of forms meeting the requirements of all agencies could be developed for several reporting areas.

It should be noted that two of the three agencies, DHS and the GDOT, were in the process of revising their manuals during the time this work was completed. Information regarding the forthcoming manual revisions was shared during agency interviews. This unified forms recommendation is consistent with the new manuals.

1.3 Agency Manual Reviews

The State Mobility Manager reviewed each of the three primary agency operations manuals, focusing on the reporting requirements contained in each. Following is a list of the agency manuals that were a part of the review process:

GDOT:

- GDOT 2011-12 Administrative Guide Section 5311 – Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program
- GDOT Section 5311 Program Procedures Manual (GDOT Intermodal Programs Division) 2010

DCH:

- Non-Emergency Transportation Broker Services Program Requirements - May 3, 2011

DHS:

- Georgia Department of Human Services Office of Facilities and Support Services Transportation Manual (Incorporates FAT Section 5310 Program Procedures Manual)

Reporting requirement details were extracted from each manual and documented in categories to facilitate a comparison of the differences between agencies. As each manual was reviewed, the reporting requirements were recorded in individual agency reporting requirement tables. Any appendices related to reporting requirements were also noted. The individual agency reporting requirement tables are attached as Appendix A to this report.

1.4 Sample Report Reviews

In addition to reviewing agency manuals, samples of actual reports were submitted by each agency. Because DCH does not prescribe consistent reporting formats, the State Mobility Manager reached out to Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (SWGRC), one of three Medicaid NET Brokers, for sample reporting forms.

In most cases for all three agencies, the sample reports reflected the manual requirements, or were very close. Where there were sample reports from multiple regions or operators within an agency, the State Mobility Manager noted any inconsistencies.

The State Mobility Manager received a variety of sample documents from nine of the 12 DHS regions. A listing of the sample documents received from DHS is attached as Appendix B. To compare reporting across regions, the State Mobility Manager assembled similar DHS forms and entered the documents into a comparative matrix to facilitate a review. A copy of the DHS document comparative matrix is attached as Appendix C.

The review of sample reports from the three agencies provided some additional background to the State Mobility Manager's review of the agency manuals and provided a better understanding of their reporting requirements. This review also revealed some questions that needed to be reviewed with each agency. The sample reports were organized according to the agency reporting requirements tables and interviews were scheduled with each agency to present the results of the initial research and ask questions about their reporting processes.

1.5 Initial Agency Interviews

The State Mobility Manager conducted two rounds of agency interviews. The first round was a review the agency manual and document review. The second round of interviews was to review the unified reporting documents developed by the State Mobility Manager. The GDOT interviews were conducted with Victor Opara-Amaechi, the DHS interviews were conducted with Leigh Ann Trainer, and the DHS interviews were conducted with James Peeples.

In the first round of interviews, the State Mobility Manager reviewed the reporting requirements table and sample documents developed for each agency. The State Mobility Manager identified cases where there was not a matching form or sample report for a reporting requirement that was identified in a manual. In these cases, either a sample form was provided or the agency indicated that there was no further need to collect the specific information.

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

The interviews provided further understanding of reporting requirements and helped lead to the unified forms concept. The agency interviews confirmed the value of developing reporting uniformity across agencies.

1.6 Unified Forms

Using the individual agency reporting requirements tables developed during in the initial document review, the State Mobility Manager was able to begin identifying common reporting requirements. Certain types of reports were common to at least two agencies. In some cases, forms used by at least two agencies were similar in content and form. In other cases, agencies were using different forms to capture similar information. This led to a list of reporting categories that would be good options for consolidation in five areas;

- Vehicle inspection reports;
- Vehicle inventory reports;
- Driver information and qualification reports;
- Daily trip and passenger information reports; and
- Vehicle operations and maintenance reports.

Using the sample reporting forms from the three agencies, the State Mobility Manager developed new blended forms for each of the five listed reporting categories that will unify individual agency reporting requirements into a single form. After vetting the forms internally, the State Mobility Manager met again with each agency to review the recommended forms.

In this second round of interviews, the State Mobility Manager asked for feedback on the viability of the unified form concept and for input on the forms themselves. In preparation for the interviews, the State Mobility Manager compiled tabbed binders with a section for each unified form. Behind each tab were the proposed form and the sample documents from the various agencies that fed into each new form.

The State Mobility Manager received significant comments from DHS and incorporated the input into a revised set of documents. In the subsequent interview with GDOT, State Mobility Manager received additional comments that were also incorporated. There were no specific comments on the forms from DCH during or after the second interview.

Figures 1.6.1 through 1.6.6 present the unified forms. Each form satisfies the combined reporting requirements of the three agencies. The form heading identifies the purpose of each. The forms are color coded to indicate the origin of the information; either from one agency or multiple agencies.

- Orange indicates information required by DCH;
- Gray indicates information required by DHS;
- Green indicates information required by GDOT; and
- Yellow indicates information required by more than one agency.

The individual agency reports and forms that are the backup to each of the recommended unified forms are attached as Appendix D.

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Figure 1.6.1: Vehicle inspections

Vehicle Inspections - Semi-Annual Inspection

Service Provider:							
Vehicle Make/Model				**Year**			
VIN #				**State Veh #**			
Tag #				**Property Decal #**			
Mileage				**Date:**			
Capacity				**Exempt**			

	OK / N/A	Adj	Repair		OK / N/A	Adj	Repair
Exterior				**Signs**			
Horn				State Seals			
2 Exterior Mirrors				Vehicle # (RF)			
Rearview Mirror				Vehicle # (RR)			
Windshield Wipers				"No Smoking, Eating, Drinking"			
Windows				"All Passengers Use Seat Belts"			
Headlights				**Information Packet**			
Turn Signals (Front)				Insurance/Accident Packet			
Brake Lights				Insurance Card			
Turn Signals (Rear)				Vehicle Log Book			
Parking Lights/Reverse Lights				**Wheelchair**			
Emergency Flashers				Raised Roof (clearance 56")			
Body Damage				Hydraulic/Elec. Lift			
Tires				Hand Rails			
Spare Tire				Controls Access Inside/Outside			
Jack				Shoulder Restraint/Lap Belt			
Interior Equip.				Reflector Tape			
Step/Running Board				4 Floor Straps			
Seat Belts				Emergency Manual Lift			
				Internal Equipment and Seals			
				Interlock System			
Seat Belt Cutter				Access Door			
First Aid Kit (10 Units)				Hydraulic Fluid Leaks			
Spill Kit				Electrical Controls			
3 Emer. Reflectors				Tie-Down Straps			
2 Seat Belt Extensions				Manual Controls			
Upholstery				**Stretcher Vehicle**			
Clean Interior				Gurney - 400 lbs. capacity			
Doors				Gurney Lowering and Raising			
Interior Lights				Gurney 3 Belt Minimum			
AC/Heat				Manufacturer Gurney Mounts			
Flooring				**Engine**			
Fire Extinguisher Insp. Date				Belts			
Fire Extinguisher (mounted)				Hoses			
Fire Exting. (1A:10B,2.5 lb)				Radiator			
Working Speedometer				Transmission			
Items stored or mounted				Fluids			
Daily Inspection Sheets				Brakes			
Two-way Radio Comm.				Steering			

Condition of Vehicle _____ Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

Status of Vehicle: _____ Pass _____ Pass with Qualifications; 10 days to comply _____ Fail

Monitor Signature _____ **Provider Signature** _____

	Legend
(orange)	DCH
(gray)	DHS
(blue)	GDOT
(yellow)	Two or More

DRAFT of 3.19.12

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Figure 1.6.2: Vehicle inventory Form

Vehicle Inventory and Certification

Name of Contractor: _____

The following vehicles have been inspected and meet with the vehicle requirements of this program. Documentation of Inspections is attached.

District/ Region	County	Location	Program/ Grant #	Vehicle #	Year	Make & Model	VIN #	Tag #	Vehicle Type	Passenger Capacity			Odometer Reading	Last Inspected
										STR	AMB	WC		

Name of Certifying Individual: _____

Title:

Signature

Date

Comments:_____
_____
_____
_____

DRAFT of 3.19.12

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Figure 1.6.3: Driver Information and Qualifications

Driver Qualification Checklist

Service Provider _____   Date _____

Name of Driver	Hire Date	Driver License #	Driver License Type	Expiration Date of Current Driver License	Date of Birth	Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) (Current year)	Criminal Background Check	Date of Transportation Provider Review	First Aid Expiration Date (3 yrs)	CPR (2 yrs)	Defensive Driver Training (3 yrs)	Consumer Service, Courtesy, and Sensitivity Awareness (PASS)	Drug Test/ Pre-Employment/ Random	Documentation of Accident(s) / # of Accidents (3 years)

Name of Certifying Individual: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(orange)	DCH
(gray)	DHS
(blue)	GDOT
(yellow)	Two or More

DRAFT of 3.19.12

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Figure 1.6.4: Daily Vehicle Log – Trip and Passenger Information (1 of 2)

Daily Vehicle Log
Passenger and Trip Information

Page 1

Service Provider			Month/Yr.			Vehicle #			License #		
			MILEAGE			TIME					
DATE	PASSENGER	DESTINATION	BEGIN	END	TOTAL MILES	BEGIN	END	HOURS	LEG A/B	√ If Late	√ If No Show

Department of Community Health
Department of Human Services
Georgia Department of Transportation
Two or More

Totals for Month
# of Service Days
Total Vehicle Miles

DRAFT of 3.19.12

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Figure 1.6.5:Daily Vehicle Log – Trip and Passenger Information (2 of 2)

Daily Vehicle Log
Passenger and Trip Information

Page 2

Service Provider

DATE	PASSENGER	RACE						TRIP TYPE									PURPOSE						FUNDING SOURCE	DRIVER INITIALS
		W	AA	H	AI	A/P	O	E	N-E	D	Amb.	WC	Stret	Para	Public	Vol	Medical	Employ.	Nutrition	Soc/Rec	Educat.	Shop/Pers.		

Department of Community Health
Department of Human Services
Georgia Department of Transportation
Two or More

DRAFT of 3.19.12

Figure 1.6.6: Daily Vehicle Log – Operation and Maintenance Log

Daily Vehicle Log
Operation and Maintenance Costs

Service Provider   Month/Yr.

Veh #   License #

DATE	MILEAGE	FUEL					OIL		MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS				DRIVER INITIALS
		GALS.	COST	Cost/ Gal.	√IF WEX	QTS.	COST	DESCRIPTION	COST	ARI Yes/No	PO# if ARI		

Totals for Month

Fuel Gals. _____   Fuel Cost _____   ▭ Department of Community Health

Oil Qt. _____   Oil Cost _____   ▭ Department of Human Services
                                                        ▭ Georgia Department of Transportation
Maint Cost _____   ▭ Two or More

DRAFT OF 3.19.12

Chapter 2 IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

From the reporting analysis, the State Mobility Manager found some inherent challenges to developing unified RHST reporting; the broad range of RHST programs and services, operational differences between agencies, and resistance to change. The State Mobility Manager also found that there are clear advantages to a unified reporting system that allows service providers to complete one set of forms accepted by all agencies. The recommended unified reporting forms accomplish the goal of improving operational efficiencies at the agency and service provider level which should help to reduce administrative costs.

DHS and GDOT are planning to implement the use of the unified forms. DCH has submitted the unified forms to their brokers for their use.

The State Mobility Manager recommends that the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCG) consider keeping this effort moving forward by focusing on additional potential unified reporting requirements to be considered as noted below:

- Accident reporting forms
- Complaint forms
- Reporting of administrative costs

Other items for future consideration that could also provide some efficiencies and cost savings:

- Standardized vehicle insurance requirements
- Shared vehicle purchasing
- A shared gas purchase programs
- A shared vehicle maintenance program

SECTION IV: EDUCATION AND OUTREACH MATERIALS

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Chapter 1 EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

1.1 Introduction

The State Mobility Manager was tasked with developing (1) education and outreach materials for Rural and Human Services Transportation (RHST) in Georgia, (2)a Roll-Out Plan for the materials' presentation and distribution, and (3) an outline for a website to promote RHST to the general public and serve as a repository for information and materials.

The State Mobility Manager identified four primary audiences for the RHST education and outreach materials:

1. <u>Politicians</u> who wish to make sure that public funding is well spent.
2. <u>Consumers</u> who rely on RHST.
3. <u>Transportation entities and agencies</u> that know and understand consumer transportation needs, and fund, purchase, or directly operate RHST services.

For the above three audiences, the intent of the materials is to illustrate:

- The need for mobility among those who rely on RHST.
- How those needs are currently being accommodated by RHST.
- The vast number of consumers who currently take advantage of these resources and the differences these services make in their lives.
- The effectiveness with which the coordination of rural public transportation and human service transportation can result in more service and more mobility by way of cost-sharing, economies of scale, improved efficiencies, and leveraging of additional federal funding.
- That more service is needed to help address the existing unmet needs and to keep up with growing demand.
- That more mobility not only leads to greater independence, but also avoids the substantial medical and human service costs associated when seniors are not able to age in place.
- That more mobility results in greater economic development.

The primary goal is to present to this audience a compelling reason for the support of and continued - if not expanded - investment in RHST funding at the **_state_** level.

4. <u>Local Counties and Municipalities</u> who are currently investing or are thinking about investing in RHST. The education and outreach materials targeted at this audience stem from a truism that local rural public transportation or coordinated RHST services are not sustainable without local investment (ownership). Thus, the intention is to present a compelling reason for continued, expanded, or new funding of RHST at the **_local_** level. As such, these materials include the same messages as pertain to the above audiences but also focus on the advantages of coordination in terms of maximizing local investment.

In the end, the goal for this audience is to provide decision-makers and stakeholders at all levels with the most up to date information and educate for the support of regional and statewide RHST coordination.

With this in mind, Task 5 includes/discusses the following deliverables:

- Development of Education and Outreach Brochures
- Development of Regional Educational Presentations

- GDOT RHST Website
- Roll-Out Plan for Educational Materials

The development of these materials has corresponded to the following timeline and milestones:

- Draft Educational Materials and Presentation: October 2011
- Final Educational Materials and Presentations: January 2012
- Website Launch: January2012
- Regional Mobility Manager Educational Outreach Training: February – March 2012

1.2 Educational and Outreach Brochures

The State Mobility Manager developed modular educational/outreach brochures as tools for Statewide and Regional Mobility Managers and the Regional Commissions to encourage continued, expanded, and new funding of rural public transportation and coordinated RHST. The State Mobility Manager worked with the State Technical Coordinating Group (TCG) and Regional Mobility Managers/Regional Commission staff to develop and finalize the educational materials to reflect the existing conditions, needs, and strategies for coordination of RHST within each of the 12 Department of Human Services (DHS) regions.

The modules consist of the following:

1. *The Statewide Brochure* provides information and benefits of RHST coordination. Within this brochure are detailed benefits, needs and opportunities for RHST nationally and in Georgia. The statewide brochure is designed to have mass appeal, and can be distributed to state, regional, and local stakeholders, and be featured on -- and made available from -- the State Mobility Management website (see Task 5.3). The brochure is designed as stand-alone piece that "speaks for itself."
2. *The Regional Insert* provides information and benefits of specific regional RHST coordination for nine Georgia regions and the detailed needs and opportunities for RHST for each specific region. The target audiences for these inserts are local counties and municipalities. It is recommended that these be made available on a more private side of the website -- accessible by Regional Mobility Managers and Regional Commission staff, for example (see Task 5.3).

Between now and the end of the contract, the State Mobility Manager will present and distribute these materials to state and regional stakeholders in concert with the Roll-Out Plan in Task 5.4 below. Beyond the end of the contract, the regional Mobility Managers and local staff will continue the education and outreach process through dissemination of materials and presentations to local officials and stakeholders.

1.3 Educational and Outreach Presentations

The State Mobility Manager also developed two PowerPoint presentations to accompany the brochure and inserts. The first presentation trains Regional Mobility Managers and Regional Commission members on the how to make the "pitch" for local investment in RHST and how the brochure and inserts support the "pitch." The second presentation is meant to be used by the Regional Members or Regional Commission staff -- or the State Mobility Manager through the end of the contract -- in the course of making the "pitch" to stakeholders and investors.

Two different presentations were created:

- <u>Presentation #1 - Audience = Mobility Managers:</u> The purpose of this presentation is to help train the Mobility Managers on how to effectively use the brochure and insert. This presentation explains, in detail, the design

strategy, the overall messages, and the Coastal Georgia example. The State Mobility Manager will present this presentation to Regional Mobility Managers and staff at the Regional Commissions at the March 6, 2012 training workshop.

- Presentation #2 - Audience = Local Municipal Investors: This presentation is a tool to be used by the State Mobility Manager or the Regional Mobility Managers / Regional Commission staff to encourage local municipalities to continue, to expand, or to newly invest in funding rural public transportation, if not multi-county, regional coordinated RHST services. The State Mobility Manager and Regional Mobility Managers will be able to adapt this presentation to fit the needs of region-specific audiences. It can also be used to educate state-level decision-makers on best practices and coordination efforts in order to leverage additional funding as well as to promote support for the RHST coordination efforts, in general.

1.4 RHST Website

The State Mobility Manager coordinated with GDOT and GDC/GRTA to develop and implement an RHST webpage through the GDOT website. This website presents a general overview of RHST efforts across the state, and provides educational resources for the public. The publicly-geared Educational Materials, including the Statewide Brochure and Presentation #2, will be available on the website for public viewing and download.

The website will also offer a repository of information and materials available to regional Mobility Managers and Regional Commission staffs (and other stakeholders as determined) through a password-protected area in the website. It is envisioned that this area will include materials such as the brochure inserts, Presentation #1, templates for Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and bylaws as well as actual RCC MOUs and Bylaws as enacted, technical RCC Work Plans, etc.

The website was launched in January 2012 and is available at http://www.dot.ga.gov/rhst.

1.5 Roll out Plan for Educational Materials

The State Mobility Manager will coordinate the distribution of the educational materials to ensure they reach interested parties and stakeholders for every region.

The roll out plan will differ depending on whether the region has a Mobility Manager or if the State Mobility Manager will be acting as the Mobility Manager.

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Phase II Technical Memorandum
April 2012

Table 1.1: Education Roll-Out Plan

January 2012 – March 2012	
Regions with Mobility Managers	**Regions without Mobility Managers**
February 14 – TCG Meeting • Distribute brochures	February • Advertise upcoming Webinar to RCs
Website Launch –January2012	
March 6 - Mobility Manager Workshop • Distribute brochures • Presentation #1 and training on how to use the brochures • Distribute Presentation #2 • Train Mobility Managers and staff on how to use the website	March • General webinar to all RCs on March 14 • Focused region-specific webinar for RCs that request it • Provide Presentation #2 to RC administrators • Distribute information about the website • Training on accessing materials online
Ongoing • Mail/email brochures as needed • Training on accessing materials online	Ongoing • Mail/email brochures as needed • Training on accessing materials online

1.6 Next Steps

The ongoing steps in the Educational Materials and Outreach Task include determining if the program is successful in its implementation. The long term goal of coordination is to create greater efficiencies and provide the same or increased level of service for RHST in Georgia. Long term indications of success include new rural transit assistant program (5311) grantees, increased coordination of rural transportation and human services transportation, and regional coordination of county transportation systems in regions that do not currently coordinate services.

Short-term quantifiable metrics to determine if the education and outreach efforts are making progress in the overall RHST coordination include the following:

1.6.1 Number of Materials Distributed

The TCG and state Mobility Manager will maintain records of the number of educational and outreach materials printed and distributed throughout the year. The State Mobility Manager will strive to distribute as many material items as needed to state and regional stakeholders and decision-makers. It is recommended that a baseline be established on a monthly basis to determine if the distribution of materials increases or decreases from month to month.

1.6.2 Number of Educational Presentations

Once the State Mobility Manager provides training on educating decision-makers and stakeholders, the number of educational workshops will be monitored on a regional basis. The information collected during the first year of the pilot projects will become the baseline for educational outreach. As more regions begin mobility management projects, the educational workshops are anticipated to increase, reflecting an increase in education and potentially additional leveraged RHST funding.

1.6.3 Number of Website "Hits"

Once the webpage goes live through the GDOT website, the state will be able to record and monitor the number of website hits they receive through the website. The program will be successful if the number of website hits increases from year to year.