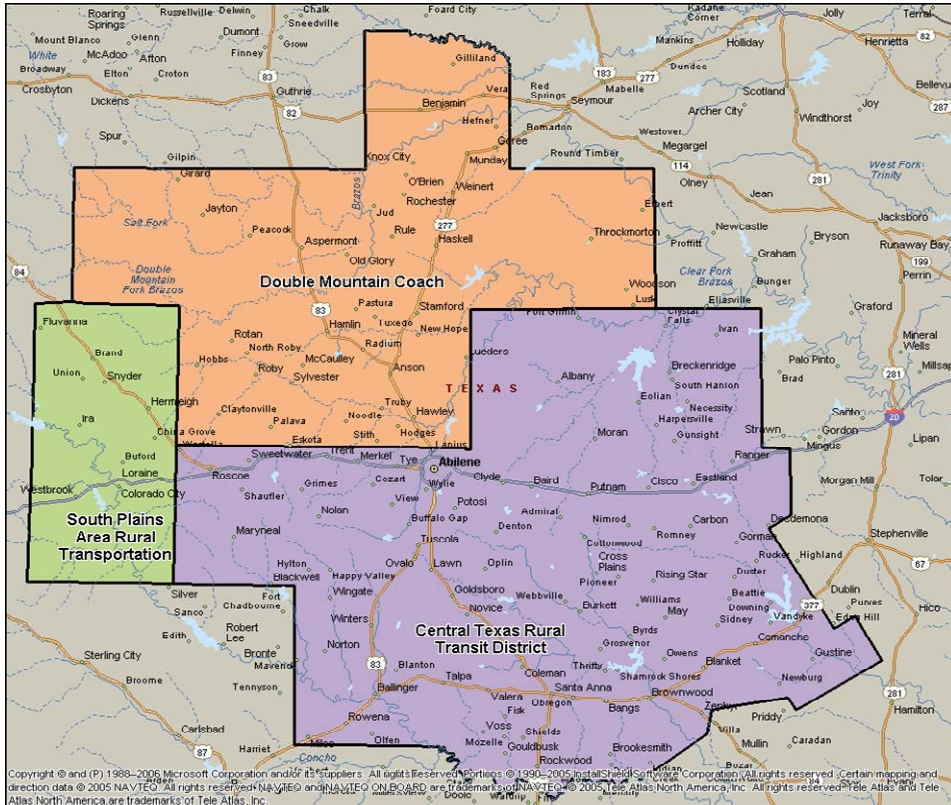


# WEST CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION FINAL REPORT



NOVEMBER 2006



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The 78<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, through passage of House Bill 3588, Article 13, and as incorporated in Chapter 460 of the Texas Transportation Code requires the development of a coordinated transit plan for the West Central Texas Region. Development of a coordinated transit plan for the West Central Texas Council of Governments (WCTCOG) has been conducted as a partnership between the WCTCOG Work Group and the A&R Consulting team, consisting of A&R Consulting and the Goodman Corporation.

The Coordinated Transit Plan incorporated work conducted in 2005 by the Central Texas Rural Transit District (CARR) and WCTCOG including a survey of transportation providers and stakeholders. Development of a regional inventory of transit providers, evaluation of the abilities and capabilities of existing transit providers, and community outreach through a series of public meetings were conducted in April and May of 2006.

West Central Texas is unique among the 24 Texas regions having four public transit providers, three rural and one urban. All of the rural providers are at least 50 miles away from the region's economic center, Abilene. Especially among the northern counties, the high percentage of population above 65 and high median age meant that transportation for older adults is and would remain a significant challenge.

Development of the initial report on the existing providers included evaluating the overall transit needs and conducting an extensive operating review of the existing providers (including human service and transit providers). The initial report also reviewed demographic and transit conditions of each of the 19 counties that comprise the West Central Texas Region.

What the initial report findings indicated were that existing coordination was the primary strategy employed by each of the rural transit agencies and a significant strategy for the small urban provider, Citylink. Coordination efforts and the coordination models were examined in significant detail. Fiscally, the largest rural provider in the region, CARR operates on the basis of multiple coordination contracts to match federal and state dollars since it receives no local or county government revenues.

During the development of the study, CARR was leading the transition to a regional Medicaid delivery system with it as prime contractor and the other regional public transit providers, Double Mountain Coach, CityLink

and SPARTAN as subcontractors. A successful transition in June and July 2006 produced greater coordination between the four regional transit providers including increased cohesion and cooperation among staff at all levels of each transit agency. Through providing Medicaid transportation successfully on a regional basis, the four transit providers have enhanced the opportunity for additional interagency coordination.

Another product of the study was to evaluate the level of transit need regionally and in each county in the West Central Texas Region. Evaluating the level of transit need was done through the use of two need indices:

- **Transit Need Index** – Through evaluation and scoring of five key demographic indicators that show an increased likelihood of individuals to need transit service. The average of Texas is considered the level of transit need similar to the state of Texas as a whole.

Most counties in West Central Texas showed a significantly higher level of transit need when compared with the state average. Fisher, Knox, Mitchell, and Stephens County scored the highest at 14 (on a scale of 5-15). Eleven other counties showed a higher transit need than Texas, and only two counties showed a demographic need on a par with the state of Texas (Callahan and Kent County) based on lower levels in several indicators. Overall, West Central Texas shows a higher level of transit need than the state as a whole based upon demographic measures (aging population, lower income levels). Only in the measure of availability of automobiles is West Central Texas transit needs significantly lower than Texas.

- **Transit Availability Index** – Examination of level and service provided to each county is based on existing service provided;

The results show that a substantial level of transit service is provided throughout the region, but with respect to rural service, only some needs are met. Brown County has the highest level of rural transit with can likely be ascribed to the regional center of Brownwood. The northern counties generally have the lowest level of transit availability.

The study was tasked with developing a list of barriers and obstacles which would be combined with other regions' barriers and obstacles for presentation to the Texas Transportation Commission prior to the 2007 Texas Legislative session. Through two workshops and steering committee meetings, the following barriers were identified:

**Key Barrier and Obstacle # 1** - Rapidly Aging Vehicle Fleet Limits the Ability of All of the West Central Texas Region Transit Agencies to Provide Reliable Service / Additional Service and Increasingly Undermines the Ability to Provide Existing Service.

- Age of vehicles creates additional vehicle road calls and reduces service reliability;
- Requirement to purchase alternative fuel vehicles and their reliability.
- Flexibility in revenue vehicle size fleet – options to purchase smaller vehicles limited.

**Key Barrier and Obstacle # 2** - Resources in West Central Texas Do Not Include Any Direct Local Funding from Any of the 19 Counties in the Region – service level constrained by relying on coordinated local funding only.

**Key Barrier and Obstacle # 3** - Lack of a Multimodal Facility in the Central City in the West Central Texas Region. A multimodal facility would enhance regional coordination.

**Key Barrier and Obstacle # 4** - Boundary Issues with Respect to the City of Abilene and Rural Taylor County causes service problems in that area.

Two public Workshops and meetings of the steering group resulted in the development of 10 specific findings and 11 recommendations with respect to West Central Texas, which are listed below:

### ***FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS***

***Finding # 1*** - The West Central Texas Region Has a "Best Practice" Approach with Respect to Medical Transportation Program. The Medical Transportation Program is the outstanding example of successful recent regional coordination in West Central Texas.

***Recommendation # 1*** - Coordinated Transportation Successfully Achieved Program Should Be Used to Leverage Additional Efforts at Coordination.

***Finding # 2*** - Despite Geographically Disperse Agencies Additional Coordination Occurs in West Central Texas.

***Recommendation # 2*** - While Regional Consolidation of the Rural Transit Providers and/or the Urban Provider Are Not Practical, Additional Institutional Coordination Should Occur.

**Finding # 3** - Employment Transportation Especially in Rural Areas Is Inadequate

**Recommendation # 3** - Pilot Projects to Enhance Transportation to Employment Should Be Developed Utilizing JARC Funding

**Finding # 4:** Lack of A Multi-Modal Terminal in Downtown Abilene negatively impacts coordination efforts.

**Recommendation # 4:** Develop a Multi-Modal Terminal for Downtown Abilene.

**Finding # 5** - Transit Agencies Use Different Scheduling and Dispatch Software.

**Recommendation # 5** - Develop a Pilot Program Whereby CARR and CityLink will have Compatible Software (Trapeze Pass).

**Finding # 6** - The Boundary Issue with Respect to Abilene is a significant issue.

**Recommendation # 6** - Develop an Inter-Local Agreement between CARR and CityLink to Address Boundary Issues.

**Finding #7** - None of the 19 Counties in West Central Texas Provide Any Direct Local Funding for Rural Transportation.

**Recommendation # 7** - Additional Local Revenue Sources Need to Be Utilized to Expand Rural Transportation.

**Finding # 8** - CityLink in Abilene Can Enhance Its Fixed Route Service, and Enhance the Overall Level of Regional Transportation.

**Recommendation # 8** - CityLink Should Conduct a Fixed Route Bus Study Designed to Enhance System Productivity and Increase Ridership.

**Finding # 9** - Fares Are Different on Different Services

**Recommendation # 9** - Develop a Fare Media That Can Be Utilized on All Four Transit Systems.

**Finding # 10** - Rapidly Aging Vehicle Fleet Limits the Ability of All of the West Central Texas Region Transit Agencies to Provide Existing or Future Service in a Reliable Manner.

**Recommendation # 10** - Increase the State Earmark Allotment for Vehicles for the rural transit agencies in West Central Texas.

**Recommendation # 11** - Allow Greater Flexibility in Meeting the Goal of Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

The final Regional Transit Coordination report was to be submitted to TXDOT no later than December 1, 2006. Additional funding support was expected to be recommended by the Texas Transit Coordination to assist the region and providers in implementing the report recommendations.

# **SECTION 1 STUDY BACKGROUND**



## **CHAPTER 1**

### **REGIONAL COORDINATION**

The 78<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, through passage of House Bill 3588, Article 13, and as incorporated in Chapter 460 of the Texas Transportation Code requires the development of a coordinated transit plan for the West Central Texas Region. Development of a coordinated transit plan for the West Central Texas Council of Governments (WCTCOG) is being conducted as a partnership between the WCTCOG Work Group and the A&R Consulting team, consisting of A&R Consulting and the Goodman Corporation.

WCTCOG served as the co-lead agency for this project along with the Central Texas Rural Transit District (CTRTD) or CARR (City and Rural Rides), for the development of a coordinated transportation plan for the West Central Texas region. The 78<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, in its 2003 regular session, passed House Bill 3588, Article 13, which created distinct opportunities, requirements and incentives with respect to the coordination of public transit throughout the state of Texas. Public transportation provider services was defined as, "... any provider receiving public funds (federal/state/local) providing or offering transportation services to clients."

Funding for transportation services has traditionally flowed through many state agencies with funds to traditional public transit providers: including small urban providers (Section 5307), designated rural recipients (Section 5311), and Elderly/Disabled (Section 5310). Providers who were funded from other sources (Medicaid, non-transit federal programs, state human service programs, or local funding) were not considered public transit per se. House Bill 3588 has changed the way that transit is defined in the state of Texas and that is important. The broader definition results in the inclusion of a wider range of programs that have often operated independently or in a manner in which minimal coordination took place.

Another important aspect of House Bill 3588 was the reorganization of the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) Public Transportation Division consistent with the changing definition of public transportation. The first major change was the moving of the Medical Transportation Program (Medicaid) into the Public Transportation Division in 2005.

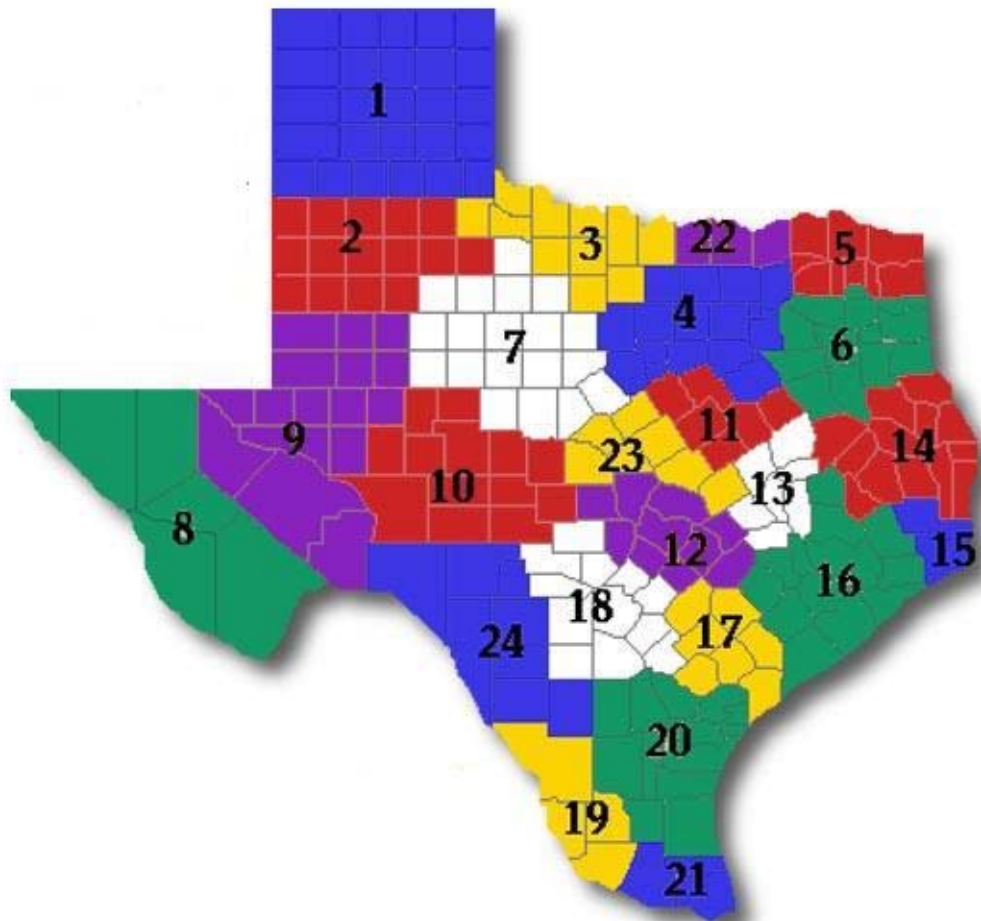
In October 2005, the statewide Medicaid transportation procurement was released and vendors were required to bid on one of 24 designated regions around the state. In the past, vendors could bid on one or more



counties throughout the state resulting in a large number of vendors interacting with the state. One of the goals of the procurement effort was to effect greater coordination at the regional level by having providers coordinate a regional bid. Such was the case in West Central Texas where CARR served as the lead agency/prime contractor for a regional bid involving CityLink (Abilene), Double Mountain Coach and SPARTAN. All of the regions providers joined together to coordinate a single bid for West Central Texas which was successful.

Starting in 2005, TXDOT Public Transportation Division required each of 24 Regions to develop Regional Coordinated Transportation Plan. The regions are shown on **Map 1-1**. West Central Texas is *Region 7*. The regional boundaries are consistent with WCTCOG regional boundaries.

**COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS REGIONS**  
**MAP 1-1**



## **REGIONAL COORDINATION PROCESS**

Regional coordination efforts began in West Central Texas in 2005. Among the efforts were the preparation, distribution and compilation of a survey in the summer and fall of 2005, identifying many of the region's transit providers and developing valuable information regarding their operation. Sixteen providers and stakeholders responded to the survey.

West Central Texas presented its intended approach in October 2005 at the TXDOT Coordination Summit in Austin. A joint effort with an external consultant was to be its means of moving the coordination planning process forward to develop a plan and meet the TXDOT reporting requirements. The A&R Consulting Team comprised to A&R Consulting and the Goodman Corporation was selected to assist with the Regional Transportation Coordination Plan.

A kickoff meeting was held on Wednesday April 12, 2006 where the project goals of the Coordination project were agreed upon. The following is a list of the Coordination Project goals:

**Goal # 1** – Comply with Reporting Requirements of the Texas Department of Transportation in accordance with HB 3588

**Goal # 2** – Compare with Federal Coordination Guidelines in a manner that will assure WCTCOG, CARR and agencies within the region are eligible for Section 5310, 5316 and 5317 Funding per March 15, 2006 Federal Register

**Goal # 3** – Develop an inclusive Coordination Plan that will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of transit service throughout the WCTCOG Region

**Goal # 4** - Improve the delivery of transportation services through enhanced coordination;

**Goal # 5** - Work through coordination to generate efficiencies in operation that can lead to increased levels of service;

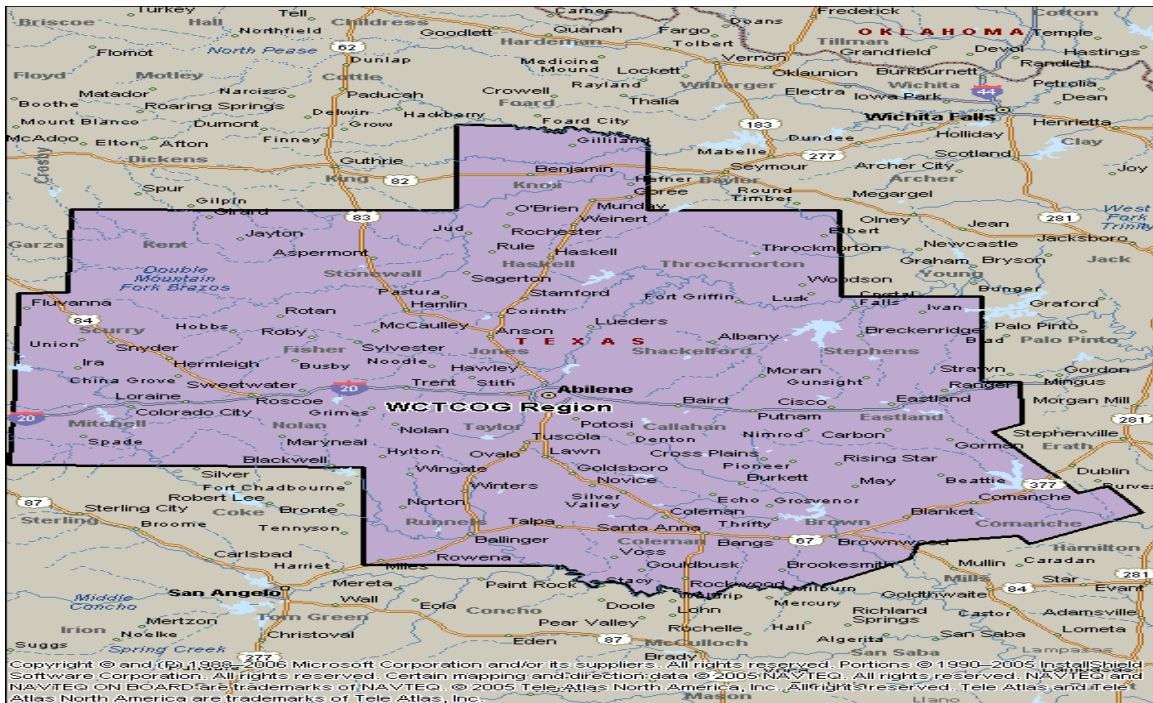
**Goal # 6** – Provide improved service quality and service information in order to enhance customer service/satisfaction;

**Goal # 7** - Encourage cooperation and coordination in a manner that enhance service delivery and the overcoming of regulatory and logistical obstacles.

## CHAPTER 2 GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF WCTCOG COUNTIES

The West Central Council of Governments comprises a nineteen county region extending more than 17,000 square miles or easily exceeding the total area of the states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut combined. Differences in demographics, travel patterns, transportation needs, and economic strengths exist in each county. Agriculture and farming is a significant economic factor in every county including Taylor County. Many of the counties (especially in the northern areas) are declining in population and aging. Most, but not all counties have transportation services that provide service to Abilene. Brownwood is an important destination in the southeast part of the region. Several cities outside of the region including Lubbock, Big Spring, Stephenville and San Angelo also serve as significant destinations for existing users of transit services.

MAP 2 -1  
WCTCOG REGION



Several of the key demographics with respect to potential demand for public transit services West Central Texas and as shown in **Table 2-1**:

**Population Growth** - West Central Texas grew less than 1% (only 0.24%) between 1990 and 2000. Texas grew by 22.8% during the 1990's. Ten of the nineteen counties lost population including six (Fisher, Haskell, Kent, Knox, Scurry and Stonewall) experienced population declines of between 10 and 15%. Only Mitchell (21.0%) and Jones (26%) Counties experienced double digit growth in the 1990's. Five of the six counties with more than 10% population loss are in the northern part of the region (Double Mountain Coach service area)

**Population Density** - West Central Texas is a rural region that averages less than one quarter of the density of the state of Texas. Only Taylor County has a population density exceeding 100 persons per square mile. Six counties have 5.0 or less persons per square mile (Kent, Knox, Stonewall, Throckmorton, Fisher and Shackelford).

**Persons over 65** - West Central Texas has a very large senior population. Less than 10% of Texas is over 65 but 16.66% of West Central Texas is over 65. Nine counties have more than 20% of their population over 65 and two counties (Kent and Haskell) have more than 25% of their population 65 or older.

**Percent Households Without a Car** - Rural areas generally have lower percentages than urban areas of households without a car. Given the long distances with often older vehicles, and the high price of gas influences the ability persons with a car to travel to meet their needs is a growing concern. Fewer households do not have a car than the state average in West Central Texas. Only three counties (Mitchell, Nolan and Knox) have a higher percentage of persons without a car than the state average.

**Per Capita Income** - Income per capita is on average much lower in West Central Texas. All nineteen counties were lower than the state per capita average of \$19,617. Thirteen were at least 20% lower than the state average and three (Runnels, Jones and Knox) were more than 30% lower than the state per capita average.

**Households Below \$15,000** - West Central Texas has a larger percentage of its population with income below \$15,000. While 17% of Texas households had an income below \$15,000, ten counties in West Central Texas (Fisher, Stonewall, Haskell, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Runnels, Mitchell, and Knox) had more than 25% of their households with income below \$15,000.

**Table 2-1** shows the demographic indicators discussed above with respect to all 19 counties, individually, collectively and compared with state wide demographics.

**TABLE 2 - 1  
WEST CENTRAL TEXAS DEMOGRAPHICS  
BY COUNTY**

County	Population	Population Growth 1990-2000	Population Density Persons per Square Miles	Persons over 65	Percent households without a car	Percent Persons 21-65 with a disability	Per Capita Income	Households below \$15,000
Kent	859	-15.0%	0.9	25.50%	1.70%	16.30%	\$17,626	18.80%
Callahan	12,905	8.8%	14.4	17.00%	4.30%	20.90%	\$15,204	22.00%
Throckmorton	850	-1.6%	2.0	20.50%	4.60%	17.70%	\$17,719	22.20%
Shackelford	3,302	0.0%	3.6	18.20%	4.90%	18.40%	\$16,341	22.90%
Fisher	4,344	-10.3%	4.8	22.70%	5.40%	24.30%	\$15,120	26.70%
Stonewall	1,693	-15.9%	1.8	24.00%	5.50%	21.20%	\$16,094	27.40%
Brown	37,964	9.6%	40.2	16.40%	5.70%	23.70%	\$15,624	24.80%
Jones	20,785	26.0%	22.3	14.00%	5.90%	22.30%	\$13,656	24.60%
Haskell	6,093	-10.7%	6.7	25.50%	6.20%	22.30%	\$14,918	30.50%
Taylor	126,555	5.8%	138.2	12.40%	6.20%	19.50%	\$17,178	19.10%
Scurry	16,361	-12.2%	18.1	15.40%	6.40%	20.00%	\$15,871	22.10%
Coleman	9,235	-4.9%	7.3	23.00%	6.60%	21.60%	\$14,911	29.60%
Comanche	14,026	4.8%	15.0	20.30%	6.90%	28.00%	\$14,677	26.70%
Eastland	18,297	-1.0%	19.8	20.90%	7.00%	26.30%	\$14,870	29.40%
Runnels	11,495	1.1%	10.9	19.50%	7.00%	22.60%	\$13,577	28.60%
Stephens	9,674	7.4%	10.8	17.70%	7.30%	25.90%	\$15,475	22.40%
Nolan	15,802	-4.1%	17.3	16.40%	8.20%	23.50%	\$14,077	29.80%
Mitchell	9,698	21.0%	10.7	15.10%	9.00%	23.40%	\$14,043	27.80%
Knox	4,253	-12.1%	5.0	22.70%	9.20%	17.10%	\$13,443	28.80%
TOTAL WCT	325,191	0.24%	18.3	16.66%	6.19%	19.96%	\$13,761	23.00%
TEXAS	20,851,820	22.8%	79.6	9.90%	7.40%	19.90%	\$19,617	17.00%

Examining the population demographics, the aging rural population with substantial levels of stagnant or low incomes indicates significant needs for transit services in West Central Texas.

## WORK TRIP PATTERNS

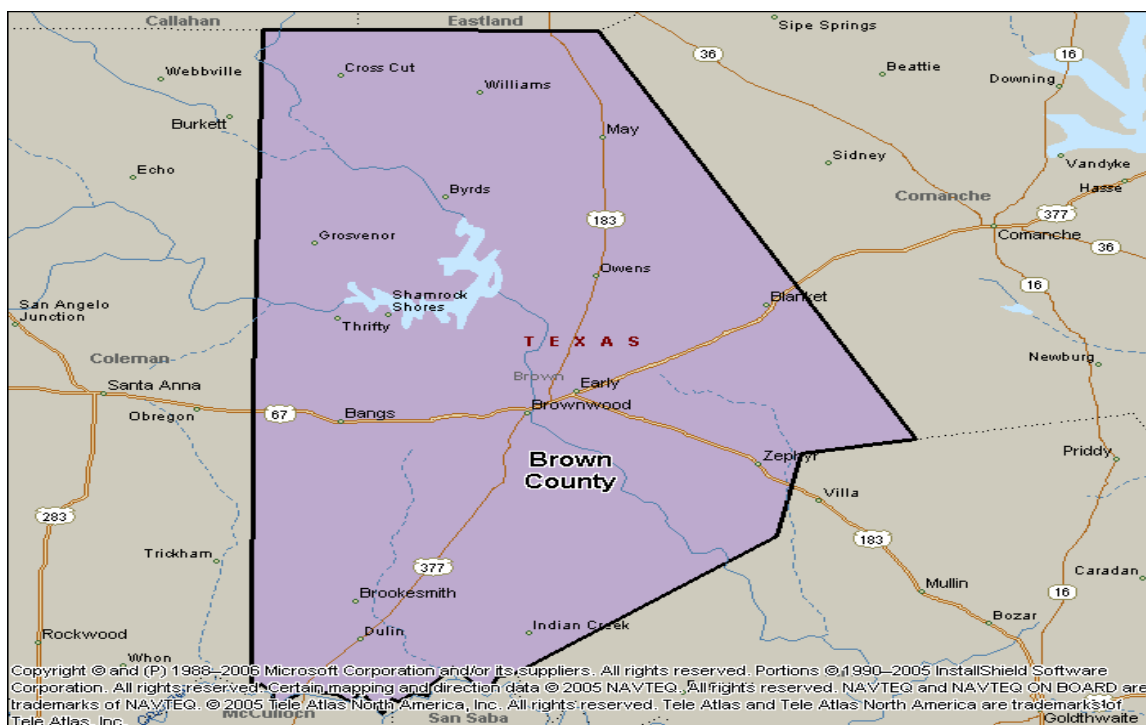
The decennial US Census data provides work travel patterns among all United States counties. Given that more 90% of the population of the Taylor County is in the City of Abilene, it is reasonable to assume that most travel into Taylor County for work is for jobs in the City of Abilene. More than 85% of the work trips with destinations in Taylor County originate in Taylor County. More than 78% of the remaining trips into Taylor County originate from either Callahan or Jones County. In fact the number one destination of work trips originating from Callahan County is Taylor County. **Table 2-2** shows the number of trips from West Central Counties into Taylor County.

**TABLE 2-2  
 WORK TRIPS TO TAYLOR COUNTY**

County	Population	Destination Taylor County	% Outside Taylor in Region
Brown	37,964	54	0.79%
Callahan	12,905	2,813	41.37%
Coleman	9,235	125	1.84%
Comanche	14,026	28	0.41%
Eastland	18,297	195	2.87%
Fisher	4,344	67	0.99%
Haskell	6,093	109	1.60%
Jones	20,785	2,547	37.46%
Kent	859	4	0.06%
Knox	4,253	7	0.10%
Mitchell	9,698	10	0.15%
Nolan	15,802	285	4.19%
Runnels	11,495	173	2.54%
Scurry	16,361	29	0.43%
Shackelford	3,302	257	3.78%
Stephens	9,674	72	1.06%
Stonewall	1,693	18	0.26%
Taylor	126,555	54,925	N/A
Throckmorton	1,850	6	0.09%
<b>TOTAL WCT</b>	<b>325,191</b>	<b>61,724</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Source US 2000 Census*

## MAP 2-2 BROWN COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Brown County is located at the southern edge of the West Central Texas COG region. Brown County is the second largest county in the WCTCOG region and had a population of 37,674 in 2000; Brownwood is the county seat (population 18,813) and, by far, the largest community in the county. Early, immediately adjacent to Brownwood, is the second largest community in Brown County with a population of 2,588. Lake Brownwood, population 1,694 and Bangs, population 1,620, are the only other communities in Brown County with a population exceeding 1,000. Population density for Brown County is 39.9 persons per square mile, the second highest density in the West Central.

The county economy is based on manufacturing (3M) agriculture and education and health facilities. Brown County population has been steadily growing since 1940 in every decade. Including in the trend is 9.6% increase in population between 1990 and 2000. Growth has continued; in 2000, the Brown County population was 37,674 and the 2004 US census estimate showed a modest increase to 38,183 (1.4%). Brown County has a population younger than most of its WCTCOG neighbors, but it is older than the rest of Texas and the county:

- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average at 16.4% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).

- Brown County median age is higher than the state median, but lower than the national average at 33.4 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3). Brown County has the youngest median age in the WCTCOG region.

Income levels are below the state average. Brown County has nearly one quarter (24.8%) of households with incomes below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$15,624, approximately 15% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

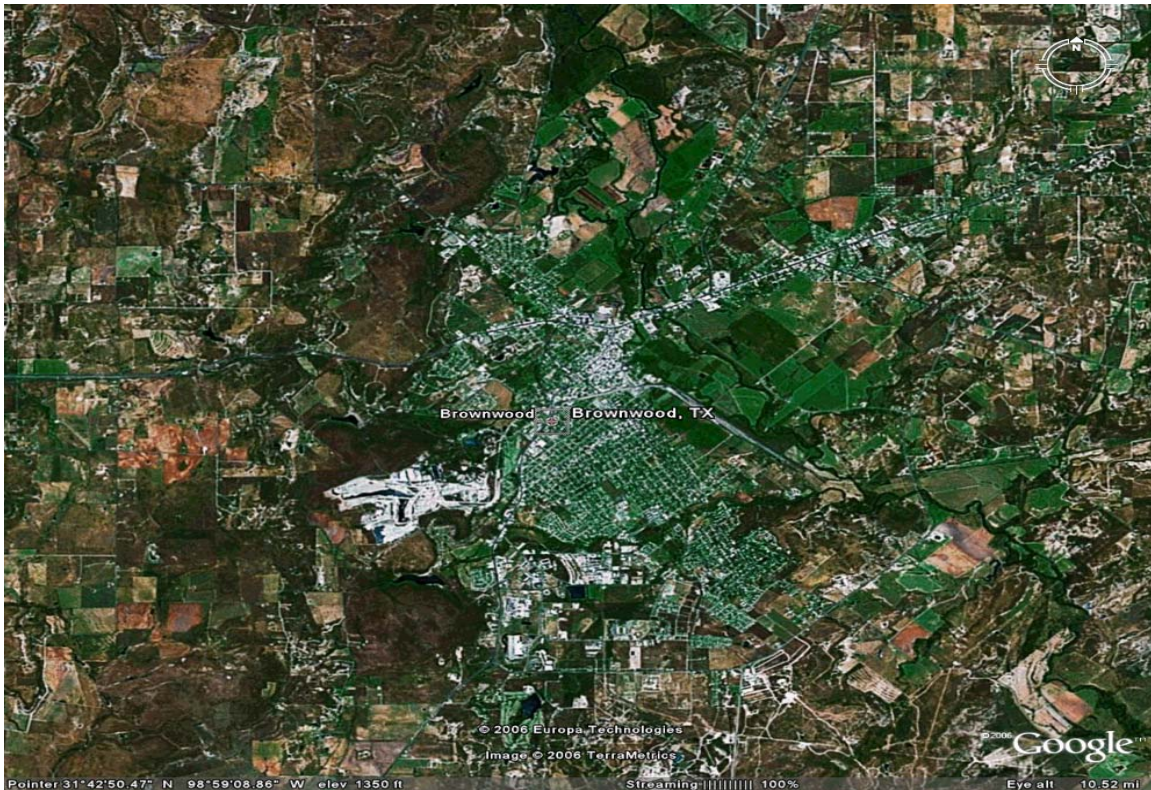
Brown County is relatively distant from Abilene, but Brownwood is a significant regional center. Its largest city, Brownwood, is 78 miles from Abilene. The percentage of households in Brown County without a car is 5.7%. Nearly all work trips (95) originating from Brown County have Brown County destinations. No single county provides even 1% of all work trips into Brown County. Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised less than 0.4% of work trips.

CARR provides a significant level of demand response service within Brown County to Brownwood. Service is provided to other communities in Brown County such as Bangs, May, Rising Star and Zephyr. No service is provided to Abilene. No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Limited service is available to Abilene. Service to these cities is also contingent upon resource availability. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$1.00). Intra-county fares range from \$1.00 to \$5.00 depending upon distance. Trip purposes may include:

- Shopping trips to Brownwood;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.



## CITY OF BROWNWOOD/EARLY PHOTOGRAPH 2-1

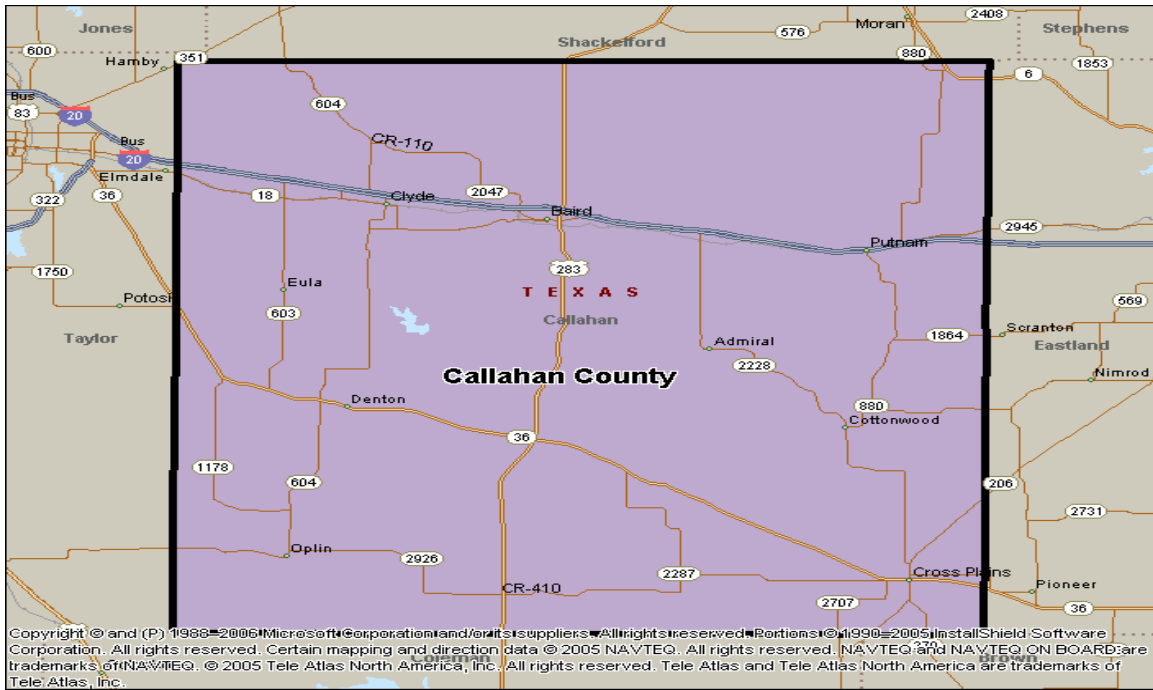


*(Aerial photograph from Google Earth)*

The Cities of Brownwood and Early combined comprise a population exceeding 21,000. Substantial manufacturing, educational and medical resources result in Brownwood being a substantial regional center within the eastern part of the WCTCOG region. Comanche, Eastland, and Coleman residents use Brownwood extensively as do CARR riders.

Two studies were conducted by the KFH Group of Bethesda, Maryland on the feasibility of providing fixed route service in the Brown/Early area. Both studies in 1996 and 1999 considered a modest two route system. Owing to the need for extensive local financial support for the fixed route system, it has not been implemented.

## MAP 2 - 3 CALLAHAN COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Callahan County is located in the east central area of the West Central Texas COG region. Callahan County had a population of 12,905 in 2000; Baird is the county seat (population 1,623) and is the second largest community in the county. Clyde, west of Baird on IH 20 is the largest community in the county with 3,345 residents. Cross Plains in the southeast corner of the county have 1,068 residents. Population density for Callahan County is 14.4 persons per square mile.

The county economy is based on a mixture of manufacturing, transportation, agriculture, tourism and mineral extraction. Callahan County population has increased steadily since 1950. In 2000, the Callahan County population was 12,905 and the 2004 US census estimate showed an increase to 13,314 (3.2%). Callahan County has a younger population than many of its WCTCOG neighbors, but it is still older than the rest of Texas and the county.

- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average at 17.0% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Callahan County median age is higher than the state and the national average at 39.8 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are below the state average. Callahan County has more than one fifth (22.0%) of households with incomes below \$15,000 versus

the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$15,204, approximately 20% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

Callahan County is close to Abilene and commuting into Abilene from Callahan County is very significant. Its largest city, Clyde, is only 16 miles from Abilene and Baird is only 21 miles distant. The percentage of households in Callahan County without a car is relatively low at 4.3%, second lowest in the WCTCOG region. Less than two fifths of all work trips (39%) originating from Callahan County have Callahan County destination. Taylor County (Abilene) comprises the majority of work trips (51%), meaning that Callahan County is substantially a commuter county with respect to work trips to Abilene. Only Jones County 2.6% comprises more than 2% of all work trips besides Taylor and Callahan Counties.

CARR provides demand response service within Callahan County and to Abilene, Monday through Friday with 24 hour advance notice. Two trips are scheduled daily from Callahan to Abilene with arrivals in Abilene at 9:30AM and 2:00 PM. Service from Cross Plains and Rising Star to Abilene occurs every Tuesday and Thursday with arrival in Abilene scheduled at 10:00 AM. Service is provided from Cross Plains to Brownwood with arrival in Brownwood at 10:30AM every Tuesday and Thursday. Human service transportation is provided for MHMR clients of the Betty Hardwick clinic.

Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$1.00.). Travel from Clyde to Abilene is \$3.00 each way; Baird to Abilene is \$4.00 and Cross Plains to Abilene is \$9.00.

- Shopping trips to Abilene and Brownwood;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## MAP 2 - 4 COLEMAN COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Coleman County is located at the southern edge of the West Central Texas COG region. Coleman County had a population of 9,235 in 2000; Coleman is the county seat (population 5,868) and is the largest community in the county. Santa Anna, population 1,081 is the only other community over 1,000 in Coleman County. Population density for Coleman County is 7.3 persons per square mile. The county economy is based on a mixture of transportation, tourism, agriculture and mineral extraction. Coleman County population has declined steadily since its peak of 23,669 in 1930. In 2000, the Coleman County population was 9,235 and the 2004 US census estimate showed a decline to 8,738 (-5.4%). Indicative of a declining and aging population is two illustrative measures from the 2000 Census:

- Over 65 population is much higher than the state and national average at 23.0% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Coleman County median age is much higher than the state and the national average at 43.0 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are below the state average. Coleman County has more than one quarter (29.4%) of households with incomes below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$14,911,

approximately 20% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

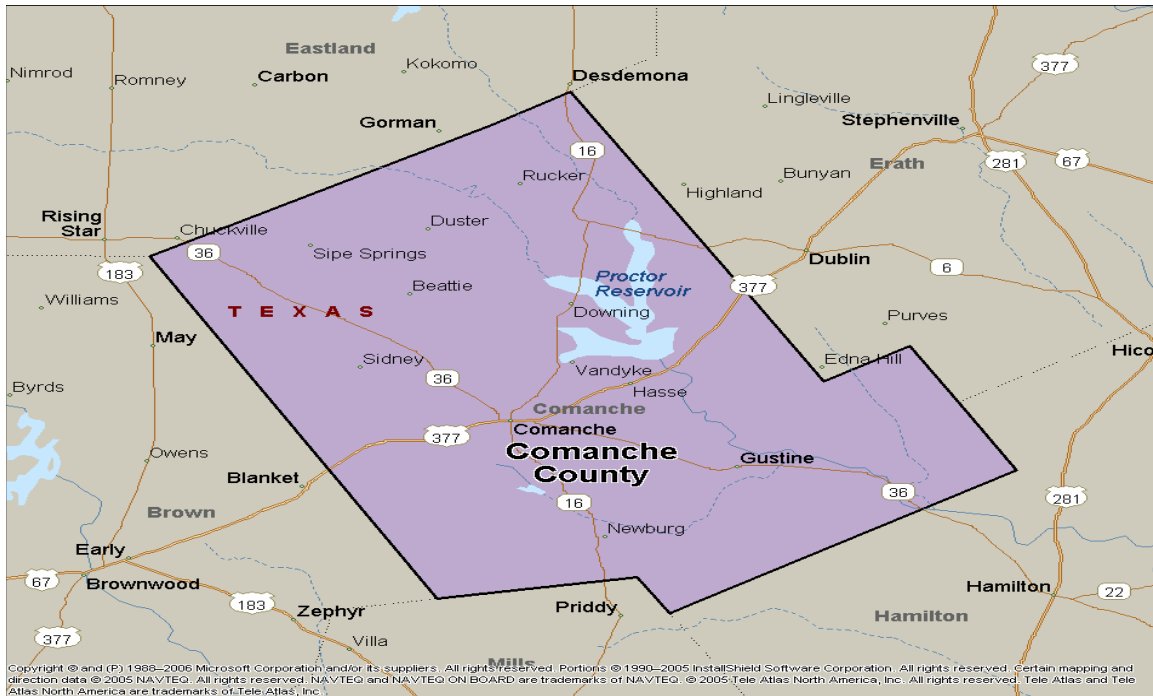
Coleman County is fairly distant from any metropolitan area. Its largest city, Coleman, is 58 miles from Abilene. Coleman is only 30 miles from Brownwood, the second largest city in the WCTCOG region. The percentage of households in Coleman County without a car is 6.6%. Nearly four fifths of all work trips (78%) originating from Coleman County have Coleman County destination with the work trips to Brown County comprising approximately half of all inter-county work trips (11%). Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised approximately 3.6% of work trips.

The administrative and operation facility of CARR are located in Coleman. CARR provides demand response service within Coleman County and to Abilene and Brownwood, Monday through Friday with 24 hour advance notice. One daily trip is scheduled from Coleman to Abilene with an arrival in Abilene at 10:00 AM. Service to Brownwood is more frequent. One trip arrives in Brownwood at 9:00 AM and a second trip arrives in Brownwood at Noon on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 1:00 PM on Tuesday and Thursday.

No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$1.00.). Travel from Coleman to Abilene is \$11.00 each way. Travel from Coleman to Brownwood is \$7.00 each way.

- Shopping trips to Abilene and Brownwood;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## MAP 2 - 5 COMANCHE COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Comanche County is located at the southeastern edge of the West Central Texas COG region. Comanche County had a population of 14,026 in 2000; Comanche is the county seat (population 4,482) and, by far, the largest community in the county. De Leon is the second largest city in Comanche County with a population of 2,433. Population density for Comanche County is 15.0 persons per square mile. The county economy is based on a mixture of transportation, agriculture and mineral extraction. Comanche County population has declined since its peak of 25,748 in 1920. Between 1960 and 2000 the population has increased including a 4.8% increase between 1990 and 2000. However, in 2000, the Comanche County population was 14,026 and the 2004 US census estimate showed a modest decline to 13,616 (-2.6%). Comanche County has a younger population than many of its WCTCOG neighbors but it is still older than the rest of Texas and the county.

- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average at 20.3% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Comanche County median age is higher than the state and the national average at 40.3 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are below the state average. Comanche County has more than one quarter (26.7%) of households with incomes below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$14,677, approximately 20% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

Comanche County is relatively distant from metropolitan area. Its largest city, Comanche, is 84 miles from Abilene. Comanche is only 26 miles from Brownwood the second largest city in the region and 34 miles from Stephenville (population 15,000) in adjacent Erath County. The percentage of households in Comanche County without a car is 6.9%. Nearly three quarters of all work trips (72%) originating from Comanche County have a Comanche County destination. Erath County has the most inter-county trips with 11%, followed by Brown County with 7%. Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprise less than 0.5% of work trips from Comanche County.

CARR provides demand response service within Comanche County and to Brownwood and Stephenville (in Erath County). No service is provided to Abilene. Service from Comanche County to Brownwood occurs on Monday, Wednesday and Friday with arrival in Brownwood at 10:00 AM. Service from Gorman to Brownwood with arrival in Brownwood at 11:30 AM occurs on Monday Wednesday and Friday as well. Comanche to Stephenville service occurs on Thursdays with arrival in Stephenville at 10:00 AM.

No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$1.00.). Travel from Comanche to Brownwood is \$6.00 each way. Travel from Comanche to Stephenville is \$8.00 each way:

- Shopping trips to Brownwood and Stephenville;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.





- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average at 17.7% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Eastland County median age is higher than the state and the national average at 38.9 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are below the state average. Eastland County has more than one fifth (22.4%) of households with incomes below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$15,475, approximately 20% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

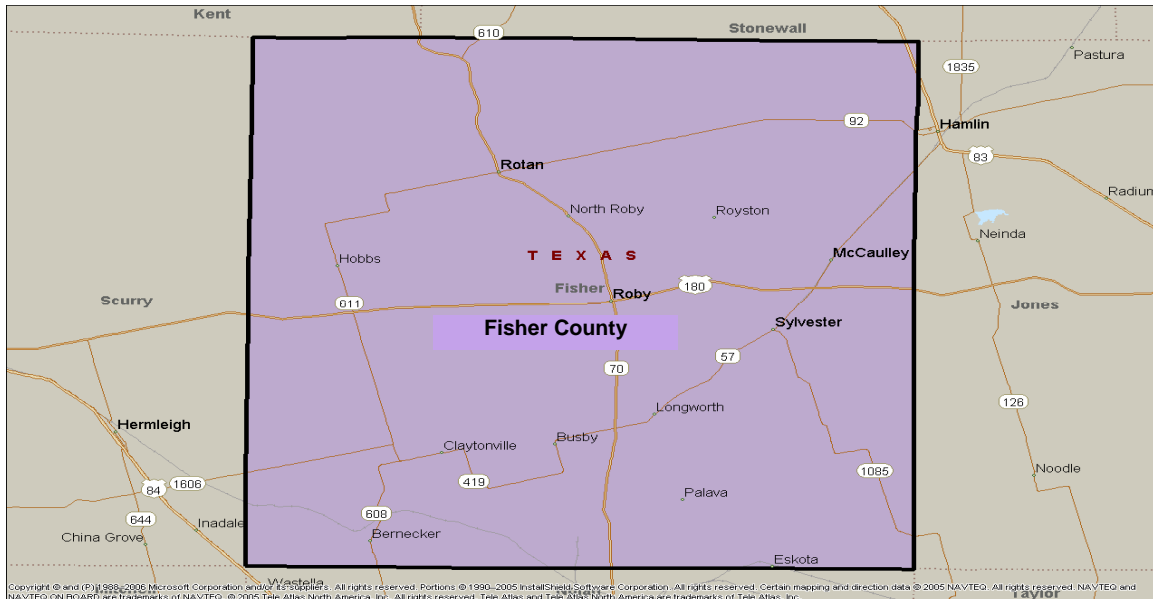
Eastland County is relatively distant from any metropolitan area. Its largest city, Breckinridge, is 58 miles from Abilene. The percentage of households in Eastland County without a car is higher than most West Central Texas counties at 7.3% of all households. Four fifths of all work trips (80.3%) originating from Eastland County have Eastland County destination. Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised less than 1.8% of work trips.

CARR provides demand response service within Eastland County and to Abilene and Brownwood, Monday through Friday with 24 hour advance notice. Trips to Abilene are scheduled Monday through Friday with 24 hour advance notice. Trips to Brownwood are scheduled on Wednesday only with arrival in Brownwood at 10:15 AM. Two trips are scheduled from Breckinridge to Abilene with arrivals in Abilene at 10:00AM and 2:00 PM.

No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$1.00.). Travel from Eastland to Abilene is \$12.00 each way.

- Shopping trips to Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## MAP 2- 7 FISHER COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Fisher County is located in West Central Texas northwest of Abilene. Roby (population 673) is the county seat, and Rotan (population 1,611) is the largest community. Population density for this rural county is low at 4.8 persons per square mile. However, about half of the county's population lives in the communities of Rotan and Roby. The county's economy is largely based on agriculture and mineral extraction. Fisher county population has declined steadily every decade since its peak population of 13,563 in 1930. In 2000, the Fisher County population was 4,344 and the 2004 US census estimate showed another decline to 4,092 (5.8%). Indicative of a declining and aging population is two illustrative indicators:

- Over 65 population is much higher than the state and national average - 22.7% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%);
- Fisher County median age is much higher than the state and national average at 42.9 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3);

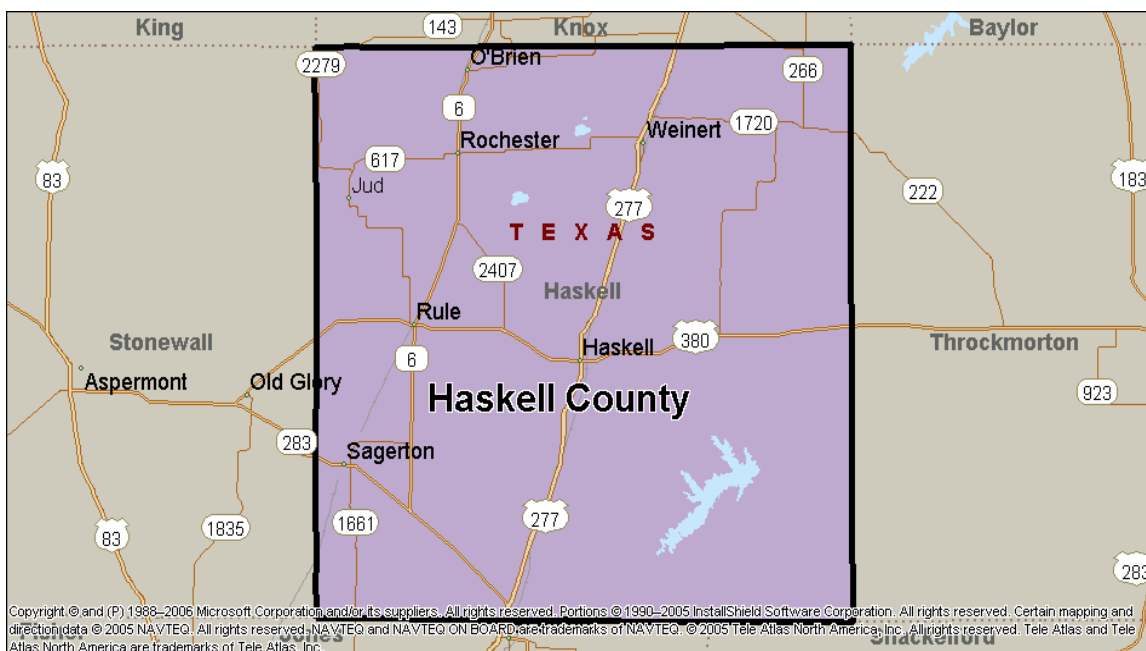
While the county population is aging and declining, income levels are also lower than the state average. More than a quarter of all households in Fisher County (25.5%) have income below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is also lower than the state average of \$19,617 (at \$15,120).

*Travel/Transit Summary*

Only 5.4% of all households do not have access to a car. Double Mountain Coach provides demand response service within Fisher County and to Abilene, Monday through Saturday with 24 hour advance notice. No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$.50). Travel within the county or to Abilene is on a sliding scale based on one way miles. A one way trip from Rotan to Abilene is \$4.00 and from Roby to Abilene is \$3.00. Trips provided include:

- Shopping trips to Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying trips;
- Miscellaneous trips.

## MAP 2-8 HASKELL COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Haskell County is located in West Central Texas north of Abilene. Haskell (population 3,106) is the county seat, and Rule (population 698) is the second largest community. Population density for this rural county is low at 6.7 persons per square mile. However, about half of the county's population lives within the city of Haskell. The county economy is largely based on agriculture and mineral extraction. Haskell County population has declined steadily every decade since its population peak of 16,669 in 1930. In 2000, the Haskell County population was 6,093 and the 2004 US census estimate showed another decline to 5,592 (-8.2%). Indicative of a declining and aging population is two illustrative measures from the 2000 Census:

- Over 65 population is much higher than the state and national average at 25.5% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%). Haskell County has the highest percentage of its population over 65 among West Central Texas counties (tied with Kent County);
- Haskell County median age is much higher than the state and the national average at 43.9 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3);

While the county population is aging and declining, income levels are lower than the state average. Haskell County has the highest number of households with incomes below \$15,000 in the West Central Texas

region at 30.5% versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is also lower than the state average of \$19,617 (at \$14,918).

*Travel/Transit Summary*

Approximately 6.2% of all households do not have access to a car. More than three quarter of all work trips (76%) originating from Haskell County have Haskell County destination with the second largest group going to Jones County (9%). Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised only 4% of work trips.

Double Mountain Coach provides demand response service within Haskell County and to Abilene, Monday through Saturday with 24 hour advance notice. No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Projected county ridership for Fiscal 2006 is 1,436 trips or .257 trips per capita (2004 census). Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$.50). Travel from Haskell to Abilene is \$4.00 each way. Trips from Haskell to Stamford are \$1.00.

. Trips provided include:

- Shopping trips to Abilene and Wal-Mart in Stamford;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.



- Jones County median age is slightly higher than the state and the national average at 36.0 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are lower than the state average at \$13,656. Nearly one quarter of Jones County has households with incomes below \$15,000; 24.6% versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is lower than the state average of \$19,617 (at \$13,656).

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

Approximately 5.90% of all households do not have access to a car. Slightly more than one half of all work trips (53%) originating from Jones County have Jones County destination. Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised 38% of work trips. A substantial percentage of the Jones County population is employed in Abilene.

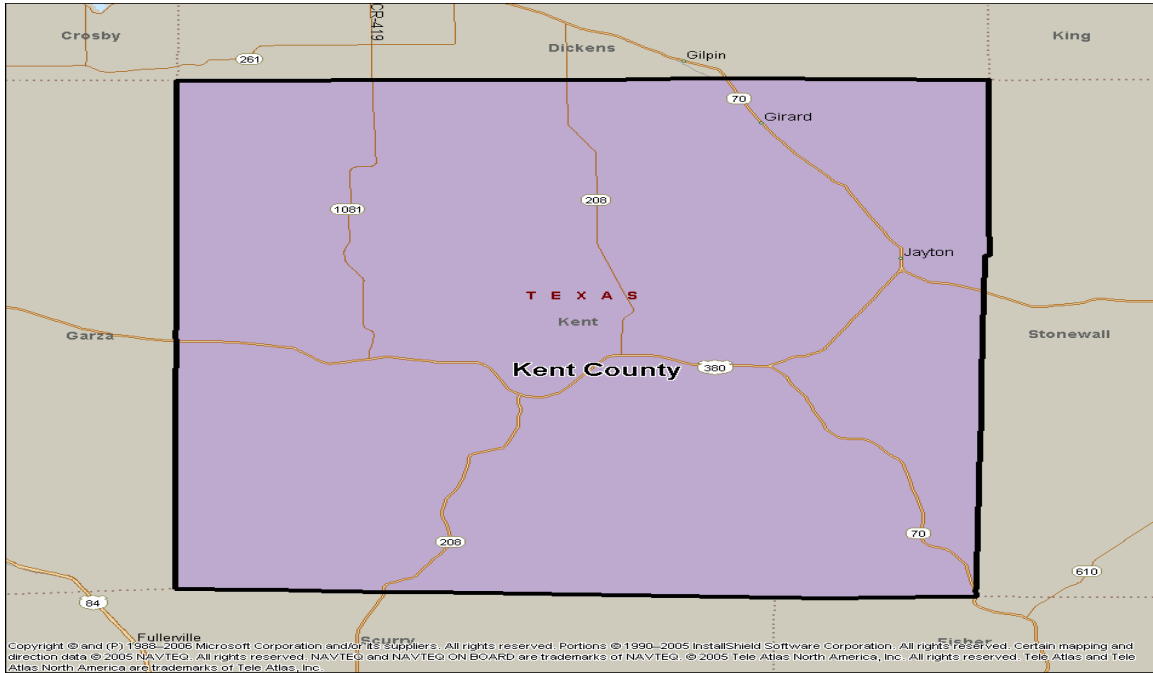
Jones County has the largest population of the seven counties served by Double Mountain Coach and comprises approximately 50% of its service area population. Double Mountain Coach provides demand response service within Jones County and to Abilene, Monday through Saturday with 24 hour advance notice. Human service transportation is provided for MHMR clients of the Betty Hardwick clinic.

Local transit service (less than 5 miles) is \$.50. Service to Abilene is \$3.00 from Stamford and Hamlin and \$2.00 from Anson.

. Trips provided include:

- Shopping trips to Abilene and Wal-Mart in Stamford;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## MAP 2 - 10 KENT COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Kent County is located at the northwest edge of the West Central Texas COG region. Rural Kent County had a population of 859 in 2000; Jayton is the county seat (population 515). Population density for Kent County is now only 0.82 persons per square mile. More than half of the county's population lives in Jayton. The county economy is largely based on agriculture and mineral extraction. Kent County population has declined steadily every decade since its peak of 3,851 in 1930. In 2000, the Kent County population was 859 and the 2004 US census estimate showed another significant decline to 744 (-13.3%). Indicative of a declining and aging population is two illustrative measures from the 2000 Census:

- Over 65 population is much higher than the state and national average at 25.5% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%). Kent County has the highest percentage of over 65 population among West Central Texas counties (tied with Haskell);
- Kent County median age is far higher than the state and the national average at 47.1 years easily the highest median age among WCTCOG counties (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

While the county population is aging and declining rapidly, income levels are close to the state average and highest among all 19 WCTCOG counties. Kent County has the fewest number of households with



incomes below \$15,000 in the West Central Texas region at 18.80% versus the state average of 17%.

*Travel/Transit Summary*

Only 1.7% of all households do not have access to a car, easily the lowest percentage lacking automobile ownership in the region. More than three quarter of all work trips (82%) originating from Kent County have Kent County destination with the second largest group going to Dickens County (5%). No other county is the destination for more than 2 % of all work trips. Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised only 1% of work trips.

Double Mountain Coach provides demand response service within Kent County and to Abilene, Monday through Saturday with 24 hour advance notice. Service is not provided to Lubbock even though the trip distance from Jayton (92 miles) is only slightly longer than the Abilene trip (84 miles).

No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$.50). Travel from Jayton to Abilene is \$5.00 each way. Trips provided include:

- Shopping trips to Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.



(28.8%) of households below with incomes below \$15,000 in the West Central Texas region at 18.80% versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is also the lowest among all West Central Texas regions at \$13,443, more than 30% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

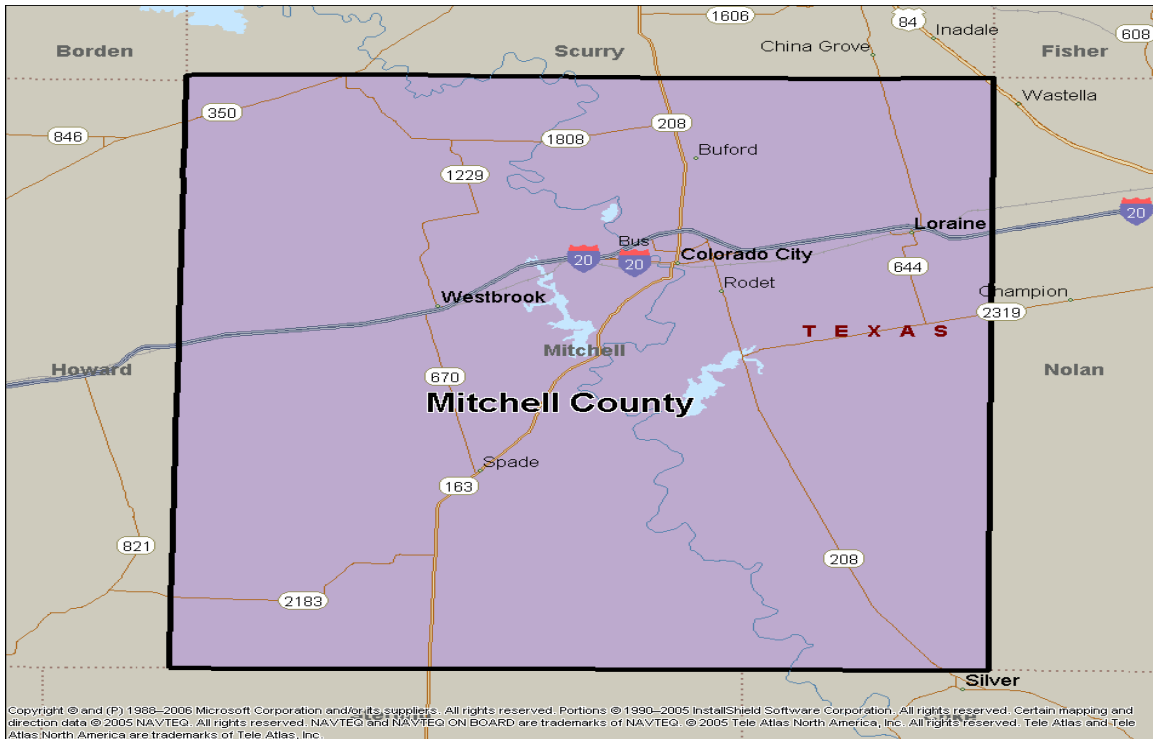
Knox County is distant from any metropolitan area. Its largest city, Munday, is 76 miles from both Wichita Falls and Abilene. The highest percentage of households in the WCTCOG region lack access to a car in Knox County. More than three quarters of all work trips (83%) originating from Knox County have Knox County destination with the second largest group going to Haskell County (7%). No other county is the destination for more than 3 % of all work trips. Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised less than 0.5% of work trips.

Double Mountain Coach provides demand response service within Knox County and to Abilene, Monday through Saturday with 24 hour advance notice.

No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$.50). Travel from Munday to Abilene is \$4.00 each way. Travel from either Knox City, Goree or Benjamin to Abilene is \$5.00. Trips provided include:

- Shopping trips to Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## MAP 2-12 MITCHELL COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Mitchell County is located at the southwestern boundary of the WCTCOG region west of Abilene. Colorado City (population 4,258) is the county seat, and easily the largest community with Loraine (population 626) the second largest community in Mitchell County. Population density is 10.7 persons per square mile. The county's economy is largely based on agriculture, mineral extraction, Correctional Facilities and (more recently) wind power generation, but Mitchell County also has considerable transportation/distribution activity owing to its location along the Interstate Highway 20 corridor. Mitchell County population declined steadily every decade since its peak of 14,357 in 1950 to 8,016 in 1990. In 2000, the Mitchell County population reversed four decades of decline and increased by nearly 21% to 9,698. However, 2004 US census estimate showed modest decline to 9,402 (3.1%). The population is older relative to Texas and United States:

- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average – 15.10% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%);
- Mitchell County median age is much higher than the state and national average at 38.6 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3);

While the county population is aging and declining, income levels are substantially lower than the state average. More than a quarter of all households in Mitchell County (27.8%) have income below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is also lower than the state average of \$19,617 (at \$14,043).

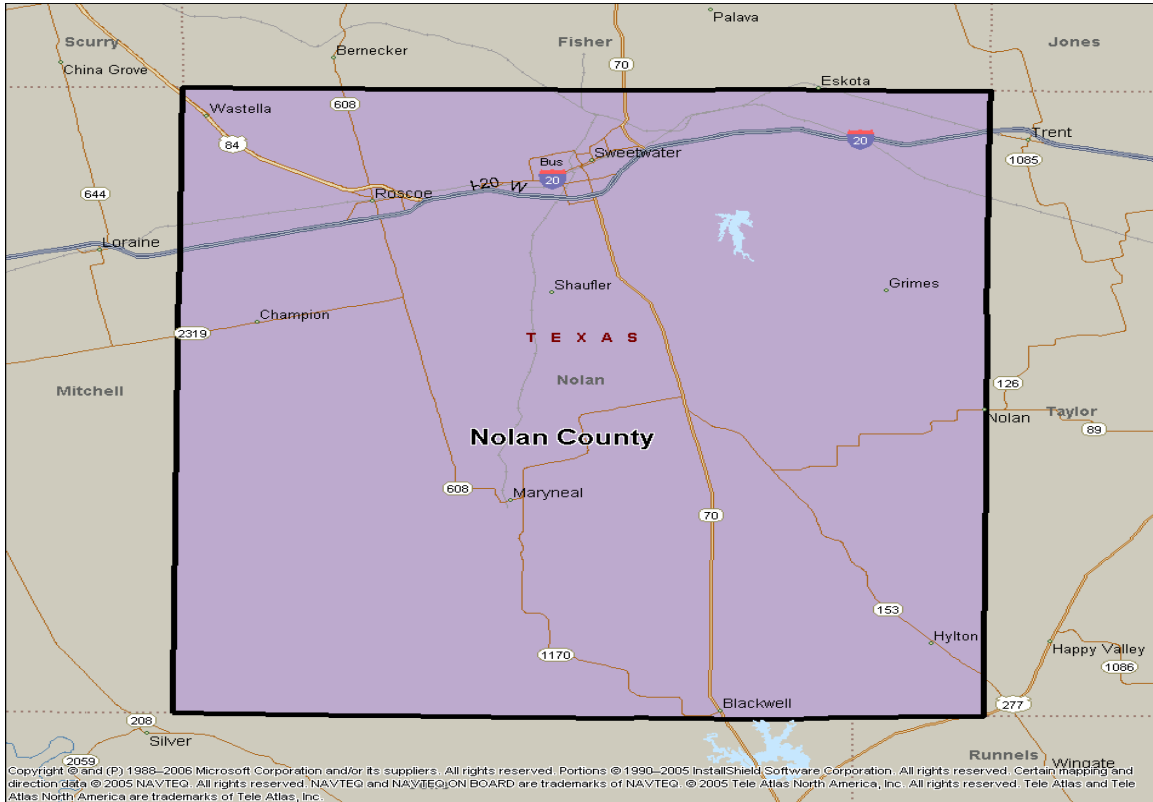
*Travel/Transit Summary*

Mitchell County residents without access to car totals 9.0% of all households, second highest in the WCTCOG region. Approximately 75% of the work trips remain in Mitchell County. Scurry County (7.5%), Nolan (4.6%) and Howard (4.4%) comprise most of the inter-county work trips. Less than 0.5% of all work trips are to Taylor County.

SPARTAN from Levelland, Texas provides demand response service within Mitchell County and to Sweetwater, Abilene, Big Spring and Lubbock. Much of the service provided to Abilene is coordinated with CARR that transfers passengers with SPARTAN in Sweetwater. SPARTAN assumed responsibility for Mitchell County service in 2003 with the closing of People's Transit of Abilene.

Monday through Saturday is provided by SPARTAN with 24 hour advance notice. No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Local transit service within Colorado City is \$2.00. Service within the county is \$3.00. Out of county service varies between \$7.00 to Sweetwater and \$22.00 to Abilene

## MAP 2 - 13 NOLAN COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Nolan County is located in the west central part of the West Central Texas COG region just west of Abilene and Taylor County. Nolan County had a population of 15,802 in 2000; Sweetwater is the county seat (population 11,415) and, by far, the largest community in the county. Population density for Nolan County is 17.3 persons per square mile. The county economy is based on a mixture of transportation, agriculture (more recently) wind power generation and mineral extraction. Nolan County population has declined steadily since its peak of 19,808 in 1950. In 2000, the Nolan County population was 15,802 and the 2004 US census estimate showed a decline to 15,129 (-4.3%). Nolan County has a younger population than many of its WCTCOG neighbors, but it is still older than the rest of Texas and the county.

- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average at 16.4 (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Nolan County median age is higher than the state and the national average at 37.4 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are below the state average. Nolan County has more than one fifth (22.4%) of households below with incomes below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$14,077, third lowest in the WCTCOG region and approximately 25% below the Texas per capita income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

Sweetwater is 40 miles from Abilene. The percentage of households in Nolan County without a car is the third highest in the WCTCOG region at 8.2%. More than nine tenths of all work trips (91%) originating from Nolan County have Nolan County destination with the two largest group of inter-county trips going to Taylor County (5%) and Mitchell County (3%). No other county accounts for more than 1% of all work trips.

CARR provides demand response service within Nolan County and to Abilene, Monday through Friday with 24 hour advance notice. Nolan County is the westernmost county in the CARR service area. CARR assumed responsibility for Nolan County service in 2003 with the closing of People for Progress, Inc.

Trips are scheduled from Nolan County to Abilene with arrivals in Abilene at 10:30AM Trips on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday are scheduled for arrival in Abilene at 9:00AM from Merkel and Sweetwater. Trips arriving in Sweetwater from Roscoe arrive at 11:00 AM Monday through Friday and from Blackwell (with a 10:00 AM arrival in Sweetwater).

CARR conducts transfers with SPARTAN vehicles bound for Big Spring and receives transfers of SPARTAN passengers bound for Abilene.

Sweetwater Nutrition Activities Program (SNAP) provides approximately 2,000 trips a year with 2 vans to its senior center. Local transit service (less than 5 miles) is \$1.00. SNAP is a 5310 provider for Sweetwater. Travel from Sweetwater to Abilene is \$8.00 each way.

- Shopping trips to Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.





- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average at 19.5% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Runnels County median age is higher than the state and the national average at 39.4 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are below the state average. Runnels County has more than one quarter (28.6%) of households below \$15,000, versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$13,577 (second lowest in WCTCOG region) more than 30% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

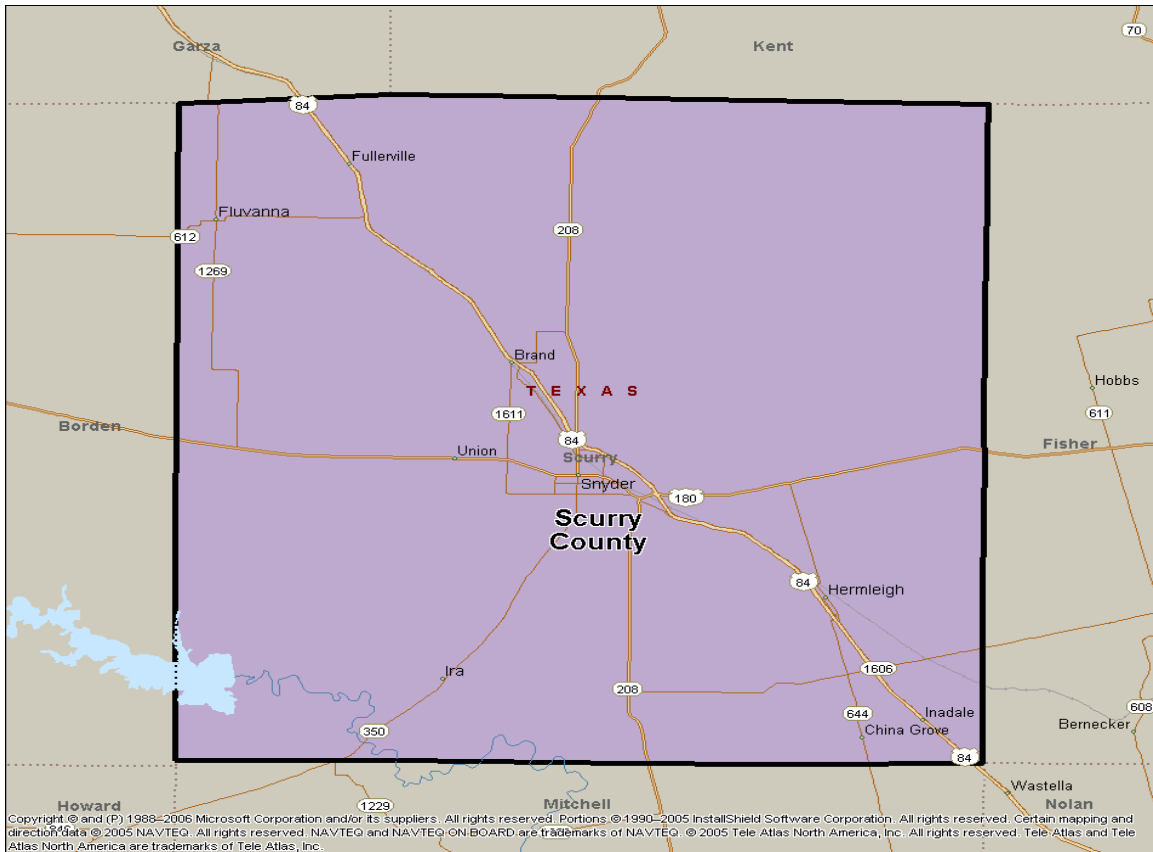
Runnels County is relatively close to both San Angelo and Abilene and commuting into San Angelo from Runnels County comprises a significant percentage of county work trips. Ballinger is 37 miles from San Angelo and 56 miles from Abilene. The second largest city Winters is only 40 miles from Abilene and 56 miles from San Angelo. The percentage of households in Runnels County without a car is 7.0%. Nearly four fifths of all work trips (79%) originating from Runnels County have Runnels County destination. Tom Green County (San Angelo) comprises more than half of all inter-county work trips (13% of total work trip). Taylor County (Abilene) comprises a much smaller number of work trips (4%). Hence, Runnels County has a commuter pattern that is more linked with San Angelo (in the Concho Valley Region) than with Abilene.

CARR provides demand response service within Runnels County and three daily trips to San Angelo with varying arrival dates. Service is provided to Abilene, Monday Wednesday and Friday with 24 hour advance notice. Two trips are scheduled daily from Runnels to Abilene with arrivals in Abilene at 9:00 AM and 1:30 PM. Human service transportation is provided for MHMR clients of the Betty Hardwick clinic.

Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$1.00.). Travel from Winters to Abilene is \$8.00 each way; Winters to San Angelo is \$12.00. Ballinger to San Angelo is \$7.00 and Ballinger to Abilene is \$12.00:

- Shopping trips to San Angelo and Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## MAP 2 - 15 SCURRY COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Scurry County is located in West Central Texas, northwest of Abilene. Snyder (population 10,783) is the county seat, and easily the largest community in Scurry County. Population density is 18.1 persons per square mile. The county's economy is largely based on agriculture correctional facilities and mineral extraction.

Scurry County population has trended downward since its peak of 22,779 in 1950 to 8,016 in 1990. In 2000, the Scurry County population continued to decline by 12.2% to 16,361. The 2004 US census estimate showed a further decline to 16,084 (-1.7%). The population is older relative to Texas and United States:

- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average – 15.40% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%);
- Scurry County median age is higher than the state and national average at 37.0 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3);

While the county population is aging and declining, income levels are substantially lower than the state average. More than a fifth of all households in Scurry County (22.1%) have income below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is also lower than the state average of \$19,617 (at \$15,817).

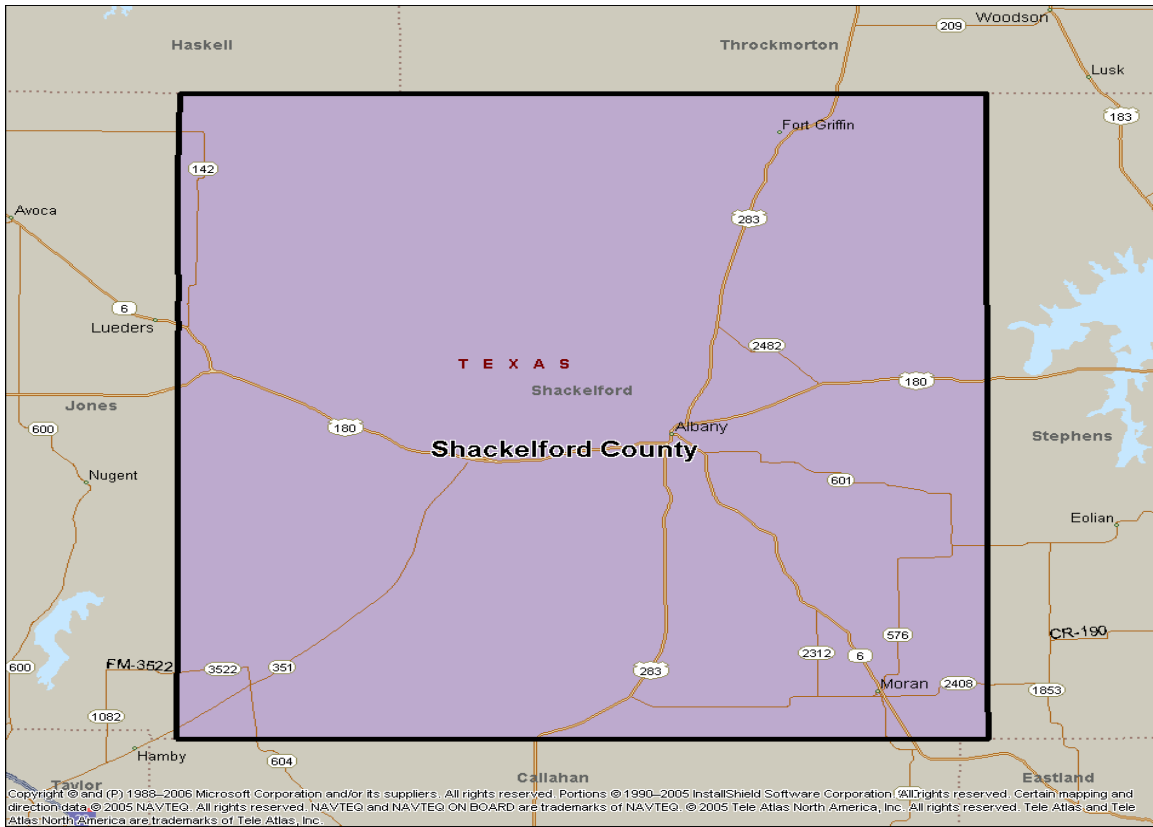
#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

Scurry County residents without access to a car total 6.40% of all households. SPARTAN provides demand response service within Scurry County and to Sweetwater, Abilene, Big Spring and Lubbock. Much of the service provided to Abilene is coordinated with CARR with transfers of passengers with SPARTAN in Sweetwater.

Monday through Saturday is provided with 24 hour advance notice. Local transit service within Snyder is \$2.00. Service within to Colorado service is \$6.00. Other out of county service varies between \$9.00 to Sweetwater and \$22.00 to Lubbock

Human service transportation to senior adult centers is provided by Scurry County Community Services with five vehicles transporting seniors to senior centers within Snyder for midday activities including lunch and limited medical appointments (scheduled in advance).

## MAP 2 - 16 SHACKELFORD COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Shackelford County is located in the east central area of the West Central Texas region. Shackelford County had a population of 3,302 in 2000; Albany is the county seat (population 1,921) and by far, the largest community in the county. Population density for Shackelford County is a sparse 3.6 persons per square mile. The county economy is based on a mixture of manufacturing, transportation, agriculture and mineral extraction. Shackelford County population has declined steadily since its peak of 6,695 in 1930. In 2000, the Shackelford County population was 3,302 and the 2004 US census estimate showed a modest decline to 3,232 (-1.6%). Shackelford County has a younger population than many of its WCTCOG neighbors. But it is still older than the rest of Texas and the county.

- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average at 18.2% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Shackelford County median age is higher than the state and the national average at 40.1 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are below the state average, but less than other WCTCOG counties. Shackelford County has more than one fifth (22.9%) of households below with incomes below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$16,341, approximately 15% below the Texas per capita income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

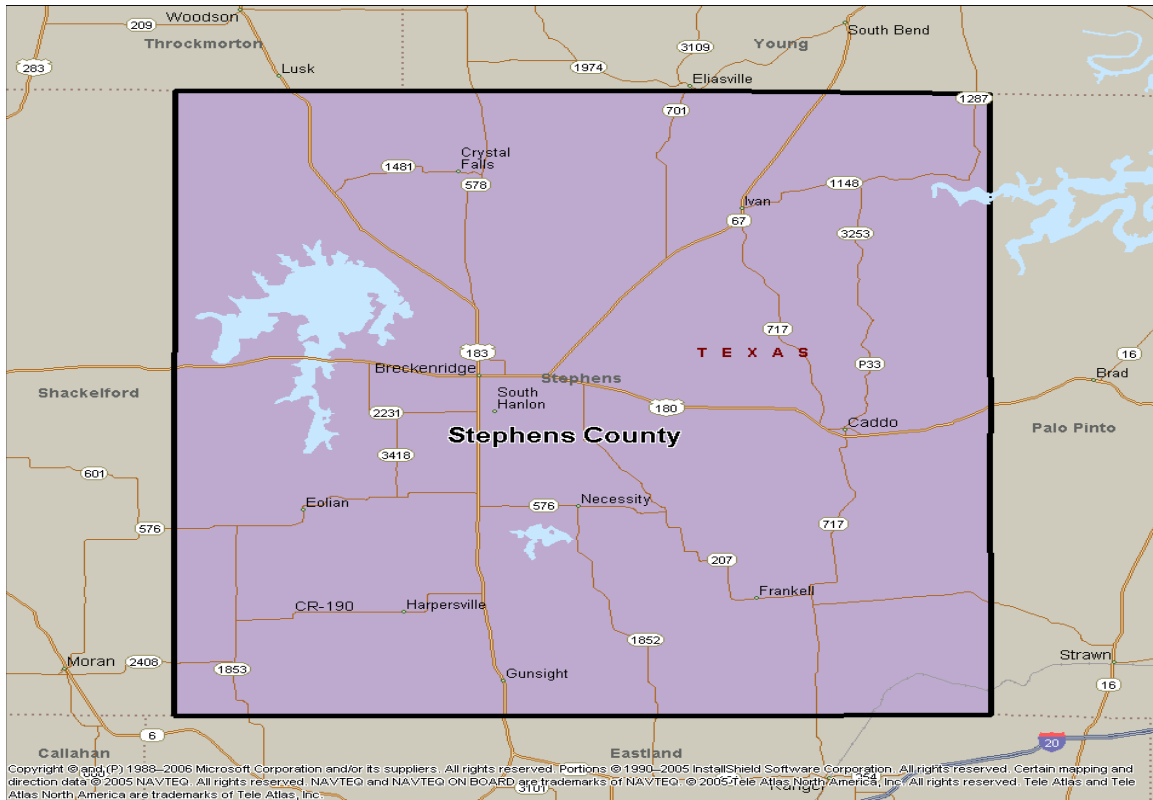
Shackelford County is relatively close to Abilene. Its largest city, Albany, is 36 miles from Abilene. The percentage of households in Shackelford County without a car is relatively low at 4.9%. Two thirds of all work trips (66.5%) originating from Shackelford County have a Shackelford County destination. Trips to Taylor County easily comprise the largest percentage of inter-county trips (19% of all trips). The two next largest groups of inter-county trips are Jones County (5%) and Stephens County (4.2 %).

CARR provides demand response service within Shackelford County and to Abilene, Monday through Friday with 24 hour advance notice. Two trips are scheduled from Albany to Abilene with arrivals in Abilene at 10:00AM and 2:00 PM.

Senior transportation is provided to medical appointments and the senior center in Albany by Shackelford County Community Services which is a designated 5311 provider. Human service transportation is provided for MHMR clients of the Betty Hardwick clinic. Local transit service (less than 5 miles) is \$1.00. Travel from Albany to Abilene is \$7.00 each way.

- Shopping trips to Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## MAP 2 – 17 STEPHENS COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Stephens County is located at the eastern edge of the West Central Texas COG region. Stephens County had a population of 9,674 in 2000; Breckenridge is the county seat (population 5,868) and, by far, the largest community in the county. Population density for Stephens County is 10.8 persons per square mile. The county economy is based on a mixture of manufacturing, transportation, agriculture and mineral extraction. Stephens County population has declined steadily since its peak of 16,560 in 1930. Between 1960 and 2000 the population has been relatively stable with an increase of 7.4% between 1990 and 2000. In 2000, the Stephens County population was 9,674 and the 2004 US census estimate showed a modest decline to 9,523 (-1.6%). Stephens County has a younger population than many of its WCTCOG neighbors but it is still older than the rest of Texas and the county.

- Over 65 population is higher than the state and national average at 17.7% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Stephens County median age is higher than the state and the national average at 38.9 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are below the state average. Stephens County has more than one fifth (22.4%) of households below with incomes below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$15,475, approximately 20% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

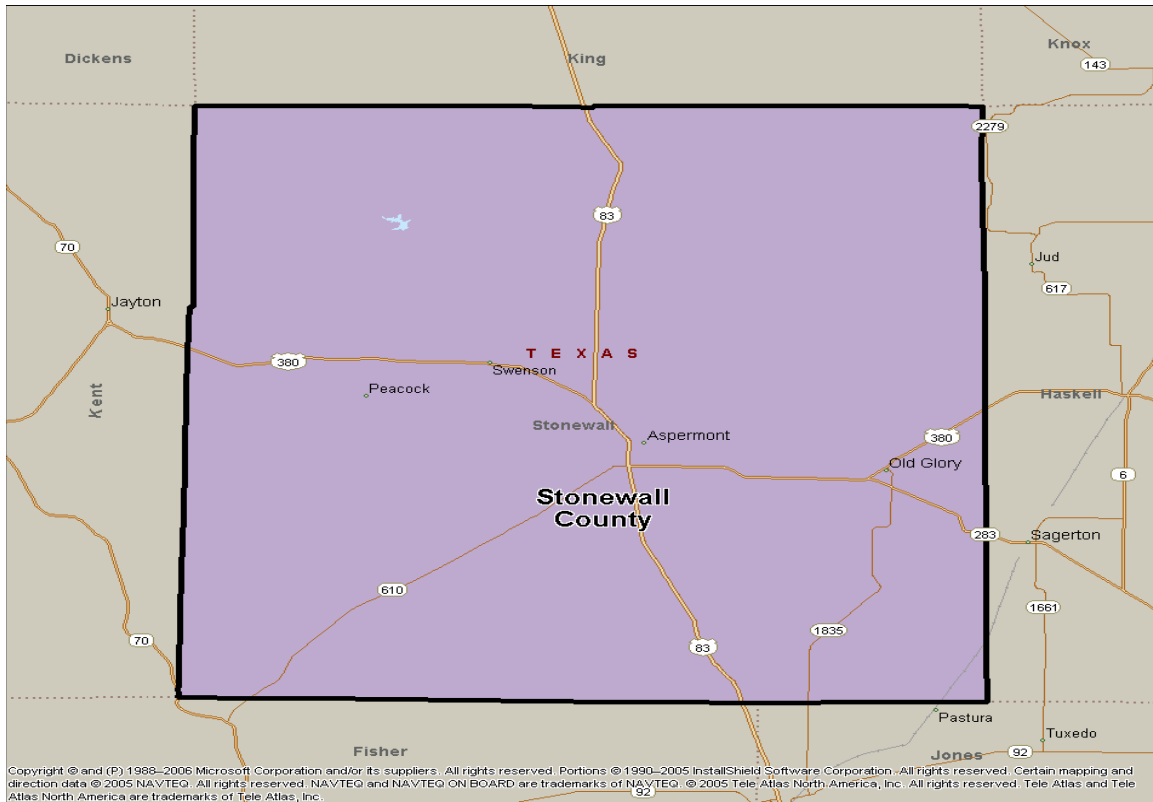
#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

Stephens County is distant from any metropolitan area. Its largest city, Breckenridge, is 58 miles from Abilene. The percentage of households in Stephens County without a car is 7.3%. Four fifths of all work trips (80.3%) originating from Stephens County have Stephens County destination with the two largest groups of inter-county trips going to Young County (4%) and Eastland County (8%). No other county is the destination for more than 3% of all work trips. Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised less than 1.8% of work trips.

CARR provides demand response service within Stephens County and to Abilene, Monday through Friday with 24 hour advance notice. Two trips are scheduled from Breckenridge to Abilene with arrivals in Abilene at 10:00AM and 2:00 PM. Human service transportation is provided for MHMR clients of the Betty Hardwick clinic. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$1.00.). Travel from Stephens to Abilene is \$12.00 each way.

- Shopping trips to Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## MAP 2 – 18 STONEWALL COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Stonewall County, is located at the northern part of the West Central Texas COG region. Stonewall County had a population of 1,693 in 2000; Aspermont is the county seat (population 1,021) and easily the largest community in the county. Population density for Stonewall County is a sparse 1.8 persons per square mile. Only Kent County has a lower population density. The county economy is largely based on agriculture, construction and mineral extraction. Stonewall County population has declined steadily every decade since its peak of 5,667 in 1930. In 2000, the Stonewall County population was 1,693 and the 2004 US census estimate showed another decline to 1,405 (-17.0%). Indicative of a declining and aging population is two illustrative measures from the 2000 Census:

- Over 65 population is much higher than the state and national average at 24.0% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Stonewall County median age is far higher than the state and the national average at 43.7 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).



While the county population is aging and declining rapidly, income levels are below the state average. Stonewall County has more than one quarter (27.4%) of households with incomes below \$15,000 in the West Central Texas region at 18.80% versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is at \$16,094, more than 15% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

Stonewall County is distant from the closest metropolitan area (Abilene). Its largest city is 63 miles from Abilene. Approximately 5.5% of households in the WCTCOG region lack access to a car in Stonewall County. More than three quarter of all work trips (85%) originating from Stonewall County have Stonewall County destinations. Between 2% and 3% of total work trips originating in Stonewall County go to Haskell, Jones, and Kent Counties respectively. Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised approximately 2.6% of work trips.

Double Mountain Coach provides demand response service within Stonewall County and to Abilene, Monday through Saturday with 24 hour advance notice.

No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$.50). Travel from Aspermont to Abilene is \$4.00 each way. Trips provided include:

- Shopping trips to Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.



consistent long term trend of modest but steady growth in population. Population increased in every decade since 1930 (except between 1960 and 1970). In 2000, the Taylor County population was 126,555 and the 2004 US census estimate showed a small decrease to 125,108 (-1.1%). Taylor County has a younger population than any of its WCTCOG neighbors, and is similar to the Texas average:

- Over 65 population is higher than the state average and the same as the national average of 12.4% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%). Taylor County has the lowest percentage of its population over 65 in the WCTCOG region.
- Taylor County median age is lower than both the state and the national average at 32.2 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

Income levels are below the state average. Taylor County has more than one quarter (28.6%) of households below \$15,000, versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$17,716 (third highest in WCTCOG region) but more than 5% below the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

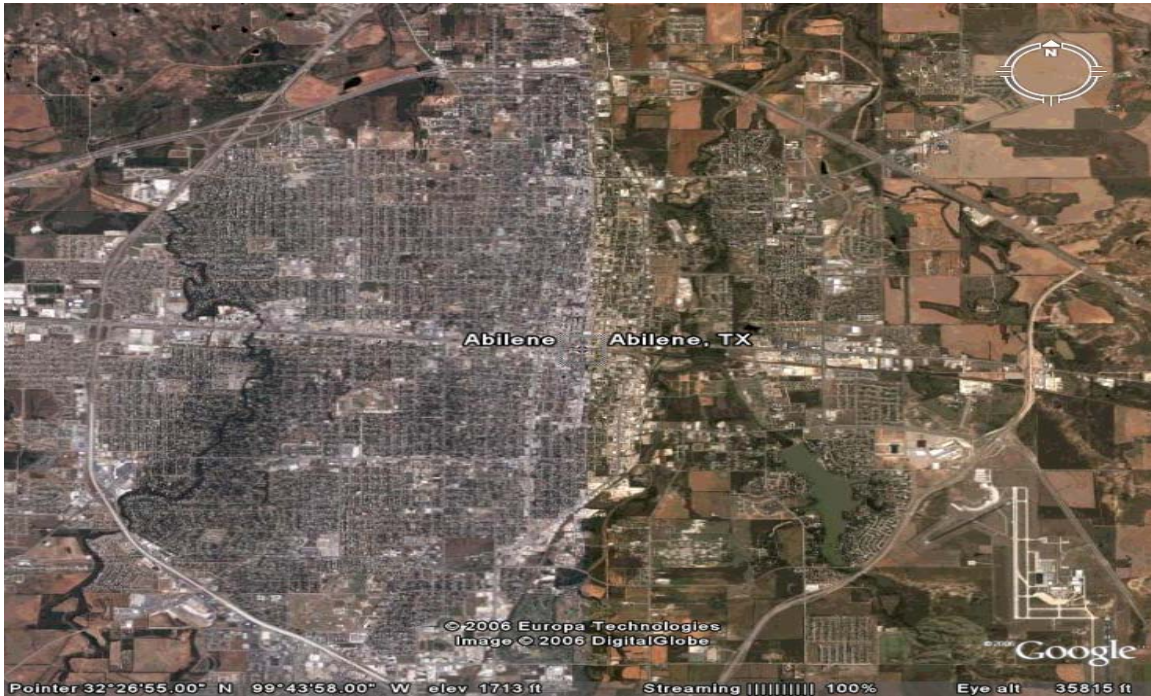
Taylor County has Abilene within the county. The percentage of households in Taylor County without a car is 6.2%. More than 90% of all work trips (79%) originating from Taylor County have Taylor County destination. Callahan and Jones Counties provide more than 5,000 daily commuting trips or 77% of the trips coming into Taylor County.

CARR provides demand response service within rural Taylor County. Service originating in the City of Abilene is not provided by CARR. Rural Service is provided to Abilene, Monday through Friday with 24 hour advance notice. Human service transportation is provided for MHMR clients of the Betty Hardwick clinic. Senior transportation is provided by the City of Abilene to local senior centers in City of Abilene for senior residents. Senior transportation is provided to local senior centers located in rural Taylor County.

Rural Taylor transit service (less than 5 miles is \$1.00).

- Shopping trips to Abilene;
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## PHOTO 2- 2 CITY OF ABILENE

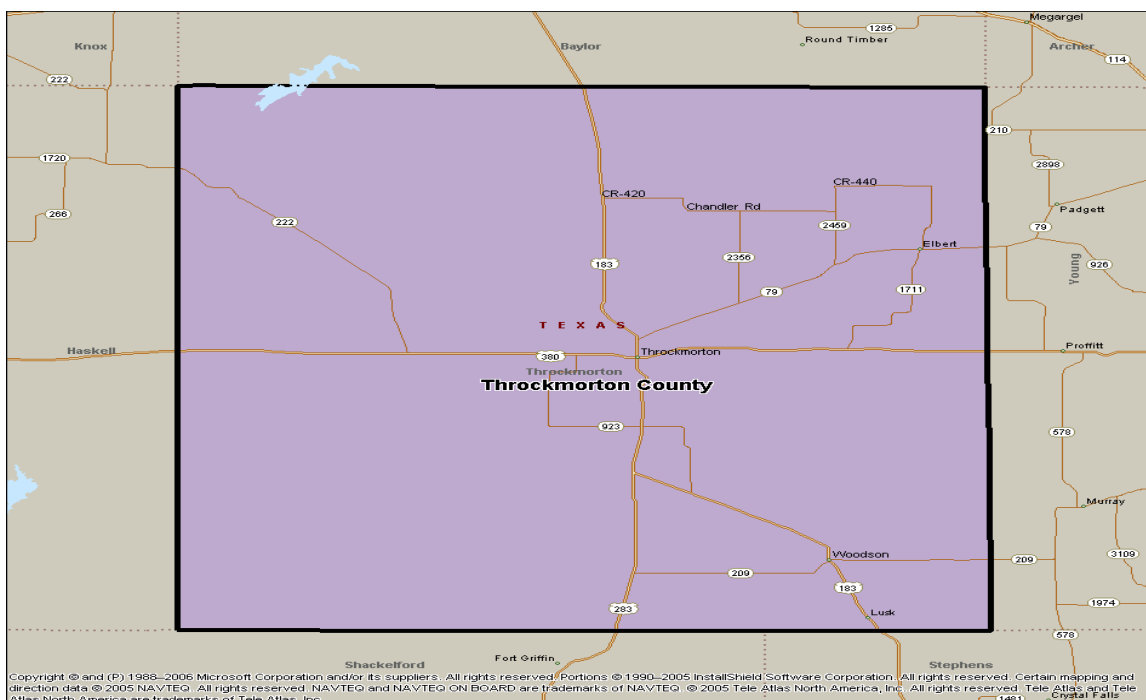


*(Aerial photograph from Google Earth)*

The City of Abilene is the only urban area within the WCTCOG region. The population of Abilene is 115,930 according to the 2000 US Census. Only 0.6% of the population is reported as using transit as a primary means of getting to work in 2000. Approximately 6.7% of Abilene households do not have access to an automobile.

CityLink is the designated provider of transit service in the City of Abilene. CityLink provides fixed route bus service Monday through Saturday. Evening general paratransit service is provided as well. ADA Complementary Paratransit service is provided throughout the City of Abilene for those individuals who have been certified to be unable to use the fixed route bus service as a result of a disability.

## MAP 2 - 20 THROCKMORTON COUNTY



### *Demographic Summary*

Throckmorton County is located at the far northeastern edge of the West Central Texas COG region. Throckmorton County had a population of 1,850 in 2000; Throckmorton is also the county seat (population 905) and the largest community in the county. Population density for Throckmorton County is a sparse at 2.000 persons per square mile. The county economy is largely based on agriculture and mineral extraction. Throckmorton County population has declined steadily every decade since its peak of 5,253 in 1930. In 2000, the Throckmorton County population was 1,850 and the 2004 US census estimate showed another decline to 1,632 (-11.8%). Indicative of a declining and aging population is two illustrative measures from the 2000 Census:

- Over 65 population is much higher than the state and national average at 20.5% (Texas is 9.9% and the US is 12.4%).
- Throckmorton County median age is far higher than the state and the national average at 41.8 years (Texas is 32.3 and the US is 35.3).

While the county population is aging and declining rapidly, income levels are below the state average. Throckmorton County has more than one fifth (22.2%) of households with incomes below \$15,000 versus the state average of 17%. Per capita income is \$17,719, approximately 10% below

the Texas per capital income of \$19,617 and further below the US per capita income of \$21,587.

#### *Travel/Transit Summary*

Throckmorton County is distant from metropolitan area. Its largest city, Throckmorton, is 72 miles from Abilene and 76 miles from Wichita Falls. Transit service is only provided to Abilene. The percentage of households in Throckmorton County without a car is a relatively low 4.6%. Nearly three quarter of all work trips (73%) originating from Throckmorton County have Throckmorton County destination with the two largest group of inter-county trips going to Young County (9%) and Stephens County (8%). No other county is the destination for more than 3 % of all work trips. Trips to Taylor County (Abilene) comprised less than 0.8% of work trips.

Double Mountain Coach provides demand response service within Throckmorton County and to Abilene, Monday through Saturday with 24 hour advance notice.

No human service providers have transportation service within the county. Local transit service (less than 5 miles is \$.50). Travel from Throckmorton to Abilene is \$4.00 each way.

- Shopping trips to Abilene
- Medical appointments (including Medicaid trips);
- Bill paying and miscellaneous trips.

## **CHAPTER 3**

## **SERVICE PROVIDER PROFILES AND CAPABILITIES**

The West Central Texas region covers a nineteen county area. Three rural and one urban provider deliver public transit service. Additional human and social service agencies provide client specific transportation. Abilene is the economic center of the region, and the destination of most inter-county rural transit trips. The largest amount of transit service is provided by Abilene and Citylink. Each of the three rural providers administrative and operations center is located more than 50 miles from Abilene and each provider covers a geographic portion of the region.

The Central Texas Regional Transit District (CTRTD or CARR) covers the eastern, southern and central portions of the county including the two most populous counties. It's administrative and operations center is located in Coleman. The Aspermont Small Business Development Corporation (ASBDC or Double Mountain Coach) covers the seven northern counties that are sparsely populated (with the exception of Jones County). It administrative and operations center is located in Aspermont. Two western counties (Mitchell and Scurry), comprise a portion of the service area of South Plains Community Action Agency, Inc. (SPARTAN), which is the only provider who is located outside of the West Central Region in Levelland, west of Lubbock. West Central Texas used to have four rural providers. Prior to 2003, People for Progress, Inc. operated rural transit service in rural Taylor, Nolan, and Mitchell County out of its Sweetwater office. When People for Progress ceased operations in 2003, CARR became the rural provider for Nolan and rural Taylor County. Concho RTD became the interim provider for Mitchell County. SPARTAN subsequently became the permanent rural provider for Mitchell County.

The review of the service providers will focus upon the four designated recipients of either 5307 or 5311 funds as either small urban or rural providers for their respective areas in West Central Texas. CityLink, CARR, Double Mountain and SPARTAN provide general paratransit and other services in their service areas.

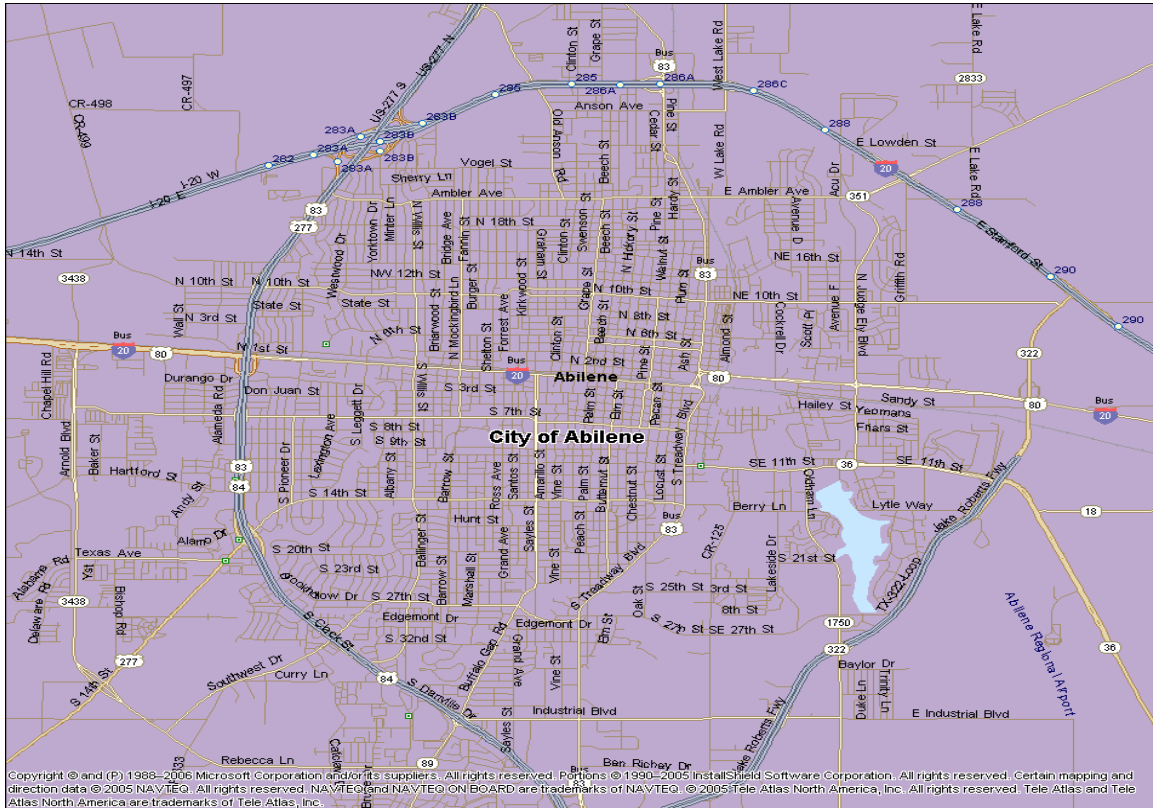
Recipients of 5310 funds listed 17 providers in 1998, but their numbers have declined in recent years. However, 5310 recipients remain a significant factor in the delivery of transit, albeit a declining factor within the region – the remaining three 5310 recipients are reviewed. Additional human service (client specific) transportation providers are also examined. Local funding resources are specifically identified where the information is available. Finally, private providers are listed who also deliver countywide services.







### MAP 3-1 CITY OF ABILENE



CityLink is the only urban transit operator in the West Central Texas region. A department of the Public Works Division of the City of Abilene government, CityLink provides:

- Fixed route service is provided along 12 routes. Service hours are 6:15 AM to 6:15 PM Monday through Friday, and 6:30 AM to 6:15 PM on Saturday;
- ADA Complementary Paratransit Service is provided for persons who are unable to use fixed route service as a result of a disability throughout all of the City of Abilene. Service hours are 6:15 AM to 6:15 PM Monday through Friday, and 6:30 AM to 6:15 PM on Saturday;

- Evening General Paratransit service for the City of Abilene is from 6:15 AM to Midnight, Monday through Saturday throughout all of the City of Abilene
- Medicaid Transportation for origins and destination within the City of Abilene is provided under contract with CARR;
- Contract service for after school programs for AISD students with the Boy's and Girl's Club's of Abilene;
- Travel training assistance to help individuals navigate the bus service and destinations within the City of Abilene;
- Special event services for civic events within the City of Abilene.

## **FIXED ROUTE SUMMARY**

Data used to summarize fixed route service was derived from the 1998 and 2004 National Transit Database (NTD). Urban transit systems are required to report data (on a calendar year basis) by the Federal Transit Administration. Fixed route and demand response service are separated so that performance can be more accurately examined. Comparison of 1998 and 2004 data will provide a benchmark to examine how CityLink has changed in recent years.

Unlinked fixed route trips have increased by nearly 24% to 580,389 unlinked trips. Revenue miles have increased by only 2.98% and revenue hours by 6.26%. In other words, the ridership increase has exceeded the modest expansion in service. Trips per revenue hour, a key indicator of service effectiveness has improved by 16.65% from slightly over 17 passengers per hour to nearly 20 passengers per hour. Per capita trips have increased by 15% to over 5 trips per capita. Fixed route service is the mode of transit used for more than 50% of all transit trips in West Central Texas combined. What these changes indicate is that transit usage has steadily increased in Abilene in recent years; **Table 3-1** provides a comparison of fixed route at CityLink in 1998 and 2004.

## **DEMAND RESPONSE SERVICE**

CityLink provides two means of demand response service – ADA Complementary Paratransit Service and Evening General Paratransit service. NTD reporting data does not distinguish between the two services; hence numbers reported are the sum of both services. Nevertheless, some noteworthy changes emerge. Demand response service has increased by more than 161% to 113,987. Revenue miles and hours also increased by more than 150% resulting in CityLink providing more hours and miles of demand response service than it provides in fixed route service.

Very few transit systems with established fixed route systems such as Abilene provide more demand response service in terms of hours and miles than fixed service; Abilene does. Such an imbalance in service levels limits the ability of a transit agency to provide service to its largest market – bus riders. Operating expenses have more than doubled in demand response service in the last 8 years and now includes 57% of the operating budget while providing only 16% of CityLink’s trips. Part of the increase is a result of evening public transit service. However, a large amount is the result of the sharp increase in demand for ADA Paratransit service. **Table 3-2** shows CityLink’s demand response performance. **Table 3-3** shows Citylink’s combined performance.

**TABLE 3-1  
 CITYLINK FIXED ROUTE PERFORMANCE**

Performance Indicator	1998	2004	Change
Unlinked Trips	468,236	580,389	23.95%
Revenue Miles	374,604	385,771	2.98%
Revenue Hours	27,493	29,213	6.26%
Operating Expense	\$809,612	\$1,032,600	27.54%
Service Area Population	107,836	115,930	7.51%
Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	1.250	1.504	20.36%
Trip per Vehicle Revenue Hour	17.031	19.867	16.65%
Cost per Trip	\$1.73	\$1.78	2.90%
Cost Per Revenue Mile	2.161	2.677	23.85%
Cost Per Revenue Hour	29.448	35.347	20.03%
Trips Per Capita	4.342	5.006	15.30%

*Source: National Transit Database 1998, 2004*

**TABLE 3- 2**  
**CITYLINK DEMAND RESPONSE PERFORMANCE**

<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Unlinked Trips</b>	43,656	113,987	161.10%
<b>Revenue Miles</b>	252,154	645,151	155.86%
<b>Revenue Hours</b>	17,064	47,392	177.73%
<b>Operating Expense</b>	\$586,272	\$1,368,797	133.47%
<b>Service Area Population</b>	107,836	115,930	7.51%
<b>Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile</b>	0.173	0.177	2.05%
<b>Trip per Vehicle Revenue Hour</b>	2.558	2.405	-5.99%
<b>Cost per Trip</b>	\$13.43	\$12.01	-10.58%
<b>Cost Per Revenue Mile</b>	2.325	2.122	-8.75%
<b>Cost Per Revenue Hour</b>	34.357	28.882	-15.93%
<b>Trips Per Capita</b>	0.405	0.983	142.87%

*Source: National Transit Database 1998, 2004*

**TABLE 3 - 3**  
**CITYLINK PERFORMANCE**  
**ALL SERVICES**

Performance Indicator	1998	2004	Change
Unlinked Trips	511,892	694,376	35.65%
Revenue Miles	626,758	1,030,922	64.48%
Revenue Hours	44,557	76,605	71.93%
Operating Expense	\$1,395,884	\$2,401,397	72.03%
Service Area Population	107,836	115,930	7.51%
Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	0.817	0.674	-17.53%
Trip per Vehicle Revenue Hour	11.488	9.064	-21.10%
Cost per Trip	\$2.73	\$3.46	26.82%
Cost Per Revenue Mile	\$2.23	\$4.80	115.45%
Cost Per Revenue Hour	\$31.33	\$31.35	0.06%
Trips Per Capita	4.75	5.99	26.18%

*Source: National Transit Database 1998, 2004*

## **FIXED ROUTES**

CityLink operates a hub and spoke route alignment with 12 routes diverging northeast, northwest, west and southwest from the transit center on 1189 South Second Street, immediately south of downtown Abilene. Most routes run hourly only on weekdays. One route runs on Saturdays. **Table 2 - 4** provides a summary of CityLink fixed route services.

Seven routes (# 2, #3, #4, #7, #9 and #10) incorporate route deviations into their routes. Upon advance request on a specific trip, the bus will deviate from its set route to a designated location or stretch of a street that is permitted in its schedule.

**TABLE 3-4**  
**SUMMARY OF CITYLINK FIXED ROUTES**

<b>Route</b>	<b>Days of Service</b>	<b>Span</b>	<b>Headways</b>	<b>Key Attractors</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1 - North Willis	M-F, S	6:45 AM - 6:15 PM	Hourly, Saturday linked with # 3	Abilene HS, Mann MS	Tripper to Abilene High at 2:30 PM
2 - Radford Hills	M-F	6:45 AM - 6:15 PM	Hourly, Saturday linked with # 5	Stevenson Park, Wal-Mart, University Hills Shopping Ctr	Route Deviation Available
3- North Mockingbird	M-F	6:45 AM - 6:15 PM	Hourly and 30 minutes during AM peak, Saturday linked with # 1	Edgewood and Merchant Park Shopping Ctr, Franklin MS	Route Deviation Available to Sears Park
4 - South 7th	M-F	7:15 AM - 5:52 PM	2 times in AM and 2 times in PM	Dyess AFB	Route Deviation Available to Sears Park
5 - Hickory	M-S	M-F 6:15 AM - 6:15 PM: SAT 8:15 AM - 6:15 PM	Every 30 minutes, Saturday linked with # 2	City Library, Hendrick Medical Center and Hardin Simmons University	Combines with # 7 on last run
6 - Westgate	M-F	6:30 AM- 6:15 PM	Every 45 Minutes AM and PM peaks, Hourly Midday, Saturday linked with # 7 and # 9	Lincoln MS, State of TX bldg, Westgate Town Center, Dyess AFB, Lee Recreation	
7 - ACU	M-F	6:15 AM- 6:15 PM	Every 30 Minutes AM and PM peaks, Hourly Midday, Saturday linked with # 6 and # 9	City Hall, Abilene Christian, Hendrick Medical Center, Hardin Simmons University	Route Deviation Available to Cypress, Pine and 17th Street
8 - South 14th	M-F	7:15 AM - 6:15 PM	Hourly, Saturday linked with # 2	HEB, River Oaks Village, Woodhaven Shopping Center	
9 - Mall - Cooper	M-F	6:45 AM - 5:30 PM	Hourly, Saturday linked with # 6 and # 7	Cesar Chavez Rec Center, Cooper HS, Mall of Abilene	Route Deviations to Abilene Health Department
10-Mall South Clack	M-F	6:15 AM - 6:15 PM	Hourly	Mall of Abilene, Cooper HS, Madison MS, HEB, River Oaks Shopping Center, Betty Hardwick Center	Route Deviations Rose Park
11- Town Trolley and Lunch Shuttle Express	M-F	6:45 AM - 5:40 PM	Every 30 Minutes	Downtown Destinations	
12 ARMC Shuttle		6:45 AM - 6:15 PM	Hourly	Abilene Regional Medical Center	

*Source: CityLink Route Maps*

## **ADA COMPLEMENTARY PARATRANSIT SERVICE**

As required by the Americans with Disability Act, CityLink provides paratransit services to persons with disabilities who are unable to use fixed route service as a result of a disability. Service is provided from 6:15 AM to 6:15 PM, Monday through Saturday throughout the entire area of the city of Abilene. ADA requires service within  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles of fixed bus routes that are in service, but CityLink provides service above and beyond ADA requirements.

### **Eligibility**

Applications for ADA eligibility are mailed in for determination. The Administrative Supervisor reviews applications and makes an eligibility determination. If an individual is certified as eligible they can use CityLink.

### **Reservations**

Trips can be reserved between one and 14 days in advance by calling between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM Monday through Saturday.

### **Fares**

#### *Fixed Route*

Adult \$1.00

Student \$0.75

Senior Citizens \$0.35

Persons with Disabilities \$0.35

ADA Paratransit - \$1.00 (within 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles of a bus route)

ADA Paratransit - \$1.50 (more than 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles from a bus route)

General Paratransit - \$3.00

## **EVENING GENERAL PARATRANSIT SERVICE**

CityLink provides a type of service is only available in a few small urban transit systems provide in the United States. Generally, transit systems provide evening fixed route service or do not provide any evening transit service at all. CityLink has pursued a rather unique third option – evening general paratransit service. The service costs \$3.00 per trip. Scheduling is done in the same manner as service for ADA service and is open to everyone. Providing mobility options with evening service expands rider's options and flexibility with respect to mobility.

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

CityLink uses 7 buses to transport AISD Students to the Boys and Girls Club under contract with the AISD.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACH**

CityLink is a department of Public Works Division of the City of Abilene, and operates relatively autonomously on a day to day basis. Small urban bus systems are often part of municipal government in Texas including the following communities: Lubbock, Amarillo, El Paso, Laredo, Galveston, Waco, Tyler Longview, Beaumont and Brownsville operating in a similar manner. McDonald Transit has a management contract with the City of Abilene to provide management services including a General Manager. **Chart 2-1** shows the organizational structure.

All operating services are under unified operations supervision.

## **REVENUES**

One good measure of the extent of CityLink coordination is the range of CityLink revenue sources. **Table 2-5** illustrates the different revenues sources utilized. Coordinated services have allowed CityLink to obtain additional funding from:

- Medicaid
- Contract Services (After School Programs and Evening Service)
- JARC funding
- CDBG funding
- Workforce Development Access

The City of Abilene also provides \$430,000 from its general fund for CityLink service. CityLink has also been successful in obtaining federal earmarks under Section 5309 for its capital needs.

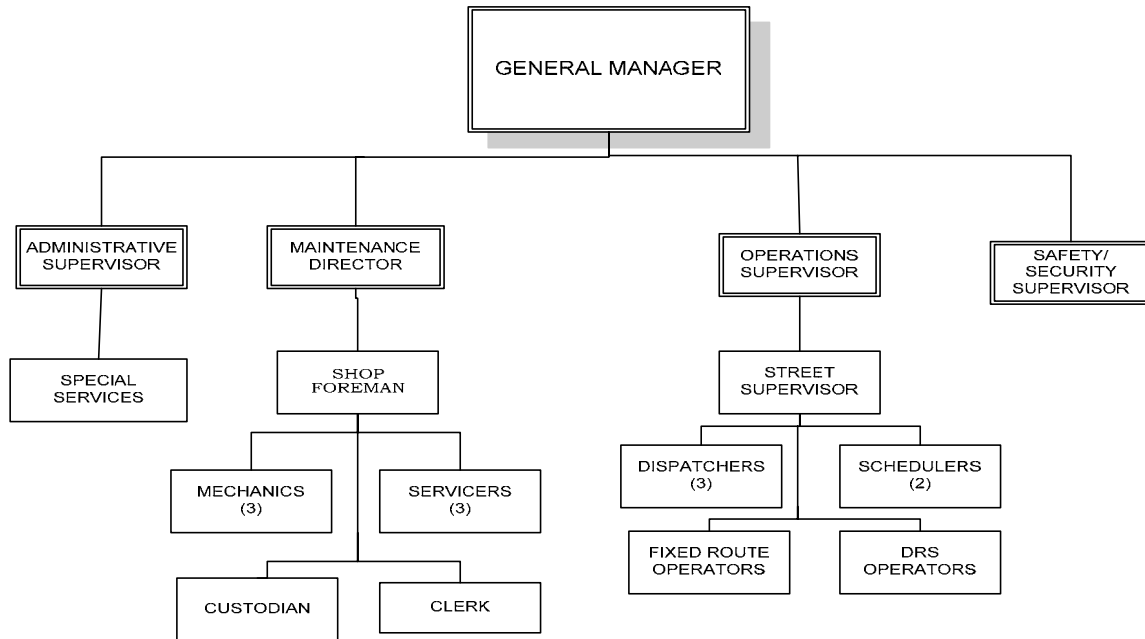


**TABLE 3-5  
 REVENUES SOURCES FOR CITYLINK**

Source	Actual 2004	Estimated 2005	Budgeted 2006
Medicaid	\$ 113,237	\$ 123,482	\$110,000
Passenger Fares	\$ 170,845	\$ 170,000	\$225,000
Charter	\$ 3,042	\$ 9,000	\$9,000
Station Concession	\$ 2,252	\$ 1,800	\$1,800
Advertising	\$ -	\$ -	\$55,000
Contract Service	\$ 66,182	\$ 90,000	\$50,000
Evening Service Fares	\$ 14,730	\$ 15,000	\$15,000
General Fund	\$ 390,000	\$ 430,000	\$430,000
Miscellaneous/One Time Revenues	\$ 12,449	\$ 21,770	\$ 2,700
<b>Local and Farebox Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 772,737</b>	<b>\$ 861,052</b>	<b>\$ 898,500</b>
<b>State Assistance</b>	<b>\$ 493,264</b>	<b>\$ 459,180</b>	<b>\$443,940</b>
<b>FTA funding</b>			
5307 Operating	\$ -	\$ 1,225,000	\$625,000
FTA 3037 JARC	\$ 56,670	\$ 83,550	\$84,400
CDBG Match Access to Jobs	\$ 20,000	\$ 55,000	\$55,000
Workforce Development Access	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$41,000
5307 Planning	\$ -	\$ 128,000	\$96,000
5307 Capital	\$ 30,906	\$ 945,770	\$704,000
5310 Capital	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$35,000
5309 Earmark	\$ -	\$ 225,930	\$1,000,000
<b>Total Federal</b>	<b>\$ 1,411,026</b>	<b>\$ 4,050,252</b>	<b>\$3,985,540</b>
<b>Total All Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 2,677,027</b>	<b>\$ 5,370,484</b>	<b>\$ 5,327,980</b>

\* SOURCES: FY 2006 CITYLINK BUDGET

### CHART 3-1 CITYLINK ORGANIZATION



#### **MEDICAID CONTRACT**

CityLink had been the designated Medicaid recipient for the City of Abilene. Effective June 1, 2006, CARR will subcontract to Citylink to provide Medicaid service for the City of Abilene.

#### **TECHNOLOGY USE**

CityLink uses two way radios for communication with its fixed route and demand response drivers. Trapeze Pass is used as the automated scheduling software for its ADA and Evening General Paratransit service successfully. Mobile Data Technology (MDT), Automated Vehicle Locators (AVL) is not currently used for Dispatch. Support for technology service is provided by the City of Abilene.

#### **MAINTENANCE, VEHICLES AND INSURANCE**

CityLink provides its own maintenance and vehicle cleaning with its own maintenance facilities, wash facilities and its own maintenance staff of eight. The Maintenance facility is located at 1189 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

## CENTRAL TEXAS RURAL TRANSIT DISTRICT (CARR) MAP 3 - 2



Medical Transportation in this area was started by Central Texas Opportunities, Inc. in 1977 in order to provide transportation for Medicaid recipients. Transportation services expanded to include operation of rural public transportation services (Section 5311) in 1993. Initially, six counties were included in the rural transit operation: Brown,

Callahan, Comanche, Eastland and Runnels County. Central Texas Opportunities purchased computer equipment/software in 1994 to allow centralized reservations, scheduling and dispatch services to manage an expanding operation. Two counties to the north of the original service area – Stephens and Shackelford County were added in 1995.

The Central Texas Rural Transit District (CARR) was formed in July 1998 as a stand alone rural transit district providing service to eight Central Texas counties previously served by Central Texas Opportunities, Inc. CARR also opened its own administrative operating facility in Coleman in 1998.

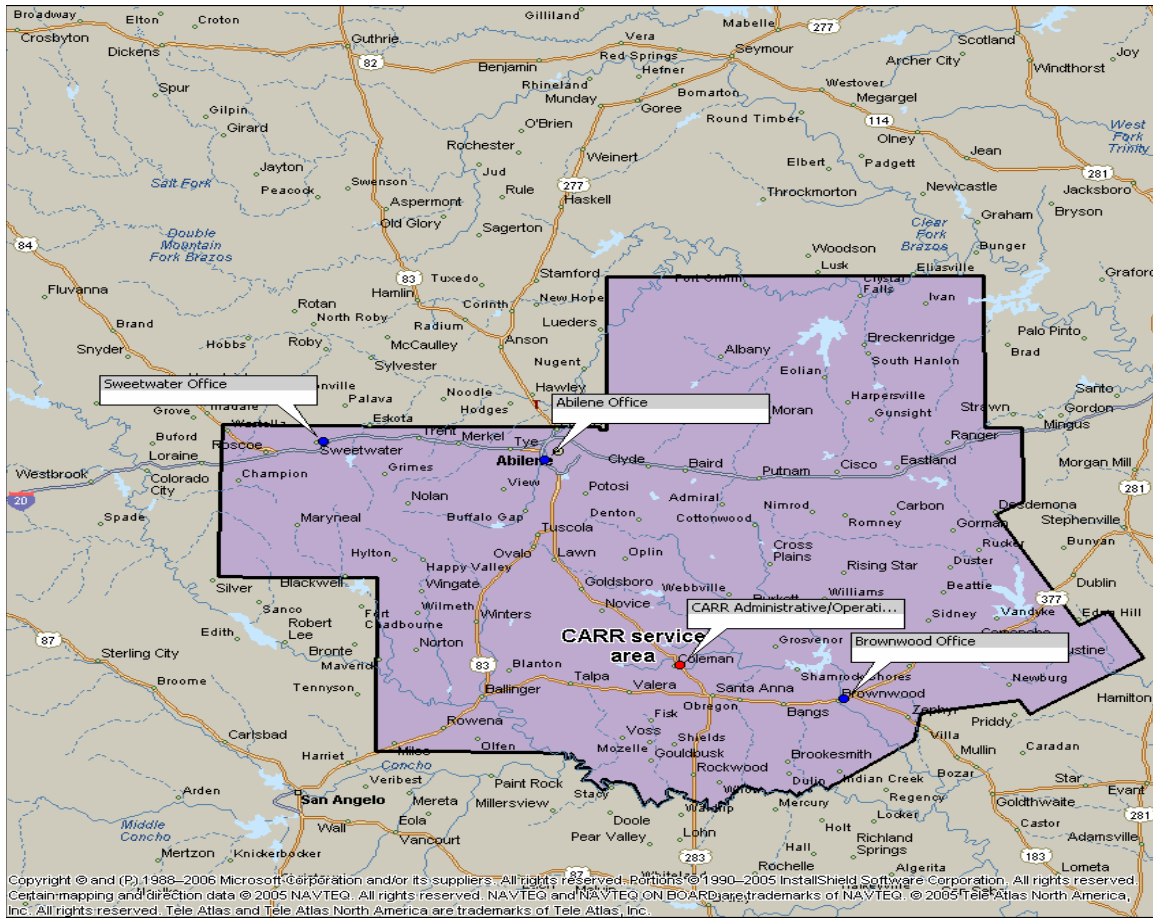
When People for Progress ceased operations in 2003, CARR became the rural provider for Nolan and rural Taylor County expanding CARR's service area to rural Taylor County and further west to Nolan County including Sweetwater. CARR opened a regional office in Brownwood in February 2002 and Abilene in June 2003.

CARR was awarded the Best Rural Transit Agency by its peers in the Texas Transit Association (TTA) at its annual transit conference in Austin in 2004. During 2003, CARR opened an office in Sweetwater, which also serves as a transfer point between trips further west on SPARTAN for CARR riders (Big Spring or Lubbock) and trips further east for SPARTAN passengers (Abilene).

**Map 3-3** shows the location of the four CARR facilities. The offices in Sweetwater, Abilene and Brownwood serve several purposes:

- Waiting area for drivers;
- Waiting area for passengers;
- Office for supervisors;
- Location for supervisors or other staff to work from;
- Potential transfer point (Sweetwater).

## LOCATION OF CARR FACILITIES MAP 3 - 3



Red Dot - Administrative and Operations Facility  
Blue Dots - Local Offices

### OPERATING AND PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

CARR provided over 108,000 passenger miles in State Fiscal Year 2006 (SFY 2006). CARR provides approximately 90% of all rural trips in the West Central Texas region. Revenue mileage for SFY 2006 was 997,250 or .11 passengers per revenue mile. Effective trip grouping allowed a productivity level of 2.11 per revenue hour. **Table 3 - 6** shows the operating performance by quarter. Cost per passenger trip was \$16.56. The operating cost per revenue service hour was \$34.89. All of these numbers were posted on the TXDOT monthly and quarterly reports for SFY 2005. An additional measure has been added - trips per capita. CARR's service area population is based the 2000 US Census (the population of the City of Abilene is subtracted from the ten county region's population of 264,295). The per capital ridership of CARR is

.731 trips, the highest among the three rural providers. The trip cost of \$16.56 is also the lowest. CARR has by far the highest trip per capita ridership among the three rural providers

**CARR OPERATING PERFORMANCE  
 STATE FISCAL YEAR 2005  
 TABLE 3 - 6**

<b>CARR OPERATING INFORMATION</b>	<b>1ST QUARTER</b>	<b>2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER</b>	<b>3RD QUARTER</b>	<b>4TH QUARTER</b>	<b>SFY 2005 TOTAL</b>
<b>Ridership</b>	27,881	26,481	28,248	25,861	108,471
<b>Revenue Miles</b>	246,912	255,302	242,914	252,122	997,250
<b>Revenue Hours</b>	13,400	12,687	13,228	12,179	51,494
<b>Operating Expense</b>	\$440,385	\$428,018	\$457,648	\$ 470,752	\$ 1,796,803
<b>Passengers Per Revenue Mile</b>	0.113	0.104	0.116	0.103	0.109
<b>Passengers Per Revenue Hour</b>	2.081	2.087	2.135	2.123	2.106
<b>Cost Per Passenger</b>	\$15.80	\$16.16	\$16.20	\$18.20	\$16.56
<b>Cost Per Revenue Mile</b>	\$1.78	\$1.68	\$1.88	\$ 1.87	\$1.80
<b>Cost Per Revenue Hour</b>	\$32.86	\$33.74	\$34.60	\$38.65	\$34.89
<b>Service Area Population*</b>	148,364	148,364	148,364	148,364	148,364
<b>Trips Per Capita</b>	0.752	0.714	0.762	0.697	0.731

Source: TXDOT Reporting For SFY 2005

Service Area Populations = CARR 10 county service area population – City of Abilene Population

## REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARY

CARR received in SFY 2005 more than one quarter of its operating and administrative revenue (29.28%) from two FTA programs – Section 5311 Rural and Section 5310 (Elderly and Handicapped). State assistance constituted a little more than one third of operating expense (34.44%). Nearly 30% of revenue is provided through contracts with Medicaid being by far the largest contracted revenue source (25.68% of revenues).

Five contracts were provided in SFY 2005 with one, Head Start, ending in mid 2005. The current four active agency contracts are:

- Central Texas Opportunities - Community Action Agency for Head Start services in Brownwood and Coleman;
- Aldersgate Enrichment Center – service for work related activities in Brownwood and Early;
- Central Texas MHMR – trips to worksites In Brown, Coleman, Comanche and Early Counties;
- Area Agency of Aging – services to Senior Centers in Taylor County (Lawn), Runnels County (Ballinger) and Brown County (Brownwood).

Combined the four contracts provide approximately 4.17% of total revenue for CARR. Farebox revenue from Rural Public Service provides approximately 6.31% of operating revenue. Operating expenses comprise slightly less than 80% of total costs (maintenance expenses are included) and administrative costs are 21.44%. **Table 3 - 7** below shows the revenue and expenses for CARR in SFY 2005

## RIDERSHIP

During State Fiscal Year 2005, more than half of CARR's ridership (56.83%) is comprised of general paratransit services. However, CARR provides an array of contract services to several area human service agencies. Including AAA, Head Start and other human service provider, 29.89% of CARR ridership was contracted. Medicaid comprised slightly over 13% of CARR ridership in SFY 2005. **Table 3 - 8** shows the distribution of CARR ridership.

**TABLE 3 - 7  
 REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR CARR  
 STATE FISCAL YEAR 2005**

Revenue Source	Total	Percent
<b>Federal 5310</b>	\$ 36,762	4.35%
<b>Federal 5311</b>	\$ 523,390	24.93%
<b>Total Federal</b>	\$ 560,152	29.28%
<b>State 5310</b>	\$ 620,167	34.44%
<b>Contract Revenue</b>		
<b>Medical Transportation</b>	\$ 430,009	25.68%
<b>Head Start</b>	\$ 57,024	1.48%
<b>AAA</b>	\$ 2,648	0.21%
<b>Other</b>	\$ 31,915	2.58%
<b>Total Contract</b>	\$ 521,596	29.95%
<b>Farebox</b>	\$ 113,706	6.31%
<b>Local Contribution</b>	\$ 2,459	0.02%
<b>Total Local</b>	\$ 116,165	6.33%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,818,080</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>SFY 2005 Expenses</b>		
<b>Operating</b>	\$ 1,432,549	78.56%
<b>Administrative</b>	\$ 364,254	21.44%
<b>Purchased Transportation</b>	\$ -	0.00%
<b>Planning</b>	\$ -	0.00%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,796,803</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Source: TXDOT Reporting For SFY 2005*

## **ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACH**

CARR is a rural transit agency governed by a 12 person Board of Directors. One representative is appointed by each County Judge in the 10 counties of CARR's service area. Two at large representatives are appointed by the ten county representatives. Day to day operation of CARR is administered by the General Manager, who has been leading the organization since 1995. Currently five (5) individuals directly report to the General Manager

The Assistant General Manager primarily oversees the administrative functions of the organization including: the Office Manager, Dispatcher, Schedulers (2), Office Assistant, Business Office, Manager, and the Billing Clerk. Runnels County Drivers are also supervised by the Assistant General Managers.



**TABLE 3 – 8  
 DISTRIBUTION OF PASSENGERS**

Passenger Distribution	Total	Percent
<b>Medicaid</b>	14,417	13.29%
<b>Head Start</b>	9,924	9.15%
<b>AAA</b>	1,615	1.49%
<b>Other</b>	20,876	19.25%
<b>Rural Public</b>	61,639	56.83%
<b>Total</b>	<b>108,471</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Source: TXDOT Reporting For SFY 2005*

The Operations Manager oversees five counties of drivers: Coleman, Callahan, Eastland, Shackelford and Stephens. Casual or extra board drivers, who can be used where needs arise, are also supervised by the Operations Manager.

One Driver Supervisor (based in Sweetwater) oversees the Taylor and Nolan County drivers. The supervisor is also the Fleet Manager, and is in charge of coordinating maintenance efforts for the revenue vehicle fleet. All maintenance is currently outsourced to different vendors in the ten county service region.

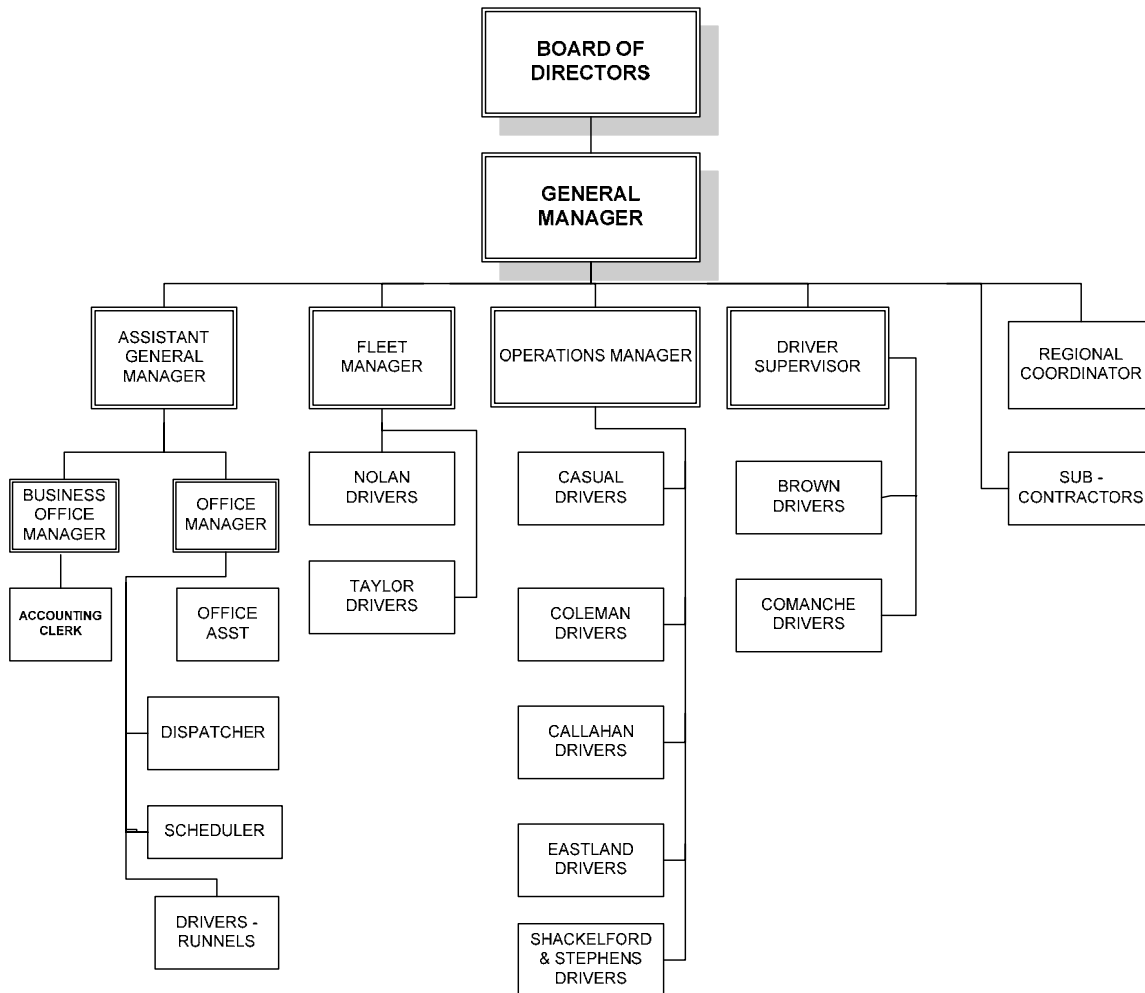
Another Driver Supervisor oversees Brown and Comanche County, and is located at the Brownwood office. The Regional Coordinator is responsible to work as a liaison with different regional agencies (transit, Council of Government and human service) in the coordination of services. As of April 20, 2006 CARR had twelve (12) office staff positions and thirty five (35) drivers for a total staff of forty seven (47). The organizational chart for CARR is shown in **Chart 3-2**.

Vehicles are strategically housed around the region to limit the deadhead non revenue miles and hours for vehicle and driver. **Table 3-9** shows which county has vehicles assigned to them and where they are housed.

**TABLE 3-9  
 CARR VEHICLE PLACEMENT  
 SUMMARY**

<b>County Served</b>	<b>Number of Vehicles</b>	<b>Location Vehicle Housed</b>
Coleman	4	Coleman
Runnels	4	Ballinger
Runnels	2	Winters
Eastland/ Taylor/ Callahan/Stephens	1	Abilene
Eastland/ Taylor/ Callahan/Stephens	4	Eastland
Eastland/ Taylor/ Callahan/Stephens	1	Breckeridge
Eastland/ Taylor/ Callahan/Stephens	2	Callahan
Eastland/ Taylor/ Callahan/Stephens	1	Brownwood
Comanche	3	Comanche
Brown	9	Brownwood
Brown	1	Taylor
Nolan County	7	Sweetwater
Nolan County	1	Nolan
Nolan County	1	Coleman

## CHART 3 – 2 CARR ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



### MEDICAID CONTRACT

The Texas Medical Transportation Program (MTP), which coordinates statewide Medicaid services, changed the procurement process for the 2005-2008 Request for Proposal (RFP). Instead of allowing vendors to bid for each of Texas' 254 counties individually, contracts were awarded on a regional basis. The West Central Texas Council of Government region has the same boundaries as the TXDOT MTP region.

CARR responded to the RFP as the prime contractor meaning CARR would be contractually responsible for service provision for the entire 19

county region. However, three other transportation providers agreed to serve as subcontractors for their respective areas of West Central Texas; Abilene remained responsible for the City of Abilene, Double Mountain Coach would provide Medicaid service in its 7 county region and SPARTAN would remain the Medicaid provider for Mitchell and Scurry Counties. CARR would provide Medicaid service for its 10 county region except for the City of Abilene. TXDOT awarded the West Central Texas contract to CARR in April 2006 and service began on June 26, 2006 for the new contract.

Providing regional Medicaid service in the manner mandated by the TXDOT RFP, required CARR to adjust its organizational structure to accommodate the new regional coordination and reporting required. No additional positions have been added, but management staff has aligned responsibilities so that CARR can successfully meet the contract requirements. The Medicaid RFP process in West Central Texas region has been a successful coordinated effort among the four transit providers. Medicaid is the only service that CARR provides with Saturday service. Providing the regional structure needed is shown in **Chart 3-3** below.

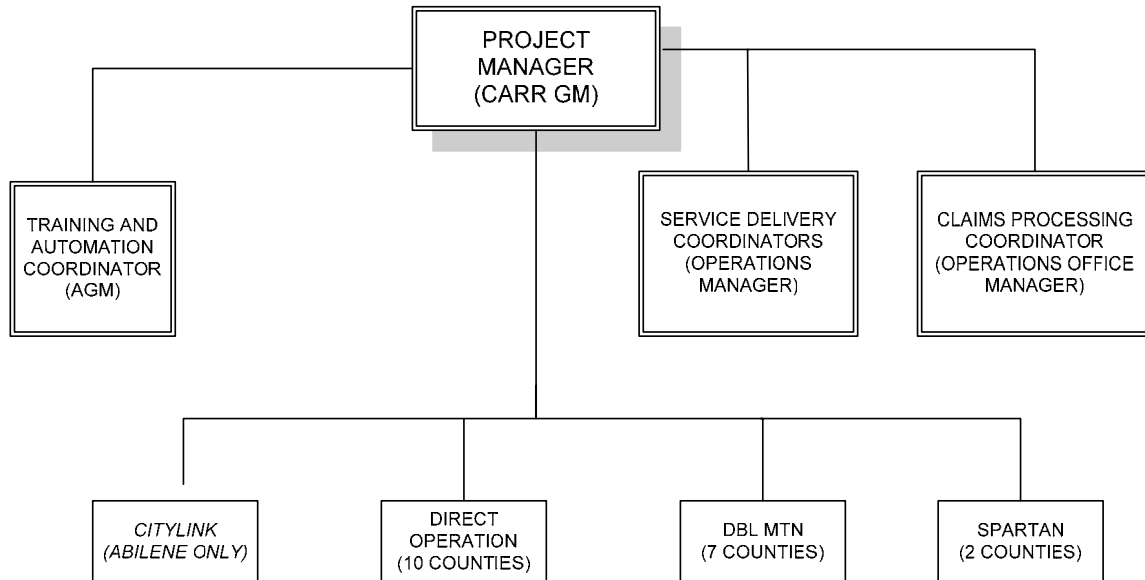
## **OPERATIONS APPROACH**

**CARR** operates as a demand response system with some significant modifications. Rural systems have realized that the combination of long travel distances, dispersed populations, and limited resources require an approach that will effectively stretch resources to maximize the amount of service and customers it can provide. Having demand response service “more fixed” in nature is an integral component of the strategy. Rural service is generally provided to either a local destination or a longer trip to a regional city that CARR serves such as Abilene, Brownwood, San Angelo, or Stephenville. Historical and existing demand determines the frequency of travel to different locations from different origins. Service frequency can vary between 3 times per day Monday through Friday to once weekly. Demand is generally fit into the parameters of the preplanned schedule. Trip requests that fall outside the schedule are either rescheduled for another day or time, declined or approved based on resource availability for that specific trip.

CARR attempts to provide the best service to its customers possible. CARR’s service approach is to provide scheduled trips to primary regional communities based on anticipated demand. Trips will be scheduled with arrival times to specific destinations and the pickup times from origins of passenger will be tied to locations requested.

### CHART 3 - 3

## WEST CENTRAL TEXAS REGION MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACH



*Reservations* are required between 24 hours and 28 days in advance. Calls for trip reservations can be made between 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Passengers provide the call taker with their name, address, time they wish to travel (or arrive), and their destination. The call taker will negotiate with the passenger and place them on a trip, if they accept the proposed trip. CARR will send a vehicle and the passenger will be scheduled to be picked up at the designated time. Normally, the schedulers accept reservations on a first come, first served basis. As a General Rural Public Transit service, ADA Complementary Paratransit guidelines do not apply since CARR service availability is equitably provided:

- Is provided on accessible vehicles;
- Fixed route service is not provided;
- Availability is for everyone within the community;
- Does not discriminate in the provision of service to persons with disabilities

Same day trips are allowed if space is available and vehicles and routes have adequate capacity to provide the trip without disrupting existing schedules. Service is provided door to door. Personal Care Attendants

can travel at no additional cost. If more than one individual travels, each person must pay the fare.

Several regional offices give passengers a place to wait (if they wish) for a return trip. Drivers can also use the facility for lunch or a lay over. Otherwise, passengers are picked up at the destination they were dropped off and returned to their residence.

The fare structure is based on distance as **Table 3 - 10** illustrates. CARR allows passengers to pay for trips in advance and receive up to four rides based on the value of the fare passes purchased. Medicaid recipients may qualify for Medical Transportation.

Scheduling is prepared using an enhanced database system from Advanced Technology Enterprises. The schedule is completed after trip requests have been taken the day prior to scheduled service. The Operations Manager and Assistant General Manager schedule the trips on specific route and schedule the drivers for each route. Since the Advanced Technology Enterprises scheduling system lacks mapping technology, it does not provide automated scheduling. What it gives CARR is a useful database for reservations, scheduling, and dispatch.

**CARR FARE STRUCTURE**  
**TABLE 3 - 10**

Mileage Range	Fare (One Way)
0 - 5 miles (Local)	\$ 1.00
6 - 10 miles	\$ 2.00
11-15 miles	\$ 3.00
16-20 miles	\$ 4.00
21-25 miles	\$ 5.00
25-30 miles	\$ 6.00
31-35 miles	\$ 7.00
36- 40 miles	\$ 8.00
41-45 miles	\$ 9.00
46-50 miles	\$ 10.00
51-55 miles	\$ 11.00
56-60 miles	\$ 12.00
61-65 miles	\$ 13.00
66-70 miles	\$ 14.00
71-75 miles	\$ 15.00
76-80 miles	\$ 16.00
81-85 miles	\$ 17.00
86-90 miles	\$ 18.00

## **TECHNOLOGY USE**

CARR has operated an effective transit system but has not utilized advanced transportation technology to do so. Communication between dispatchers and drivers is conducted by 800 megahertz two way radio. No GPS, AVL or MDT technology is used. Manual scheduling is done using a database and manual scheduling not with the assistance of automated scheduling.

## **MAINTENANCE, VEHICLES AND INSURANCE**

CARR has 41 vehicles as follows including 1 support vehicle and 40 revenue vehicles including sedans, station wagons, minivans, full size vans, Type II and Type III buses. Seven vehicles are propane powered which CARR has experienced extensively maintenance difficulty with the reliability of the propane vehicles. Two vehicles are diesel and the remaining 32 are gasoline powered. The list is shown in **Table 3-11**. More than half of the vehicles have exceeded their useful life of 150,000 miles and approximately 40% have more than 200,000 miles. Given the lack of reliable replacements (including the seven propane vehicles), older and less reliable vehicles are required to provide large amounts of service resulting in more frequently service interruptions, increased maintenance costs and reduced system reliability.

Vehicle maintenance is contracted out to various vendors throughout the region. The Driver Supervisor is also certified for propane use and wheelchair lifts, so he will work on maintenance problems in those areas. Vehicle and liability insurance is provided by the Texas Municipal League in which CARR is a member of the group pool.

## **DRIVERS**

CARR has a relatively experienced group of drivers. More than a quarter of the drivers (9), have been with CARR more than five years (and are still driving). Over half (20) have been with CARR at least two years. Less than one third of all drivers (11), have been with CARR less than a year.

Hiring and maintaining well qualified drivers is essential to any successful transit operation. Candidate operators that apply for positions are interviewed and a criminal background and drivers' license review are taken. No more than two tickets in the prior year are permitted.

**TABLE 3 – 11  
CARR REVENUE VEHICLE INVENTORY**

CTR TD ID#	Yr-Model	Description	W/out W/chairs	W/Chair	Location	Current Mileage	Fuel Type
		<b>Service</b>					
1003	2002	Type VII Chevy	6	4 & 1 w/ch	Abilene	137530	Gas
1004	2002	Ford Eldorado Type II	11	10 & 1 w/ch	Sweetwater	101892	Gas
1005	1999	Ford Type II	9	4 & 1 w/ch	Ballinger	181176	Gas
1006	1994	Station Wagon	6	0	Ballinger	215390	Gas
1007	1999	Dodge Type VII	4	4 & 1 w/ch	Eastland	174722	Gas
1009	1995	Ford Type 10	7	0	Abilene	209241	Gas
1010	1995	Ford Type 10	7	0	Baird	198835	Gas
1011	1995	Chevy Type 9	15	0	Sweetwater	153541	Gas
1012	1993	Ford Type 9	15	0	Sweetwater	277044	Gas
1101	2002	Chevy Mini-Van	7	4 & 1 w/ch	Sweetwater	195401	Gas
1104	2004	Astro Passenger	8	0	Winters	76782	Gas
1106	1994	Chev Astro Van	7	0	Winters	426639	Gas
1107	2004	Astro Passenger	8	0	Brownwood	41294	Gas
1108	2002	Chevy Mini-Van	7	4 & 1 w/ch	Ballinger	194217	Gas
1109	2002	Chevy Mini-Van	7	4 & 1 w/ch	Comanche	186495	Gas
1111	1996	Ford Van	15	4 & 1 w/ch	Comanche	202767	Gas
1118	2002	Chevrolet Mini-Van	4	4 & 1 w/ch	Coleman	93196	Gas
1119	1997	Ford Station Wagon	4	0	Brownwood	271137	Gas
1120	1998	CWS Ford Raised Roof Van	9	6 & 2 or 8 & 1	Ballinger	208991	Gas
1201	1998	Ford Goshen Bus	21	17 & 1 or 15 & 2	Brownwood	230760	Gas
1202	1998	Ford Goshen Bus	21	17 & 1 or 15 & 2	Brownwood	229056	Gas
1203	1999	Ford Gospacer II	9	8 & 2 w/ch	Brownwood	248047	Gas
1204	1999	Eldorado National Aerolite	9	8 & 2 w/ch	Breckenridge	252822	Gas
1205	2000	Eldorado National Aerolite	9	8 & 2 w/ch	Baird	323907	Gas
1206	2000	Eldorado National Aerotech	21	17 & 1 or 15 & 2	Brownwood	201138	Gas
1207	2000	Eldorado National Aerolite	9	8 and 2 w/ch	Coleman	262678	Gas
1208	2000	Eldorado National Aerolite	9	8 & 2 w/ch	Eastland	284738	Gas
1209	2000	Eldorado National Aerotech 240	21	17 & 1 or 15 & 2	Comanche	173858	Gas
1210	2000	Eldorado National Aerotech 240	21	17 & 1 or 15 & 2	Brownwood	180223	Gas
1211	1995	Eldorado Bus	25	0	Brownwood	124011	Gas
1212	2003	Alt Fuel Ford GCII	21	17 & 1 or 15 & 2	Brownwood	72562	Propane
1213	2004	Eldorado National	21	15/3 w/ch	Sweetwater	89514	Propane
1214	2002	Eldorado National Aerolite	13	8 & 2 w/ch	Coleman	194698	Gas
1215	2004	Eldorado National	21	15/3 w/ch	Sweetwater	82940	Propane
1216	2004	Eldorado National	21	15/3 w/ch	Brownwood	89823	Propane
1217	2005	Eldorado National Aerotech 240	21	15/3 w/ch	Eastland	64889	Propane
1218	2005	Eldorado National Aerotech 240	21	15/3 w/ch	Sweetwater	61922	Propane
1219	2006	Ford E450 Goshen Coach II	14	8/3 w/ch	Brownwood	15186	Diesel
1220	2006	Ford E450 Goshen Coach II	14	8/3 w/ch	Abilene	24271	Diesel

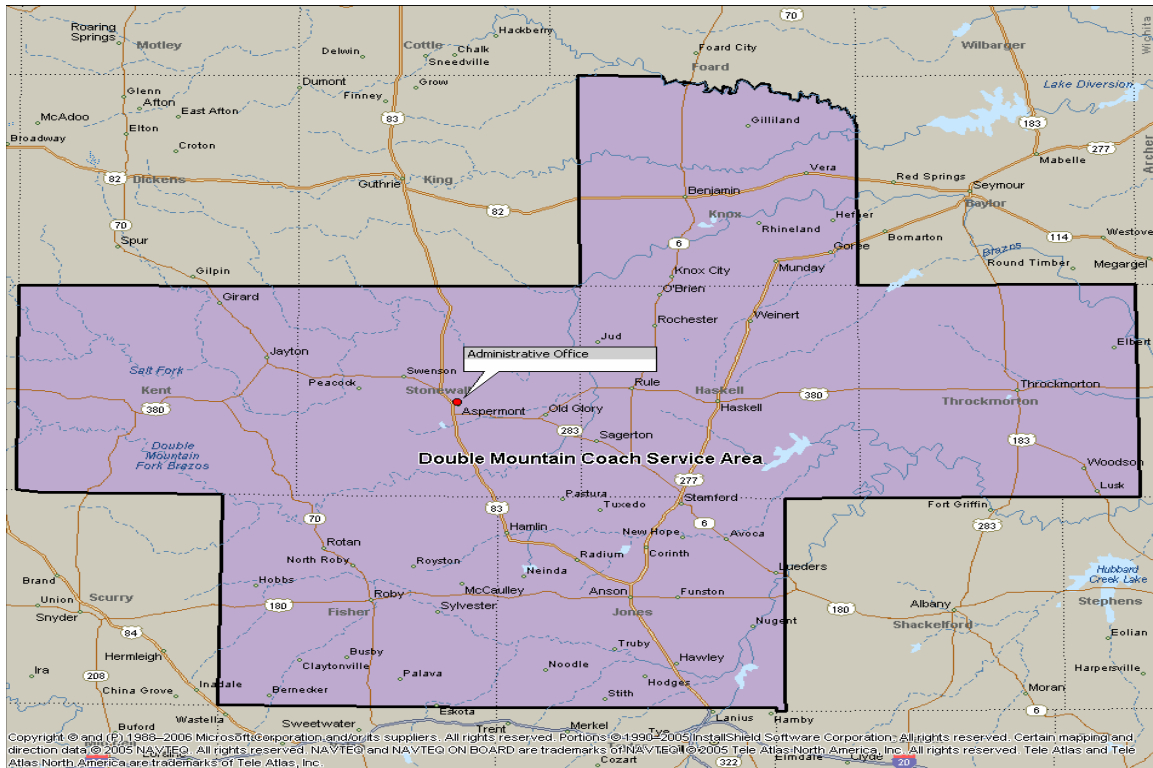


## **MARKETING**

CARR primarily uses brochures and handouts for marketing. Brochure information is available in English and Spanish and contains information on using CARR services. CARR also has a series of nine (9) color coded handouts on specific and detailed route schedules for: Brown County, Callahan County, Coleman County, Comanche County, Eastland County, Nolan County, Runnels County, Shackelford/Stephens County and Rural Taylor County. No website is active at this time.

## ASPERMONT SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH)

### MAP 3 - 4 DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH SERVICE AREA



Seven rural counties located in the northern portion of the West Central Texas region are served by the Aspermont Small Business Development Corporation (ASBDC) or Double Mountain Coach. Serving the counties of: Fisher, Knox, Kent, Stonewall, Haskell, Throckmorton and Jones, Double Mountain Coach started with one borrowed van in 1984 and has expanded into a multi-county operation with 11 staff including 7 drivers. The administrative office also serves as the operating facility, and where vehicles are stored.

### OPERATING AND PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Ridership for SFY 2005 was 6,931 for the seven county service area. Total revenue miles were 411,561.

**Table 3 - 12** shows Double Mountain Coach performance information for SFY 2005.

Annual operating expense for Double Mountain Coach was \$497,610 In Fiscal Year 2005. The passengers per revenue miles are under 0.02 passengers reflecting the long average trip length of more than 59 miles. Passenger per hour is less than 0.5 passengers per hour, reflecting the long trip length and low passenger numbers that are transported. The cost per passenger trip is \$71.79. Trip length is a significant reason for the high per trip cost. Per capita usage is the lowest among the three rural transit providers at 0.174 passengers based upon the 2000 Census for the seven county rural service area.

### **REVENUES AND EXPENSES**

Revenue is received from five sources:

- Medicaid (14.21%);
- 5311 Rural (26.65%);
- State Assistance (44.53%)
- Farebox (1.82%)
- Local in Kind Service (14.61%)

Local in kind service is donated local service, facilities provided for Double Mountain Coach in Aspermont. Administrative expense comprises 28.37% of total expense with operating expense (including maintenance) comprising 71.63% as shown in **Table 3 - 13**

**TABLE 3 – 12  
 DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH  
 OPERATING INFORMATION**

DOUBLE MOUNTAIN OPERATING INFORMATION	SFY 2005 TOTAL
Ridership	6,931
Revenue Miles	419,094
Revenue Hours	14,504
Operating Expense	\$497,610
Passengers Per Revenue Mile	0.017
Passengers Per Revenue Hour	0.478
Cost Per Passenger	\$71.79
Cost Per Revenue Mile	\$1.21
Cost Per Revenue Hour	\$34.31
Service Area Population	39,877
Trips Per Capita	0.174

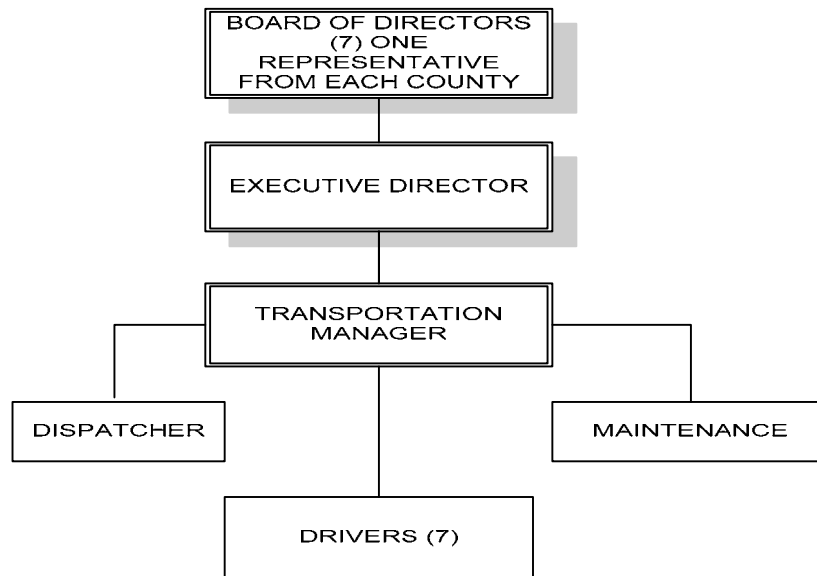
**ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACH**

Double Mountain Coach is a rural transit agency governed by a Board of Directors that has one representative from each of its seven counties. The Executive Director oversees all of the services of ASBDC including transportation while the Transportation Manager oversees the day to day operation and set the daily schedule. The Dispatcher coordinates communication with the seven drivers. The organizational chart is shown below in **Chart 3-4**.

**TABLE 3 – 13  
 DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH  
 REVENUES AND EXPENSES**

Revenue Source	Total	Percent
Federal 5311	\$153,337	26.65%
State Assistance	\$ 256,157	44.53%
Medical Transportation	\$81,742	14.21%
Farebox	\$10,443	1.82%
Local Contribution	\$73,624	12.80%
<b>Total Local</b>	<b>\$84,067</b>	<b>14.61%</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$575,303</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
SFY 2005 Expenses	Total	Percent
Operating	\$356,426	71.63%
Administrative	\$141,184	28.37%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$497,610</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**CHART 3 - 4  
 DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH ORGANIZATION**



## MEDICAID CONTRACT

Double Mountain Coach had been the designated Medicaid recipient for its seven county service area. Effective June 26, 2006, CARR will subcontract with Double Mountain to provide Medicaid service for its seven county service area.

## OPERATIONS APPROACH

Passengers can reserve trips, but should do so at least 24 hours in advance. Travel can occur within the service area or to Abilene. Service is Monday through Friday 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Fare levels are substantially lower for Double Mountain Coach than for CARR or SPARTAN. Fares are as follows:

**TABLE 3 – 14**  
**DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH FARES**

Mileage Range	Fare (One Way)
0 - 5 miles (Local)	\$ 0.50
<b>OUT OF TOWN SERVICE</b>	
6 - 20 miles	\$ 1.00
21-40 miles	\$ 2.00
41-60 miles	\$ 3.00
61-80 miles	\$ 4.00
81-90 miles	\$ 5.00
90 miles and over	\$ 6.00

Passengers have the option of traveling to multiple destinations during the same day on Double Mountain Coach. For example, a Double Mountain driver may pick up a passenger and wait for them at multiple destinations within Abilene. Passenger's are allowed flexibility when there need is for more than one errand during a trip on Double Mountain Coach.

## TECHNOLOGY USE

Dispatch uses radio communication. Scheduling and other operating functions are done with the assistance of Shah Software. Automated scheduling is not used.

## **MAINTENANCE, VEHICLES AND INSURANCE**

Double Mountain Coach conducts cleaning and running repair and has a person on staff dedicated to vehicle maintenance. Heavy maintenance requirements are contracted out. Double Mountain Coach has 13 revenue vehicles.

## **DRIVERS**

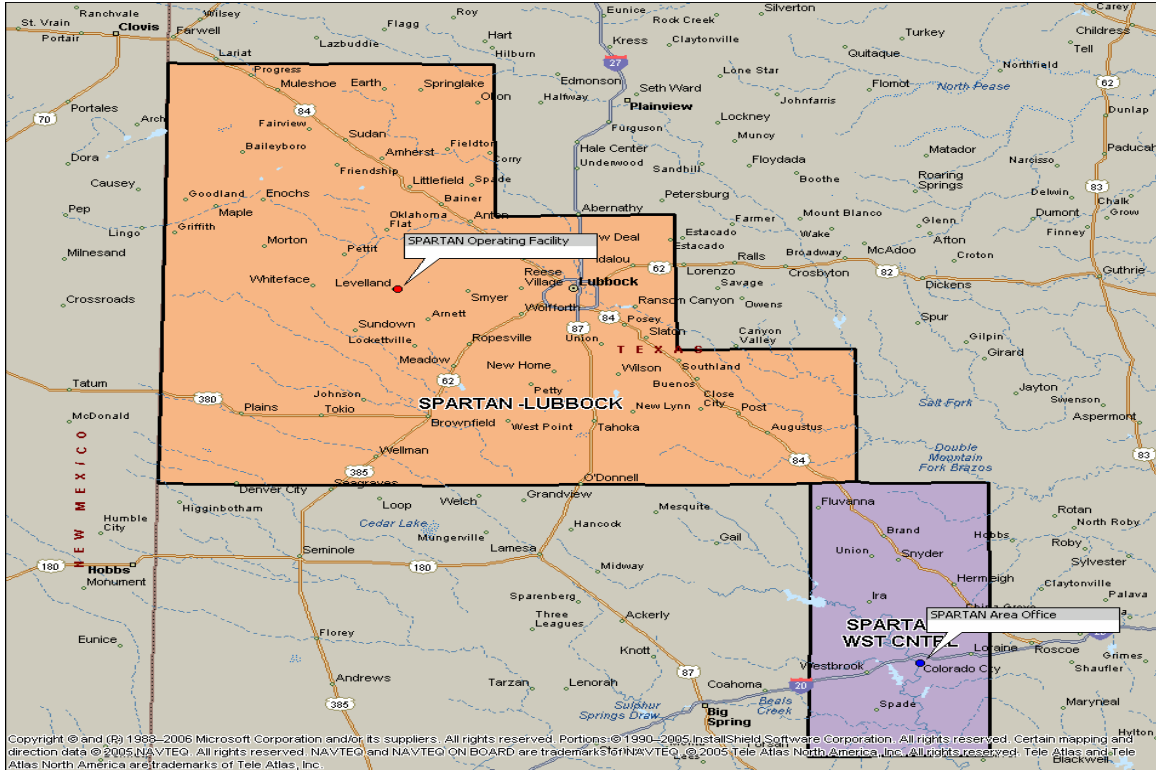
Double Mountain Coach has seven full time drivers who work six days a week. A shortage of drivers and turnover has been an ongoing problem.

## **MARKETING**

Double Mountain Coach uses a brochure for service information. It also distributes a refrigerator magnet with basic service information.

## SOUTH PLAINS COMMUNITY ACTION CENTER (SPARTAN)

### MAP 3 - 5 SPARTAN SERVICE AREA



SPARTAN is primarily a Lubbock or South Plains Area rural transit provider. Nine of the eleven counties in its service area are in the South Plains region and more than 90% of its service is provided in its core nine county service area. The Administrative office is located west of Lubbock and is nearly 200 miles from Abilene and is more than 100 miles from the western edge of West Central Texas Region.

SPARTAN has been a rural provider since 1980. Mitchell County was added to its service area in 2003 with the demise of People for Progress, the prior rural transit provider for that county.

All operating and performance information is not available individually for SPARTAN regarding the two counties. The following information for the two county services is available. Trip length for SPARTAN is almost as long as for Double Mountain at 48.45 miles per passenger. Usage of the service is slightly over 0.25 passengers per capita.



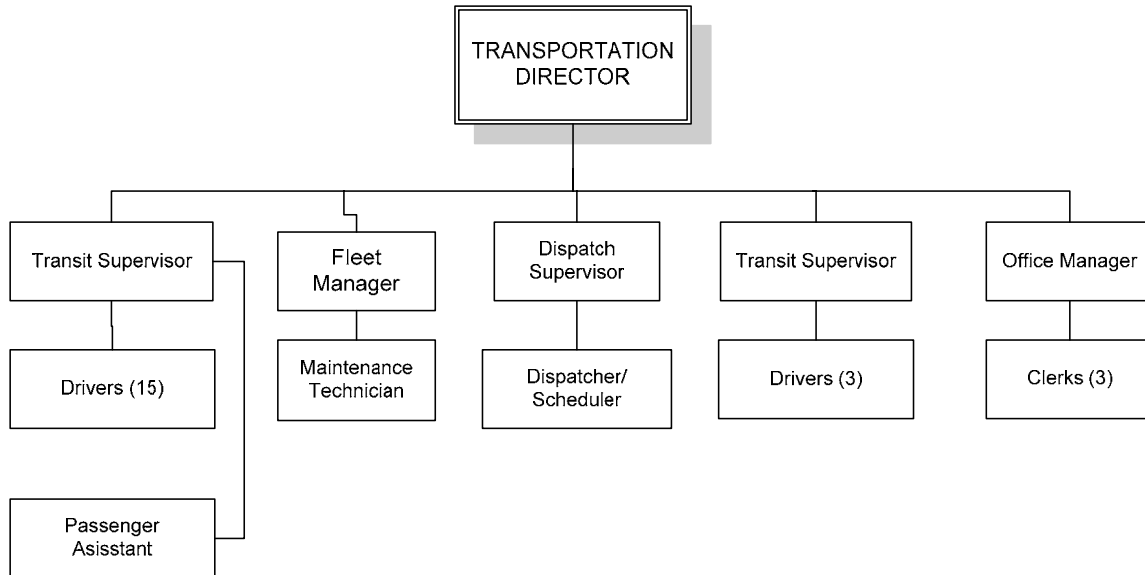
**TABLE 3 - 15**  
**SPARTAN OPERATING INFORMATION**  
**FOR MITCHELL AND SCURRY COUNTY**

<b>SPARTAN OPERATING INFORMATION</b>	<b>SFY 2005 TOTAL</b>
<b>Ridership</b>	5,696
<b>Revenue Miles</b>	275,976
<b>Passengers Per Revenue Mile</b>	0.021
<b>Service Area Population</b>	20,730
<b>Trips Per Capita</b>	0.275

### **ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACH**

SPARTAN is governed by a Board of Directors representing the counties in which service is provided. The Board oversees all of South Plains Community Action Services including rural transit. The SPARTAN Transportation Director reports to Executive Director. SPARTAN has a dispatch supervisor and three dispatcher schedulers. SPARTAN maintains its own vehicles and has two staff dedicated for maintenance. Two transit supervisors oversee eighteen (18) drivers. Four drivers and three vehicles are dedicated to providing service in Mitchell and Scurry Counties. **Chart 3 - 5** shows the SPARTAN organization.

## CHART 3 - 5 SPARTAN ORGANIZATION



### **MEDICAID CONTRACT**

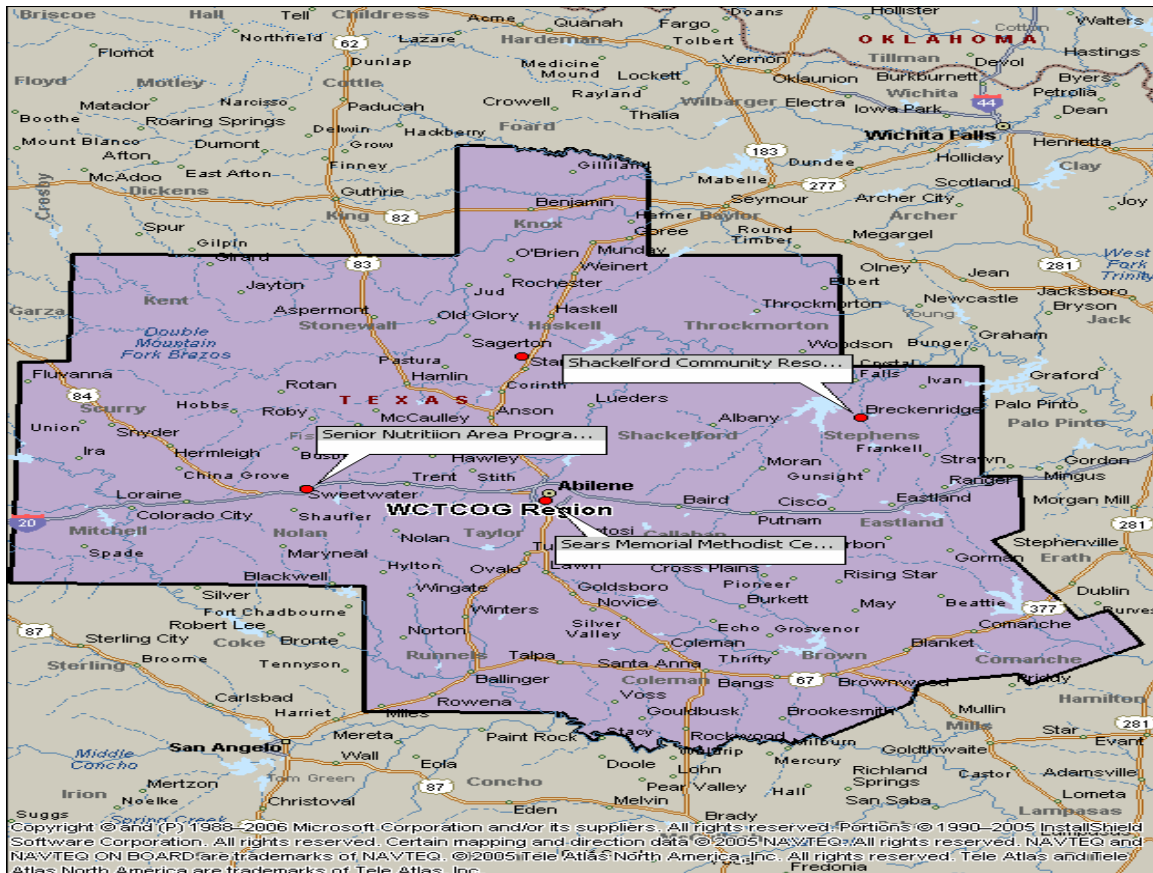
SPARTAN had been the designated Medicaid recipient for Mitchell and Scurry counties. Effective June 26, 2006, CARR subcontracts with SPARTAN to provide Medicaid service for the two county service area of Mitchell and Scurry counties.

### **MARKETING**

SPARTAN provides brochures and flyers on its service. Public service announcements are also used. Services have also been marketed at health fairs and job fairs. Information is also available on the South Plains Community Action Association website.

## 5310 PROVIDERS

### MAP 3 - 6 CURRENT 5310 PROVIDERS



Back in 1996, TXDOT provided a large number of vehicles throughout the state and many new 5310 Recipients were created. In 1998, West Central Texas had 15 human service providers who (as a result of receiving vehicles from TXDOT) were also 5310 recipients; providing 47,546 trips at a cost of \$136,940 or \$2.88 per trip as shown in **Table 3 - 16**. A conscious effort has been to reduce the number of 5310 providers since 1998, and as of 2006, only three 5310 providers remain.

As shown in **Table 3 - 17**, the remaining recipients provide 8,804 trips at a cost of \$54,518 or \$6.19 per trip. A brief summary of the three 5310 recipients is included.

**TABLE 3 - 16**  
**WEST CENTRAL TEXAS REGION**  
**HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDERS - 1998**

<b>5310 Provider</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>	<b>Passenger Trips</b>	<b>Vehicle Miles</b>	<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>Cost Per Trip</b>
Abilene Adult Day Care	2	5,431	22,712	\$24,109	\$4.44
Abilene Goodwill Industries	2	1,111	23,714	\$5,687	\$5.12
AARP - Brownwood	2	4,429	20,795	\$13,584	\$3.07
American Legion of Tuscola	1	295	1,679	\$2,365	\$ 8.02
Brown County Assoc of Retarded Clients.	2	10,630	12,835	\$12,364	\$1.16
Callahan County Nutrition Project	1	4,041	3,306	\$ 736	\$ 0.18
Community Action Program - Abilene	1	1,899	89,445	\$2,769	\$1.46
Fisher County Memorial Post 5072 (Roby)	3	847	33,020	\$6,279	\$ 7.41
Jones County Aging Services	2	2,550	13,145	\$8,750	\$3.43
Kiwanis Club of Colorado City	1	332	4,314	\$4,260	\$12.83
Kiwanis Golden K (Snyder)	1	3,336	4,704	\$7,232	\$2.17
Rural Taylor Council of Aging	2	1,617	7,080	\$6,605	\$4.08
Sears Memorial Methodist Center	2	7,949	49,147	\$39,982	\$ 5.03
Senior Citizens of Buffalo Gap	1	1,108	2,045	\$ 201	\$ 0.18
Senior Nutrition - SNAP of Sweetwater	1	1,971	4,058	\$2,017.00	\$1.02
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>47,546</b>	<b>291,999</b>	<b>\$136,940</b>	<b>\$2.88</b>

**TABLE 3- 17**  
**WEST CENTRAL TEXAS REGION**  
**HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDERS – 2006**

<b>5310 Provider</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>	<b>Passenger Trips</b>	<b>Vehicle Miles</b>	<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>Cost Per Trip</b>
Sears Memorial Methodist Center	3	7,080	53,568	\$39,706	\$ 5.61
Shackelford County Community Resource Center	1	640	17,181	\$12,618	\$19.72
Senior Nutrition - SNAP of Sweetwater	1	1,124	1,122	\$2,194	\$1.95
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8,804</b>	<b>71,871</b>	<b>\$54,518</b>	<b>\$6.19</b>

Sears Methodist Retirement System provides access with five buses (three of which are funded by 5310) and one van for service to persons in its retirement and nursing center system in Abilene and surrounding rural Taylor County. The table above only shows the information for the three TXDOT funded vehicles. Trip purposes can be medical appointments and social outings. The total local contribution of Sears Methodist Retirement Center is \$39,706 for SFY 2005.

Shackelford County Community Resource Center provides countywide service medical and nutrition transportation service based in Albany with one TXDOT funded vehicle. The total local match for Shackelford County is \$12,618.

Senior Nutrition Activities Program provides service within the City of Sweetwater to its adult day care center for its lunch and activity programs. The total local match is \$1,795 as the Area Agency on Aging funding of \$399 is not subject to local match.

## **HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS**

Several additional providers in the West Central Texas region provide transportation services. Services provided are targeted to specific groups of clients.

### **CITY OF ABILENE SENIOR SERVICES**

The City of Abilene Senior Services has five senior centers located around the City. Anyone over 60 who wishes to attend the midday program (including lunch) can receive transportation Monday through Friday. Persons over 60 can also use Senior Services for medical trips and grocery shopping. Appointments must be scheduled between 8:00 AM and 2:00 PM Monday through Friday.

Six vehicles including 2 sedans and 4 Type II vans are available for service. The City of Abilene senior services provides approximately 27,000 trips per year. None of the vans are lift equipped. If an individual is required to use a lift they will use CityLink services. CityLink is also used to provide services when demand for trips exceeds Senior Service vehicle capacity. Funding primarily comes from the General Fund of the City of Abilene (\$117,000 per year). AAA funding provides another \$7,000 for the program. Based on an estimated cost of \$124,000 per year, the cost per trip for the City of Abilene senior services is \$4.59 per trip.

### **SNYDER SENIOR SERVICES**

The City of Snyder provides a similar service with five vehicles serving the three senior centers within the city.

### **BETTY HARDWICK/MHMR**

The Betty Hardwick center provides Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MHMR) services in Taylor, Jones, Callahan, Stephens, and Shackelford Counties. Transportation services can be for the following purposes:

- Adult day care of day habilitation - both to facility and for day trips;
- Community support services;
- Skills training;
- Sheltered workshops;
- Employment location.

Betty Hardwick has 12 vehicles available including:

- 3 – 15 passenger vans, two that are lift equipped;
- 3 – 8 passenger vans, one that is lift equipped;
- 5 passenger sedans

Not all service can be provided for its clients with the existing vehicles, so CityLink is used to provide service within the City of Abilene to eligible clients. Betty Hardwick has also entered into a contract with Classic Taxi of Abilene whereby it transports clients to and from work. The cost of a round trip within the City of Abilene is \$16.00.

### **HEAD START – ABILENE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (AISD)**

Head Start provides transportation to its day care centers, to work (for parents) and for medical appointments. AISD Head Start has two full size buses (53 passengers), one is lift equipped. One 15 passenger van (not lift equipped) is also available. Currently approximately 6,000 to 8,000 trips per year are provided by Head Start.

A shortage of funds exists, and more drivers and vehicles could be used. There is a waiting list of at least ten students per day who cannot access this service.

### **MESA SPRINGS HEALTH CARE**

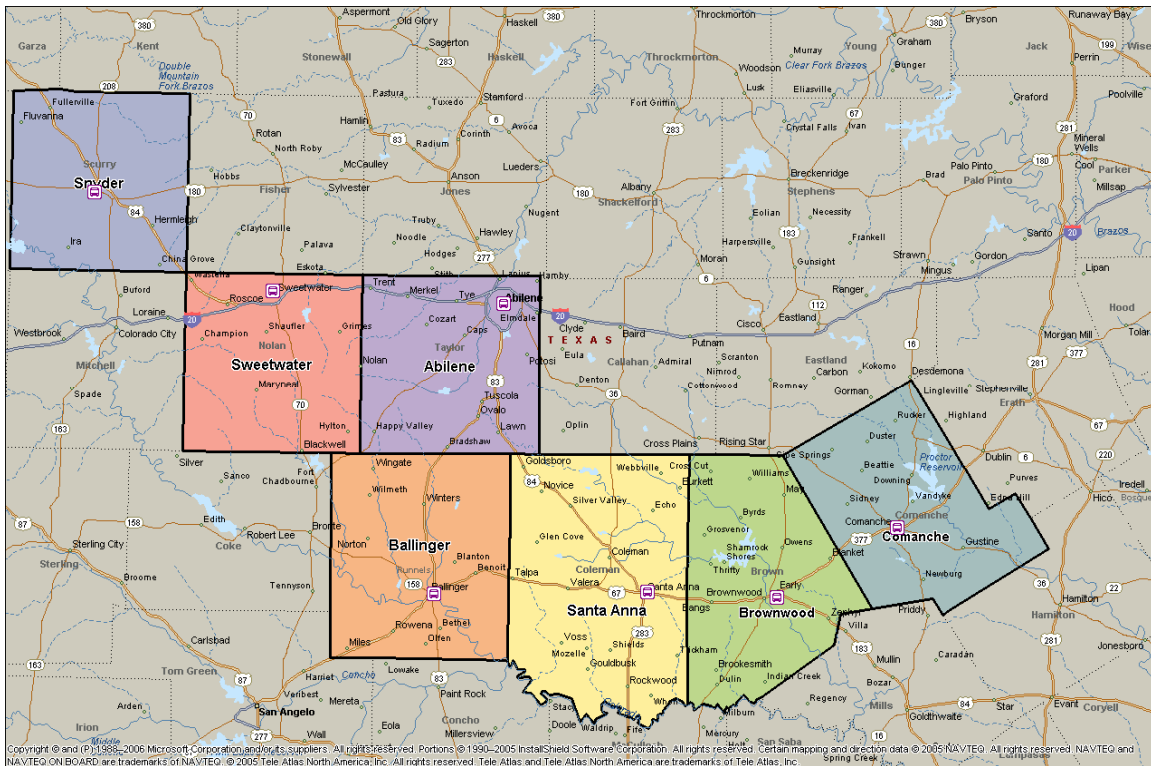
Mesa Springs Health Care is a private provider that delivers medical transportation to the counties of Callahan, Haskell, Coleman, Jones, Taylor and Shackelford to its facilities. Currently, all demand is met – staff work involves other duties in addition to driving. Two lift equipped vehicles are available for transportation.

## PRIVATE FOR PROFIT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Additional transportation options are available by private transportation providers. These providers are operating for profit transportation services that may provide additional mobility options for West Central Texas residents.

### GREYHOUND INTERCITY TRANSPORTATION

#### MAP 3 - 7 LOCATION OF GREYHOUND TERMINALS



Greyhound provides intercity bus city with stops in seven West Central cities (Comanche, Brownwood, Santa Anna (no depot), Ballinger, Abilene, Sweetwater and Snyder (see Map above). Travel within the region and to Texas destinations such as Lubbock, Big Spring, Midland, Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio is available. Frequency varies between daily and four times a day depending on the route. One way fares varied between \$14.50 for Sweetwater to Abilene and \$62.00 for Snyder to Dallas. Greyhound has announced substantial realignments of its routes with the goals of reducing the number of stops between larger cities. The



result for the West Texas region may be a reduction of either terminals and travel frequency.

## **TAXICAB SERVICES**

Only the two largest cities in the West Central Texas region have taxi cab providers – Abilene and Brownwood. Two taxi companies operate out of Abilene and one small taxi company (Friendly Cab) operates out of Brownwood.

## **AIRPORT SHUTTLES**

Abilene Regional Airport provides commuter plane service to Houston and Dallas through American and Continental Express. No shuttle or bus service is provided to the airport. Dallas Fort Worth International Airport is 174 miles from Abilene and 175 miles from Brownwood. An airport shuttles service was attempted several years ago in Brownwood but was not successful. No airport shuttle service is currently provided.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **EXISTING REGIONAL COORDINATION**

Coordination between transit agencies is not a new concept in West Central Texas. Transit coordination is part and parcel of the service delivery approach of all of the providers including the small urban provider, CityLink. Coordination within West Central Texas has been extensive and vital to the existence of rural transit service. A strong argument could be made that rural public transportation in West Central Texas would not exist if the three agencies involved did not coordinate with and provide service to social and human service agencies. CARR, Double Mountain Coach and SPARTAN have used partnerships with human service agencies as a vital component of their service from the time of their inception.

#### **Coordination and the Development of Rural Transit Agencies**

Rural public transit agencies are often the product of historical coordination efforts begun by human or social service agencies. Similar historical development occurred in many rural agencies with a similar pattern of development. All three of the WCTCOG rural transit agencies have similar patterns of development:

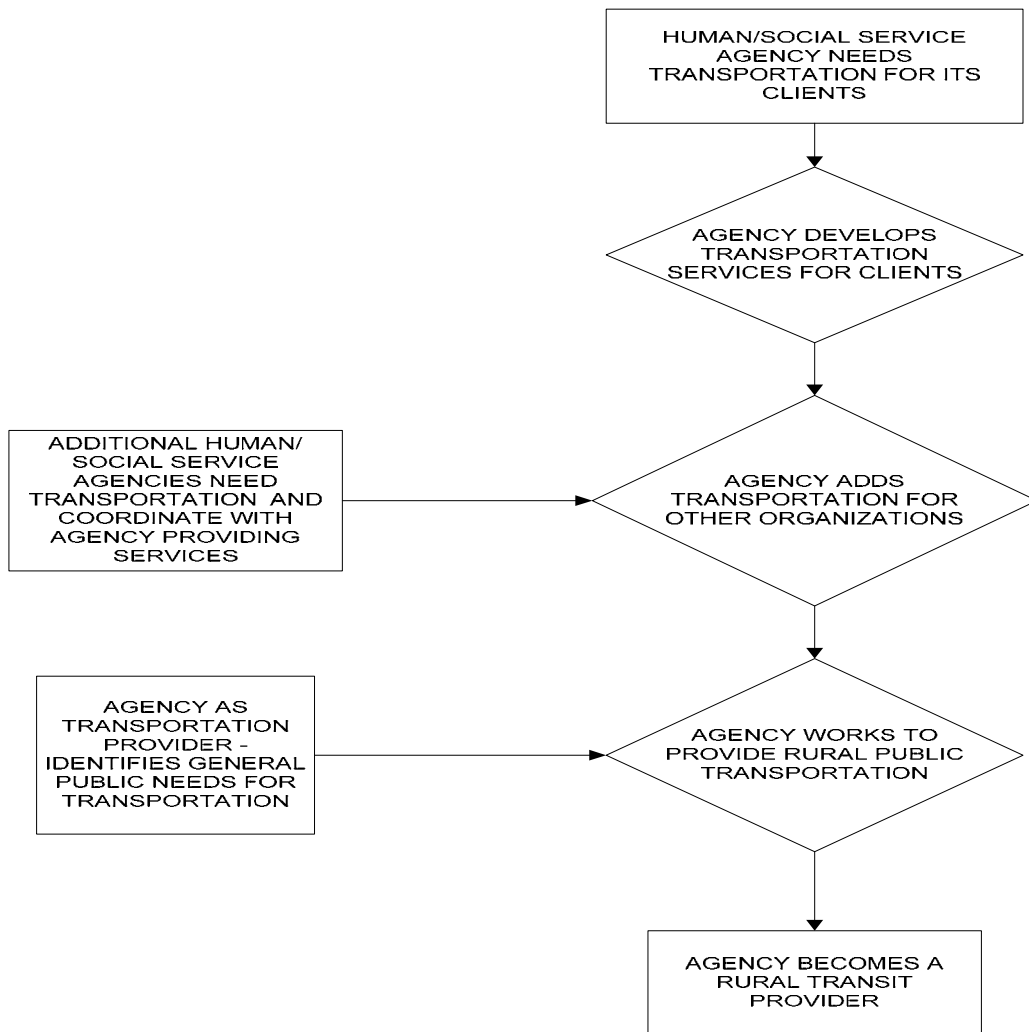
- A human service agency or agencies had difficulty getting its clients to its facility so that services could be provided;
- Transportation service developed to meet this specific need;
- Additional agencies had similar transportation challenges, and contracted with the human service agency for its transportation services;
- Transportation services expanded and the agency realized it could use its funding to leverage federal transit assistance;
- The transportation service emerged as a rural service provider and remained either as a part of the founding agency or became an independent transit agency.

Rural transit agencies frequently develop through coordination and expand into providing public transit services. Coordinating transit services is ingrained in the rural agency organizational culture. Rural agencies are generally a newer development than most urban agencies. They emerged with human/social service coordination as the key trigger for their organizational development.

Instrumental to developing a coordination plan is determining the level and effectiveness of current coordination efforts. West Central Texas has

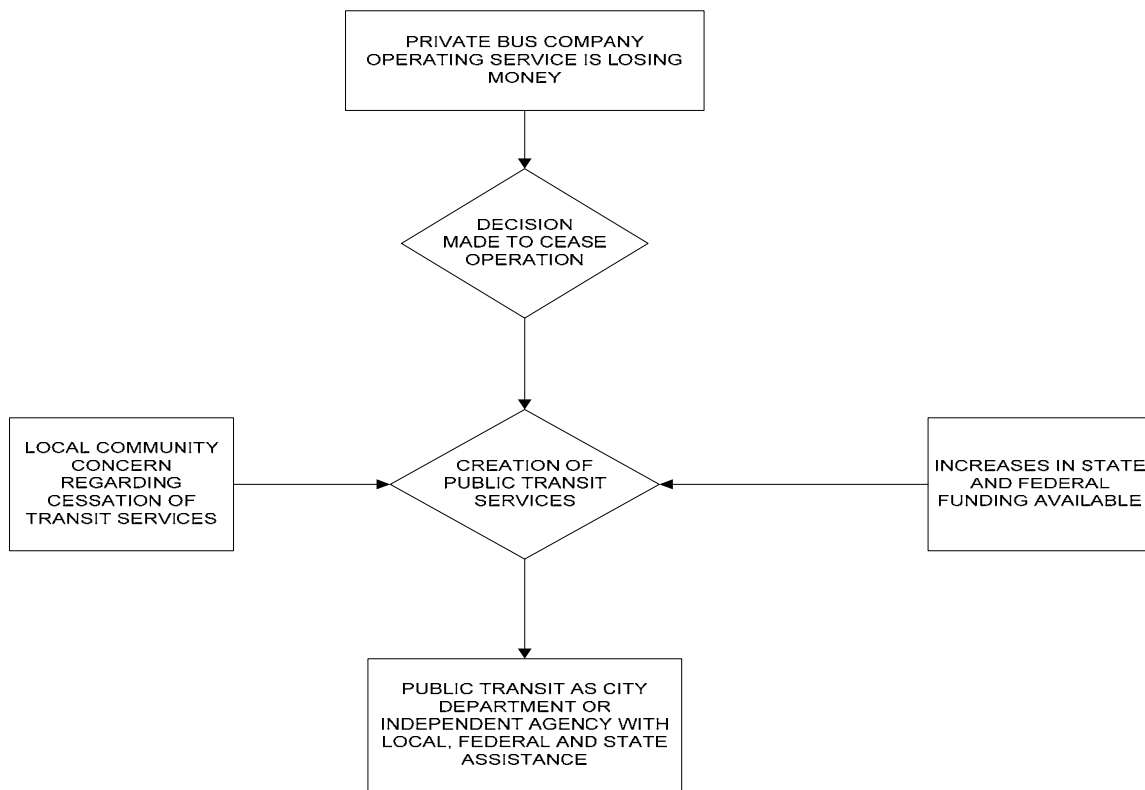
been an area where the needs for transit service have far outstripped resources. Transit and other agencies also generally exhibit a strong ethic to provide the most service possible for their clients and customers. While improvements in the existing level of coordination are both necessary and possible in West Central Texas, a substantial amount of coordination already exists. **Diagram 4 - 1** illustrates the process by which many human service transportation programs evolve into a public rural transportation provider. Coordination as the means to increase service is central to the growth and development of transportation services.

**DIAGRAM 4 - 1**  
**DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TRANSIT SERVICES**



Urban transit agencies often have a different history. Many large (and many small) urban transit agencies emerged as the result of the failure of private companies to continue to deliver public transit service between about 1960 and 1980. Urban bus systems were successors to private bus companies providing existing transit service when it became no longer financially feasible to operate without public funding.

## DIAGRAM 4 – 2 DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN TRANSIT SERVICES



Is the difference in how rural and urban systems emerged relevant with respect to developing coordination strategies? Yes, because how and why the transit agency developed affects how it aligns its services and shapes its perspective. Therefore, it is important to understand how the agency developed. Here are some of the differences with respect to coordination.

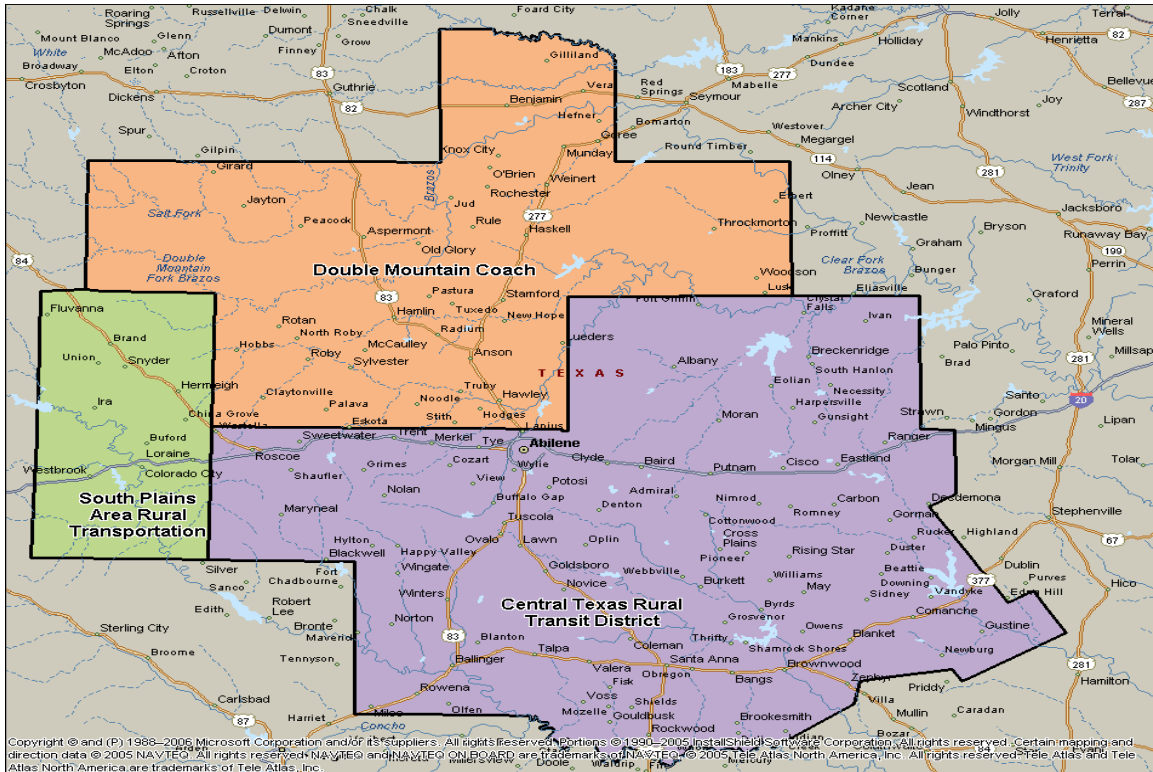
- Rural systems are largely based upon coordination with human services;
- Urban systems use coordination as a means to expand existing services;
- Rural public transit service usually is a means of expanding beyond human service transportation;
- Coordinated transit for urban systems is a means of expanding beyond fixed route service;
- Rural transit services usually have coordinated transportation as their core operation;
- Urban transit systems normally have fixed route service and (since 1990) ADA Paratransit as their core operations;

TXDOT is requiring 24 regional plans to be developed. Each district is unique and the existing structure of transportation services is important to understand. Different existing arrangements of service require different approaches to coordination.

West Central Texas has three rural providers that each serves a geographic distinct sub-region of West Central Texas. CARR serves the eastern, southern and central portions of the region, Double Mountain service the northern tier and SPARTAN serves two counties at the western edge of the region. **Map 4-1** shows the regional configuration of the rural service providers.

None of the regional providers are located in the region's largest and centrally located city, Abilene. Coleman, CARR's administrative location is in the southeast quadrant of the region. Aspermont, Double Mountain's location is in the northern part of the region, and SPARTAN is located out of the West Central Texas region entirely.

## MAP 4-1 WCTCOG RURAL PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDERS



### Governance and Local Funding

At the core of most rural public transit agencies' challenge in the United States is the issue of funding. While most large urban agencies can rely on one or more dedicated local funding source, rural systems rely on a patchwork of funding sources, along with limited or no local support from county and municipal government.

None of the counties or municipalities in West Central Texas provides direct financial assistance to any of the rural transit systems. Double Mountain Coach serves seven counties that provide in kind assistance, allowing the in kind services to be leveraged for state and federal funds. No assistance is provided by the twelve counties of CARR or SPARTAN service areas. **Table 4 – 2** shows the level of local contributions.

**TABLE 4 - 2**  
**LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO TRANSIT SERVICES**

County	Rural Provider	FY 2005 County General Fund Contribution	FY 2005 County In Kind Contribution (\$ value)
Brown	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Callahan	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Coleman	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Comanche	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Eastland	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Nolan	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Runnels	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Shackelford	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Stephens	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Taylor (Rural)	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Mitchell	SPARTAN	\$ -	\$ -
Scurry	SPARTAN	\$ -	\$ -
Fisher	ASBDC	\$ -	\$1,555.33
Haskell	ASBDC	\$ -	\$18,104.02
Jones	ASBDC	\$ -	\$21,587.96
Kent	ASBDC	\$ -	\$10,389.59
Knox	ASBDC	\$ -	\$ 3,732.79
Stonewall	ASBDC	\$ -	\$ 4,194.84
Throckmorton	ASBDC	\$ -	\$ 1,928.61

The City of Abilene does contribute more than \$400,000 per year out of its general fund to operate the small urban transit system, CityLink.

**Regional Coordination**

The Medical Transportation Program is the outstanding example of successful recent regional coordination in West Central Texas. Leadership in the coordination effort was assumed by the Central Texas Rural Transit District (CARR). Up until June 2006, West Central Texas had several Medicaid providers. The newest MTP Request for Proposal issued in the fall of 2005 precluded the existing arrangement from continuing. Regional coordination by an existing provider or another entity would be needed in order to administer the contract.

The West Central Texas Council of Government evaluated the proposal and decided that it was not best equipped to lead the coordinated arrangement. CARR decided to pursue the contract, and has successfully enlisted the three other regional public transit providers, Double Mountain Coach, SPARTAN and CityLink to provide service in their respective service areas.

TXDOT awarded the contract to CARR for Region 7 – West Central Texas. CARR developed contracts and worked with the other providers through inter-local agreements and development of a common reporting framework to allow for Medicaid to work throughout the region.

Service under the new contract commenced in June 2006, and while many of the stipulations of the new state contract have been challenging to implement CARR and the regional providers have developed a new coordinated regional system for Medical Transportation in West Central Texas.

## **CARR AND COORDINATION**

Transit service at CARR is actually primarily dependent upon its coordinated contracts with outside agencies to ensure that it can match available state and federal dollars and provide service. The Medicaid contract is the largest of its contracts to provide coordinated services, but it is not the only service. Rural general public transportation is not shown, but the financial ability of CARR to provide general public transportation is largely based on its coordination efforts. In other words, coordination for CARR has allowed it the have the ability to provide rural public transportation in its service area.

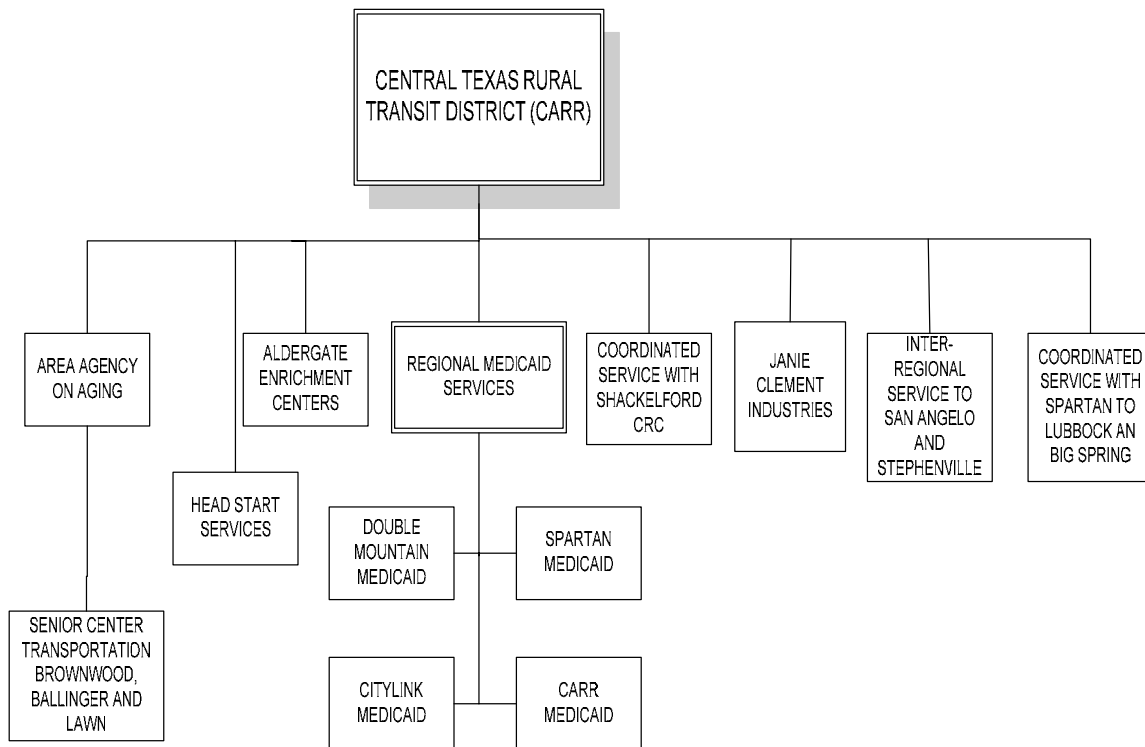
A few additional coordinated services are provided by CARR, including:

- Provides leadership role in Regional Coordination Plan as co-lead with WCTCOG. CARR is the co-lead along with West Central Texas Council of Governments in the development of the Transportation Regional Coordination Plan. The leadership role is consistent with other initiatives of CARR within West Central Texas.
- Provide office and wait area for other transportation providers and passengers in Abilene. Abilene is not in CARR's service area, but is a primary destination of its customers. CARR has offered the use of the facility to other providers, as a waiting area for drivers and customers.
- Coordinates inter-county service for seniors with SNAP in Sweetwater;
- Serves on local and regional boards including: TXDOT District 5310 Elderly and Disabled Advisory Board for Abilene and Brownwood, West Central Texas Workforce Development Board, Area Agency on Aging.

**Diagram 4- 3** shows the coordination model of CARR.



## CARR COORDINATION MODEL DIAGRAM 4- 3



### DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH AND COORDINATION

Double Mountain Coach has a different operating model than CARR. A large number of trips are out of the service area to Abilene. Most trips are either general public transportation trips or Medicaid trips. Medicaid trips are part of the regional coordination effort.

Two additional types of coordination service are provided by Double Mountain Coach. First, Double Mountain Coach provides transportation to the Greyhound Station in Abilene which allows its customer the ability to easily access intercity bus service to Dallas, Midland-Odessa and more distant locations. Second, coordinated transportation with area nursing homes is provided.

## **SPARTAN AND COORDINATION**

SPARTAN primarily provides its transportation services to areas outside of the West Central Region. Coordination efforts are focused in the South Plains region where SPARTAN is located. However, SPARTAN is also involved in local and regional coordination efforts in Mitchell and Scurry Counties.

SPARTAN is a provider of Medicaid services for trips originating in Mitchell and Scurry County. SPARTAN also works with CARR to coordinate trips and transfer with of passengers to Abilene, Big Spring and Lubbock between the respective providers.

## **CITYLINK AND COORDINATION**

CityLink is a small urban provider. Their core service is fixed route service where more than 500,000 trips annually are provided. Measured in passenger trips, CityLink is by far the largest provider in the region providing more than 75% of the region's transit trips.

CityLink's core service is its hub and spoke network of 12 fixed routes. The CityLink funding model is primarily not based on the coordinated services model. However, CityLink is among the smaller urban providers who have used coordination effectively to provide additional transportation services.

Coordination has emerged as a significant component in what CityLink does. CityLink has gone beyond providing the traditional core services and in doing so has met many of the goals of coordinated transportation including increased service in meeting different transit needs.

Evening service is not a given in small urban transportation services. Ridership declines during the evening, yet there are significant needs for transit service after 6:00 PM. CityLink has leveraged Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funds to be able to provide general demand response service for passengers until midnight Monday through Saturday. The evening service is successful and provided 17,629 evening trips during Fiscal Year 2005, primarily for employment.

CityLink has coordinated senior trips with the City of Abilene Senior Services providing trips for persons who require lift assisted service (and are ADA certified). Although the City of Abilene Senior Services provides a separate service, coordination exists between CityLink and the Senior Services. The Betty Hardwick Center provides transportation for its clients; CityLink provides an available supplement service for Betty

Hardwick Center clients. CityLink has also worked to provide dedicated service to after-school programs through contracts with Boys and Girls club of Abilene and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Books and Beyond.

Instrumental to developing a coordination plan is determining what level of coordination currently exists. West Central Texas has been an area where needs for transit service have outstripped resources. While improvements in the existing level of coordination are both necessary and possible in West Central Texas, a substantial amount of coordination already exists.

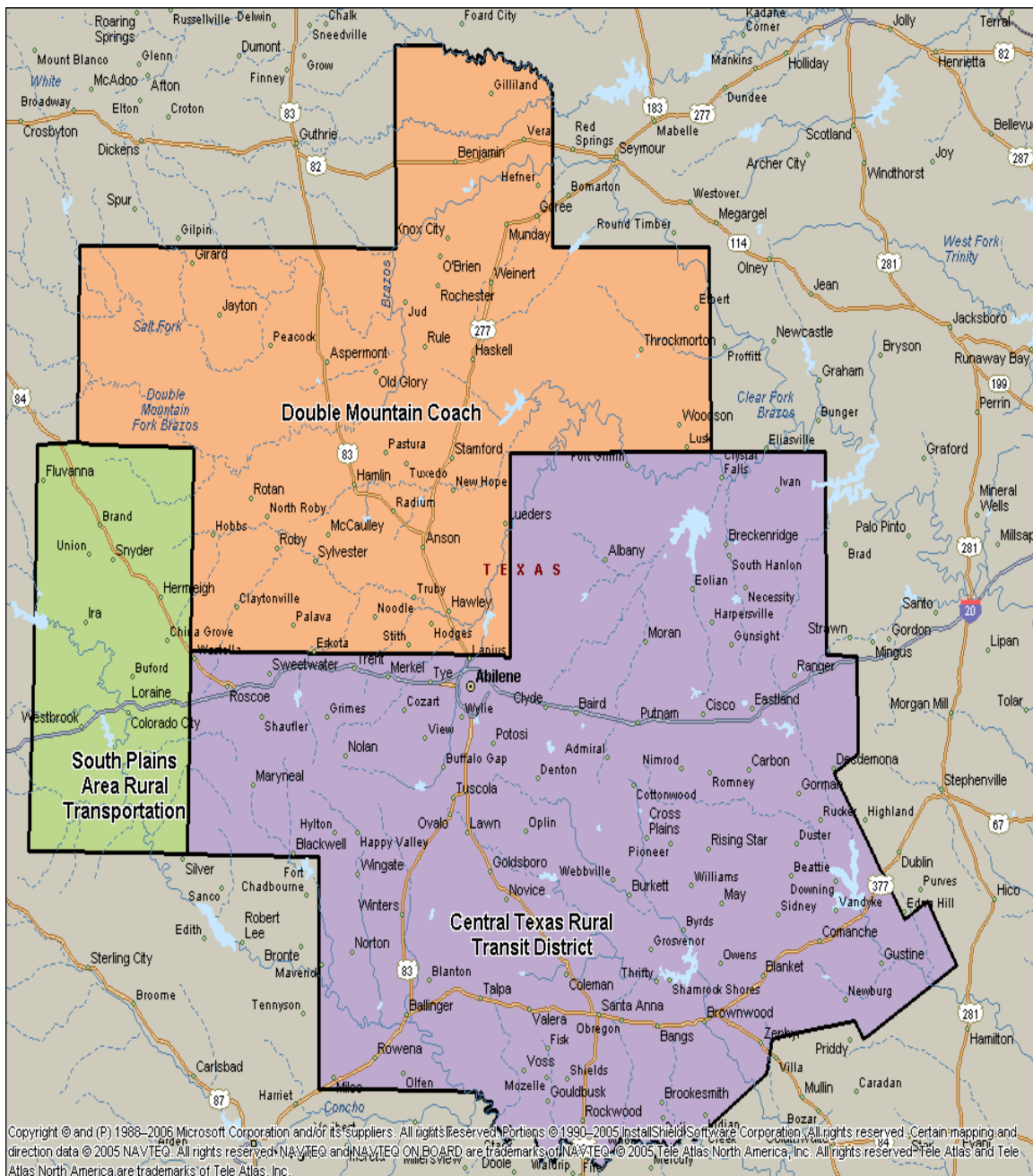
## **LIMITS OF COORDINATION**

Coordination is a helpful, valuable and important practice for transit agencies to pursue. Transit coordination is not a panacea; organizations with limited funding may be able to provide more or better service. Will it meet all demand? Lack of reliable revenue transit vehicles in West Central Texas is a large barrier to increasing the level of coordinated transit service. Existing service is challenging due to the lack of reliable vehicles; expanded coordinated service is more problematic.

Not every effort at coordination even among those implemented will have desirable results. Coordination should be done to provide a tangible benefit which can be financial savings, increased service levels or volume, improved customer service, better information or enhanced funding. However, it should not be done purely for its own sake.

Coordination is not necessarily consolidation. Having transportation organizations merge operation may make sense, but often local transportation providers who remain intact, rather consolidated into a regional operation may be the preferred option. Sometimes a local, small operation is the best, most cost-efficient way to perform a transportation task and consolidation can lead to a negative outcome.

## SECTION 2 REGIONAL SERVICE COORDINATION PLANNING



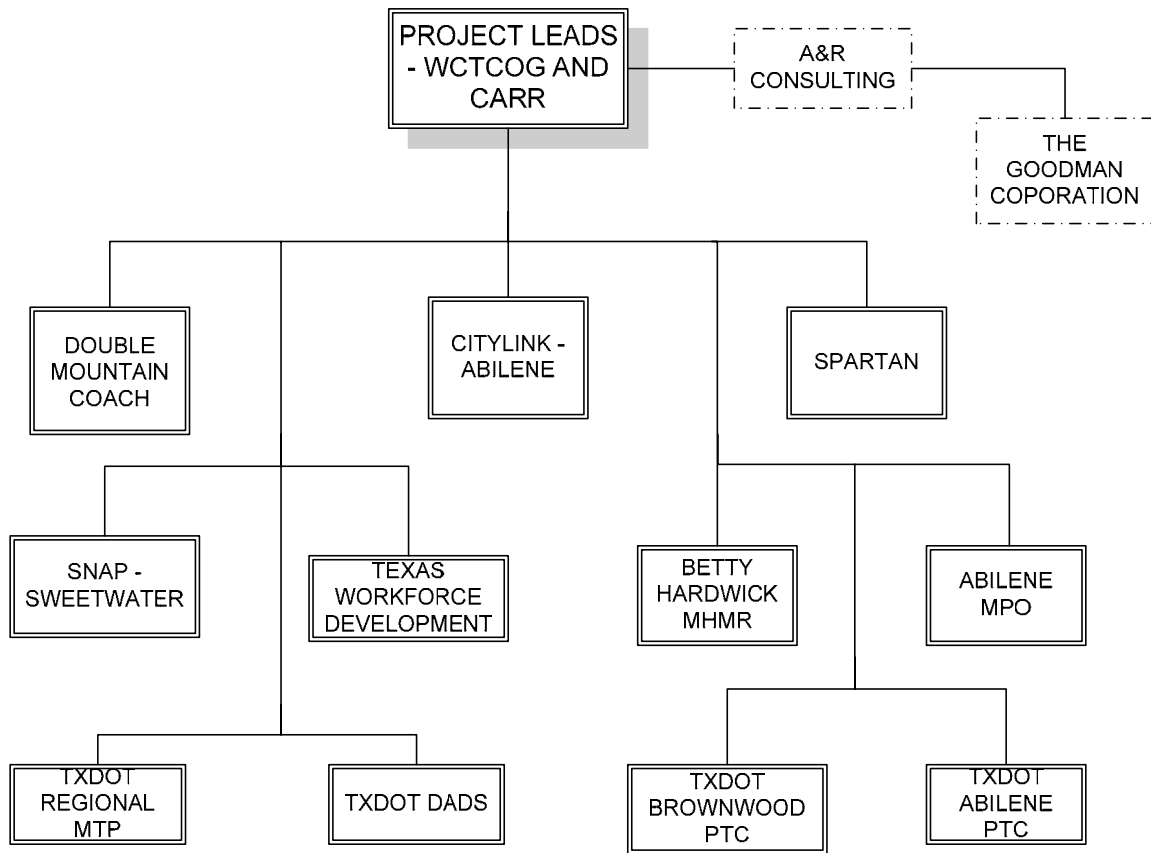
## **LEAD AGENCIES**

The West Central Texas Council of Governments and the Central Texas Rural Transit District (CARR) are the co-lead agencies on this study. Technical support has been provided under contract with A&R Consulting of Houston.

## **OTHER INVOLVED ENTITIES**

- **Abilene MPO**
- **CityLink, Abilene**
- **TXDOT PTC Abilene**
- **TXDOT PTC Brownwood**
- **Aspermont Small Business Development Corporation (Double Mountain Coach)**
- **South Plains Community Action Agency (SPARTAN)**
- **West Central Texas Area Agency on Aging**
- **City of Brownwood**
- **Sweetwater Nutrition Activities Program (SNAP)**
- **Shackelford County Community Resources Center**
- **City of Abilene Senior Citizens**
- **West Central Texas Workforce Development Board**
- **Central Texas Opportunities**
- **NORTEX Regional Planning Commission**
- **Concho Valley Council of Governments (CVCOG)**

# DIAGRAM 1 WEST CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL COORDINATION PLAN STEERING GROUP



## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETINGS HELD IN MAY**

#### **SEE APPENDIX C FOR PRESS RELEASES AND PUBLICITY**

May 15, 2006 5:30 P.M. MONDAY	Adams Street Community Center  511 East Adams Street, Room C Brownwood, Texas
May 16, 2006 5:30 P.M. TUESDAY	Experienced Citizens Center  1401 South 1 <sup>st</sup> Street Haskell, Texas
May 17, 2006 5:30 P.M. WEDNESDAY	WCTCOG Conference Room  841 North Judge Ely Boulevard Abilene, Texas

## SECTION 3 REGIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Source: Google Earth



## **CHAPTER 1 PROJECT GOALS**

The Project Goals for the West Central Texas Regional Transportation Coordination Plan are as follows:

Goal # 1 – Comply with Reporting Requirements of the Texas Department of Transportation in accordance with HB 3588

Goal # 2 – Compare with Federal Coordination Guidelines in a manner that will assure WCTCOG and agencies within regional are eligible for Section 5310, 5316 and 5317 Funding per March 15, 2006 Federal Register

Goal # 3 – Develop an inclusive Coordination Plan that will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of transit service throughout the WCTCOG Region

Goal # 4 – Improve the delivery of transportation services through enhanced coordination;

Goal # 5 – Work through coordination to generate efficiencies in operation that can lead to increased levels of service;

Goal # 6 – Provide improved service quality and service information in order to enhance customer service/satisfaction;

Goal # 7 – Encourage cooperation and coordination in a manner that enhance service delivery and the overcoming of regulatory and logistical obstacles.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION GAPS**

Transit policymakers have recognized that rural areas of the United States are underserved and under-funded vis-à-vis public transit needs. Public support for rural transit service generally started later than it did for its urban counterparts, and as we was noted in Chapter 1 of this section, rural service built local support and funding through coordinated transportation service contracts. Local support in the form of direct revenue assistance at the county and community level often was more the exception than the rule.

Two methodologies have been developed in this study to assess the level of service and need in the West Central Texas Region. Each measure provides a potential perspective in how much transit service is needed for the nineteen counties in the region. The measures are based for rural service, and exclude the City of Abilene.

The first measure is a per capita approach to transit need, positing transit need is substantially based upon population. For the sake of clarity, this method will be described as the Per Capita Approach to transit need and service. The method provides a rough approximation of a reasonable service level and the relative performance of the transit providers in the 19 counties.

A second approach has been developed which examines transit need based upon five demographic indicators compared with Texas as a whole. A separate measure examines the appropriate level of rural transit service within each county. Type of service availability (with existence and level of general public transportation being deemed the most significant factor) A score of zero or one is given for all indicators of service except the existence and level of general public transportation (which is scored between one and three).

Rural transportation is public transportation but it is not as efficient nor does it provide the number of trips that large urban or even small urban transportation can provide. Densities are low, average trip lengths are high. However, significant numbers of individuals in rural areas need transit service. West Central Texas faces challenges with respect to an aging population, low income levels, and long distances to travel. As a result there are significant needs for transit service. Examining transit needs in West Central Texas indicates that the relative level of rural transit need in West Central Texas is likely higher than in Texas as a whole.

## TRANSIT NEEDS AND THE TRANSIT GAP INDEX

The Transit Needs Index provides a tool to assist in assessing both the relative level of transit need combined with assessing the level of service provided. Transit need is determined by measuring key demographic indicators of the level of transportation need. Data is derived from the 2000 US Census. The transit need median is based on the level of the demographic indicator for the state of Texas.

Transportation need consider the following demographic indicators.

- **Percentage of household without an automobile** (mobility challenge). A higher percentage of households, translates to a higher transit need.
- **Median household income** – (resources available) lower average income translates to a higher transit need due to assumed vehicle reliability and cost of gasoline.
- **Percentage Persons over 65** (seniors) - Higher senior population tends to result in higher percentage of persons who cannot use a vehicle, hence a need for alternate transportation.
- **Percentage Persons with a Disability (persons with disabilities)** – Indicator attempts to measure need based on percentage of persons with disability which may also result in a greater need for alternate transportation.
- **Percentage of households below poverty line (economically disadvantaged)** – Represents a level of economic need and need for less expensive mobility options.

Each indicator is measure on a scale of 1 to 3 with 1 indicating the lowest need for transit and 3 indicating the highest need for transit. Texas transit statistics represent the base point for each measurement since need is being measured versus relative need in Texas as a whole. The measurement of transit need is not seen as an absolute measurement of service need, but as a tool to understand relative levels of transit need throughout the region. **Table 2-1** shows the three point scoring system based on the level for the entire state of Texas. Counties where the need is substantially higher than the Texas average (more than 20% above state average – except for median household income which is lower) are scored as a three. Counties where the need is substantially lower than the Texas average (more than 20% below state average – except for median household income which is higher) are scored as a one. Counties in which the need is within 20% of the state level are scored as a two. Therefore, scores higher than 10 indicate transit need higher than the state (15 is the maximum score and 5 is the minimum score).

**TABLE 2-1  
 SCORING FOR TRANSIT NEEDS INDEX**

	Percentage of Households without an Automobile	Median Household Income	Percentage Persons over 65	Percentage of Persons with a Disability 21-64	Percentage of Households below poverty line
What it measures	Mobility challenge	Financial resources	Senior population	Disability population	Economically disadvantaged
Texas	7.40%	\$39,927	9.90%	19.90%	12.00%
High Need	8.88% or higher	\$31,942 or lower	11.88% or higher	23.88% or higher	14.40% or higher
High Score	3	3	3	3	3
Medium Need	between 5.92% and 8.88%	between \$31,942 and \$47,912	Between 7.92% and 11.88%	between 15.92% and 23.88%	between 9.6% and 14.40%
Medium Score	2	2	2	2	2
Low Need	lower than 5.92%	higher than \$47,912	lower than 7.92%	lower than 15.92%	lower than 9.6%
Low Score	1	1	1	1	1

**TABLE 2-2  
 WEST CENTRAL DEMOGRAPHIC LEVELS OF  
 ESTIMATED TRANSIT NEED**

<b>County</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Persons over 65</b>	<b>Percent households without a car</b>	<b>Percent Persons 21-65 with a disability</b>	<b>Per Capita Household Income</b>	<b>Household Poverty Rate</b>
Brown	37,964	16.40%	5.70%	23.70%	\$30,974	17.20%
Callahan	12,905	17.00%	4.30%	20.90%	\$32,463	12.20%
Coleman	9,235	23.00%	6.60%	21.60%	\$25,568	19.90%
Comanche	14,026	20.30%	6.90%	28.00%	\$28,422	17.30%
Eastland	18,297	20.90%	7.00%	26.30%	\$26,832	16.80%
Fisher	4,344	22.70%	5.40%	24.30%	\$27,659	17.50%
Haskell	6,093	25.50%	6.20%	22.30%	\$23,690	22.80%
Jones	20,785	14.00%	5.90%	22.30%	\$29,572	16.80%
Kent	859	25.50%	1.70%	16.30%	\$30,433	10.40%
Knox	4,253	22.70%	9.20%	17.10%	\$25,453	22.90%
Mitchell	9,698	15.10%	9.00%	23.40%	\$25,399	17.70%
Nolan	15,802	16.40%	8.20%	23.50%	\$26,209	21.70%
Runnels	11,495	19.50%	7.00%	22.60%	\$27,806	19.20%
Scurry	16,361	15.40%	6.40%	20.00%	\$31,646	16.00%
Shackelford	3,302	18.20%	4.90%	18.40%	\$30,479	13.60%
Stephens	9,674	17.70%	7.30%	25.90%	\$29,583	15.60%
Stonewall	1,693	24.00%	5.50%	21.20%	\$27,935	19.30%
Taylor	126,555	12.40%	6.20%	19.50%	\$34,035	14.50%
Throckmorton	1,850	20.50%	4.60%	17.70%	\$28,277	13.50%
<b>Texas</b>	<b>20,851,820</b>	<b>9.90%</b>	<b>7.40%</b>	<b>19.90%</b>	<b>\$39,927</b>	<b>15.40%</b>

Source: US Census 2000

**TABLE 2 - 3**  
**WEST CENTRAL TEXAS SCORING OF**  
**ESTIMATED TRANSIT NEED**

County	Population	Percent households without a car	Median Household Income	Persons over 65	Percent Persons 21-65 with a disability	Percentage of Household Below Poverty Line	Total Score
Brown	37,964	1	3	3	2	3	12
Callahan	12,905	1	2	3	2	2	10
Coleman	9,235	2	3	3	2	3	13
Comanche	14,026	2	3	3	3	3	14
Eastland	18,297	2	3	3	3	3	14
Fisher	4,344	2	3	3	3	3	14
Haskell	6,093	1	3	3	2	3	12
Jones	20,785	1	3	3	2	3	12
Kent	859	1	2	3	2	2	10
Knox	4,253	3	3	3	2	3	14
Mitchell	9,698	3	3	3	2	3	14
Nolan	15,802	2	3	3	2	3	13
Runnels	11,495	2	3	3	2	3	13
Scurry	16,361	2	3	3	2	3	13
Shackelford	3,302	1	3	3	2	2	11
Stephens	9,674	2	3	3	3	3	14
Stonewall	1,693	2	3	3	2	3	13
Taylor	126,555	2	2	3	2	3	12
Throckmorton	1,850	1	3	3	2	2	11
<b>Texas</b>	<b>20,851,820</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: US Census 2000

Based upon **Table 2-3**, six counties show the relatively highest level of transit needs based on demographic factors: Comanche, Eastland,

Fisher, Knox, Mitchell and Stephens County. Each county scored a 14. Two counties showed a demographic need on a par with the state of Texas (Callahan and Kent County) based on lower levels in several indicators. Overall, West Central Texas shows a higher level of transit need than the state as a whole based upon demographic measures (aging population, lower income levels). Only in the measure of availability of automobiles is West Central Texas significantly lower than Texas.

## **TRANSIT AVAILABILITY**

Transit availability is primarily based on the amount of public transit per capita available within the county or region. The availability index in West Central Texas results in scores between 0 and 11, and includes the role that human service transportation may provide within the community. Zero would indicate no human service or rural public transportation is provided within the community and 11 would indicate that the rural service meets a substantial level of community need for transportation service. Scoring less than five would indicate a very level of service. None of the West Central Texas counties score below five (although some counties in other parts of Texas would score below five). A score of 11 does not indicate all needs are met. Scoring less than 10 is not meant to be a criticism any of any transit agency since most rural agencies in Texas lack the resources to score a higher than a 7 or 8.

Either a county or a region can be scored with this analysis.

- Availability of Senior Center services to residents of county (can be contracted to transit provider) – 1 point;
- Availability of MHMMR services to group homes, workshops (can be contracted to transit provider) – 1 point;
- Medicaid transportation (can be contracted to transit provider) – 1 point;
- General rural transportation – 3 points;
- No General rural transportation - 0 points;
- General rural transportation providing more than 1.00 trips per capita – 3 points;
- General rural transportation providing between than .50 and trips per capita – 2 points;
- General rural transportation providing less than .50 trips per capita – 1 points;
- General rural transportation providing no trips – 0 points;
- Rural transportation providing evening service – 1 points;
- Rural transportation providing weekend service – 1 point.

Brown County scores the highest among West Central Texas County with a nine. Coleman and Nolan County also score relatively high with an eight. Knox and Throckmorton County score the lowest with a five. **Table 2-4** shows the relative scores of the nineteen counties. The average available level for the nineteen counties is 6.6.

- Availability of Senior Center services to residents of county (can be contracted to transit provider) – 1 point;
- Availability of MHMMR services to group homes, workshops (can be contracted to transit provider) – 1 point;
- Medicaid transportation (can be contracted to transit provider) – 1 point;
- General rural transportation – 3 points;
- No General rural transportation - 0 points;
- General rural transportation providing more than 1.00 trips per capita – 3 points;
- General rural transportation providing between than .50 and trips per capita – 2 points;
- General rural transportation providing less than .50 trips per capita – 1 points;
- General rural transportation providing no trips – 0 points;
- Rural transportation providing evening service – 1 points;
- Rural transportation providing weekend service – 1 point.

A reasonable conclusion from all of these attempts to gauge service provision and transit needs is that a significant level of transit demand is not met in the nineteen counties. The constraints of limited resources preclude the ability of the rural providers to serve higher levels of demand unless additional revenue sources of new coordination agreements are identified.



**TABLE 2-4  
 TRANSIT AVAILABILITY INDEX**

<b>County</b>	<b>General Rural Transit Service Provided</b>	<b>Rural Service Level</b>	<b>General Rural Evening Service</b>	<b>General Rural Weekend Service</b>	<b>Medical Trans Program</b>	<b>Senior Transportation</b>	<b>MHMR Transportation</b>	<b>Total Score</b>
Brown	3	3	-	-	1	1	1	9
Callahan	3	1	-	-	1	1	1	7
Coleman	3	2	-	-	1	1	1	8
Comanche	3	1	-	-	1	1	-	6
Eastland	3	1	-	-	1	1	1	7
Fisher	3	1	-	-	1	1	1	7
Haskell	3	2	-	-	1	-	-	6
Jones	3	1	-	-	1	-	1	6
Kent	3	3	-	-	1	-	-	7
Knox	3	1	-	-	1	-	-	5
Mitchell	3	1	-	-	1	1	-	6
Nolan	3	3	-	-	1	1	-	8
Runnels	3	2	-	-	1	1	-	7
Scurry	3	1	-	-	1	1	-	6
Shackelford	3	1	-	-	1	-	1	6
Stephens	3	2	-	-	1	1	1	7
Stonewall	3	2	-	-	1	-	-	6
Taylor	3	1	-	-	1	1	1	7
Throckmorton	3	1	-	-	1	-	-	5

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **BARRIERS AND OBSTACLES**

The West Central Texas Region covers a nineteen county area. One urban and three rural providers deliver public transit service. Additional human and social service agencies provide client specific transportation.

Abilene is the economic center of the region and the destination of most inter-county rural transit trips. The largest amount of transit service is provided by Abilene and CityLink. Each of the three rural providers' administrative and operations centers are located more than 50 miles from Abilene, and each provider covers a geographic subset of the region.

The Central Texas Regional Transit District (CTRTD or CARR) covers the eastern, southern and central portions of the region, including the two most populous counties. It's administrative and operations center is located in Coleman. The Aspermont Small Business Development Corporation (ASBDC or Double Mountain Coach) covers the seven northern counties that are sparsely-populated. It's administrative and operations center is located in Aspermont. Two western counties (Mitchell and Scurry), comprise a portion of the service area of South Plains Community Action Agency, Inc. (SPARTAN), which is the only provider that is located outside of the West Central Region in Levelland, west of Lubbock. Prior to 2003 People for Progress, Inc. operated rural transit service in rural Taylor, Nolan, and Mitchell County out of its Sweetwater office. When People for Progress ceased operations in 2003, CARR became the rural provider for Nolan and rural Taylor County. Concho Valley RTD became the interim provider for Mitchell County. SPARTAN subsequently became the permanent rural provider for Mitchell County.

The West Central Texas Region successfully provides a wide range of transportation coordination today. Rural transit agencies in the West Central Texas region started initially as human service transportation providers and expanded later into providing public transit services. Coordinating transit services is ingrained in the rural agencies' organizational cultures. They emerged as transportation organizations as a result of human/social service.

Local funding is based upon coordination contracts and not based upon county or city level revenue sources. The City of Abilene, while operating with a significant component of local support, has successfully expanded services and funding beyond the parameters of general public through extensive coordination.

Reviewing West Central Texas, all public transportation providers have developed significant efforts towards coordination. Transportation coordination is a reality, and an important reality, in West Central Texas. Discussion of Barriers and Obstacles in West Central Texas are based upon the premise that public transportation coordination does not need to be invented in West Central Texas. Enhancing transportation coordination requires an approach consistent with the existing situation within the region.

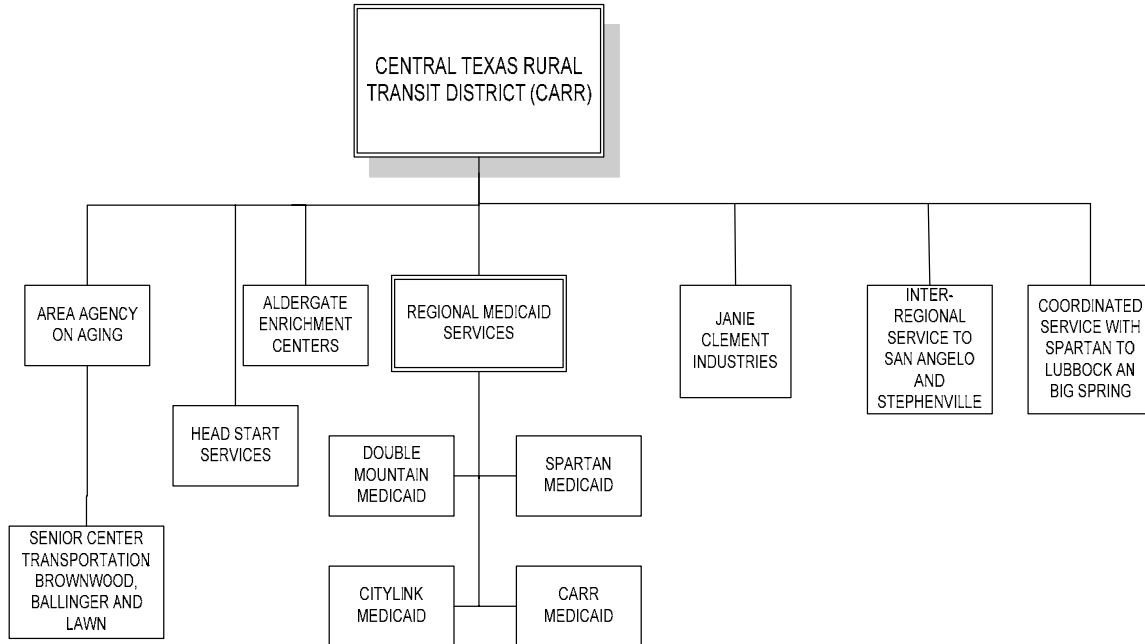
Of course, more coordination opportunities exist. Barriers and Obstacles in the West Central Texas Region remain. However, in examining the environment for public transportation in West Central Texas, understanding the existing situation with respect to coordination is essential.

An underlying assumption of transportation coordination is that because coordinated efforts were not present in a specific area or region coordination efforts need to commence. Rural public transportation in West Central Texas **is based on coordination.**

West Central Texas has provided a significant amount of public transit service based upon the coordinated transportation model. The Region's many unmet needs are primarily due not to a lack of coordination but to a lack of funding and reliable revenue vehicles. State funding has remained flat or has been reduced in recent years.

CARR specifically has developed an extensive coordination model that impacts the entire West Central Texas region as well as the 10 counties that CARR directly serves. **Diagram 3-1** shows the CARR coordination model:

## DIAGRAM 3-1 CARR COORDINATION MODEL



Barriers and obstacles exist with respect to coordination and delivery of transit service. Since the goal of transportation coordination is to increase and improve transportation services, identifying potential barriers and obstacles is an important step in developing an optimal coordination approach.

Barriers also exist with respect to improving transit service in the West Central Texas Region. Coordination has not been maximized and areas for improvement exist. Identifying barriers and constraints can be important for a variety of reasons:

- Understanding the reasons and nature of the barrier and constraints;
- Assessing what is preventing coordination from occurring;
- Ability to develop a strategy to overcome the barriers and constraints.

Defining types of barriers can consider the following categories: funding barriers, regulatory barriers, operational barriers, geographic barriers, and political barriers. Noting the different types of barriers can help

clarify many of the challenges with respect to enhancing existing transit coordination.

The West Central Texas memorandum on barriers and constraints will divide barriers and constraints into two groups. First will be what is deemed high - priority on the most significant barriers and constraints with respect to enhancing existing coordination in the West Central Texas Region. Detail and impact will be discussed with respect to these priority barriers and constraints as specified in the TXDOT e-mail/memorandum dated September 19, 2006. Second, additional barriers and constraints will be referred to, but in a brief format. The West Central Texas Region wishes to document all identified barriers and constraints, but will focus primarily on four barriers and constraints it deems to be the most significant to overcome in order to enhance quality and amount of services provided to residents within the Region.

**Key Barrier and Obstacle # 1 - Rapidly Aging Vehicle Fleet Limits the Ability of All of the West Central Texas Region Transit Agencies to Provide Reliable Service / Additional Service and Increasingly Undermines the Ability to Provide Existing Service**

*A) Age of vehicles creates additional vehicle road calls and reduces service reliability.*

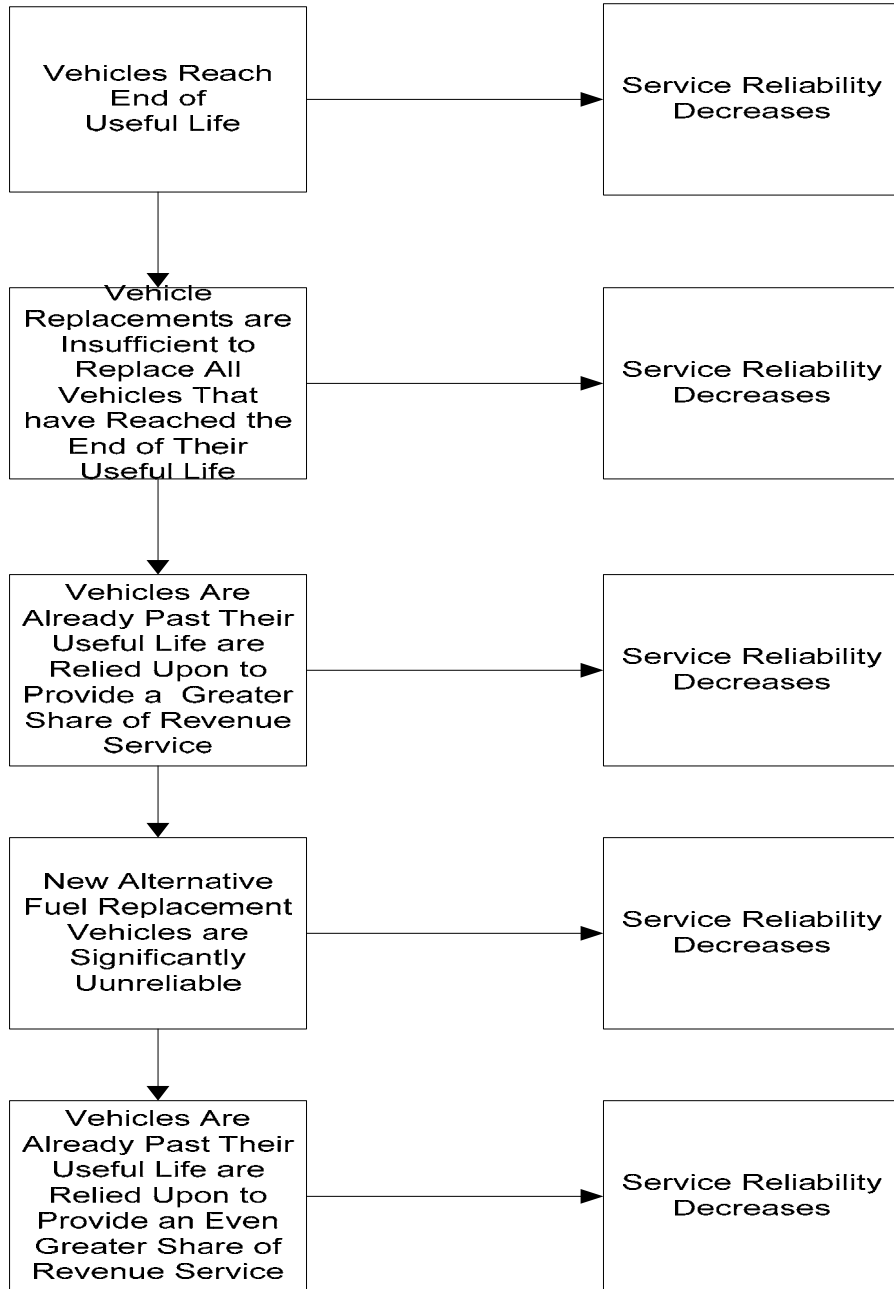
Transit revenue vehicles used by rural public transit are generally Type 2 or Type 3 cutaway vans or smaller passenger or mini-vans. Most of these have useful lives of three to four years or 150,000 or at most, 200,000 miles. Replacing revenue vehicles is important to providing a reliable transit service. When a substantial number or a majority of the transit vehicles of an agency exceed their useful life, vehicles reliability declines. Unless the mix of vehicles improves, a transit agency will struggle to maintain service reliability for its existing service. Expansion, which may be a potential outcome of coordination, becomes extremely difficult, due to the lack of reliable vehicles. Among the rural providers, most of the rural revenue vehicles in the West Central Texas Region exceed 150,000 miles, and more than a third of the rural revenue vehicles in the West Central Texas Region exceed 200,000 miles. According to the transit agencies, the situation has worsened in the last few years, for two reasons. First, vehicle replacement funding has been insufficient to replace all of the vehicles which have reached the end of their useful life. As a result, transit revenue vehicles that have reached the end of their useful life have continued to be pressed into service. Second, the mandate to use alternative fuel vehicles has resulted in significant purchases of propane vehicles by two of the three transit providers in the West Central Texas Region. The new vehicles have been substantially less reliable than was expected. The alternative fuel vehicles break down

frequently and the amount of down time has been significant. Lacking reliable new vehicles has been created a cycle whereby the transit agencies have been forced to use the older vehicles to substitute for the new vehicles, increasing the mileage on the older vehicles. **Diagram 3-2** shows the cumulative impact of recent events and their effect on vehicle reliability.

West Central Texas rural transit agencies have needed to keep vehicles well beyond the end of their useful life. Repair costs increase dramatically as high- ticket items such as transmissions and engines often have to be replaced. The older vehicles are less reliable and more prone to breakdowns, requiring frequent road calls. Major repairs result in extended downtime for revenue vehicles. Operating and maintenance costs increase as a result of declining vehicle reliability. Greater cost and effort is needed by drivers, supervisory and maintenance personnel to ensure that daily service needs are met.

The quality of customer service is harmed by lack of vehicle reliability. Passengers that are on board are delayed from the reaching their destination. Passengers are more likely to face late pickups as a result of insufficient numbers of vehicles being available due to the number of vehicles undergoing repairs. Breakdowns with passengers on board require long waits in rural areas for assistance to arrive. Often passengers need to wait substantial periods of time in isolated areas without air conditioning or heat due to vehicle breakdowns. Several such incidents have occurred among the region's providers.

## REDUCED VEHICLE RELIABILITY SPIRAL DIAGRAM 3-2



*B) Requirement to purchase alternative fuel vehicles and their reliability.*

TXDOT has mandated the use of alternate fuel vehicles including Compressed Natural Gas and/or propane. Complying with the mandate has resulted in more costly service for rural providers. Propane vehicles have showed substantially less reliability than their diesel and gasoline powered counterparts. What has resulted is a higher level of repairs, both planned and unplanned. Obtaining reliable maintenance expertise and fueling propane vehicles can be very challenging, especially in rural areas.

Newer vehicles (assuming they are reliable) can mitigate the problems associated with revenue vehicles at the end of their useful life. However, the program vehicles have not mitigated but aggravated the West Central Texas Region vehicle reliability issues. As a result of the unreliable nature of the alternate fuel vehicles, vehicle reliability issues have been exacerbated. Breakdowns with alternative fuel vehicles have resulted in several disturbing incidents due to their suddenness and the locations in which they have occurred.

#### *C) Flexibility in revenue vehicle size fleet.*

Rural transit agencies often transport small numbers of passengers. Accessible vans with one or two wheelchair tie-downs are often sufficient to meet passenger demand for specific trips. Vans can cost up to 50% less than Type 2 or Type 3 cutaway vans. Additionally, operating costs in terms of maintenance and fuel are substantially less in accessible vans than with Type 2 or Type 3 cutaway vans.

The issue of adequate vehicles for revenue service is currently the highest priority among the rural transit providers of the West Central Texas Region. Reliable vehicles are a fundamental component of quality transit service. When vehicle reliability declines, the result is that the quality of transit service declines as well. The age and mileage of transit vehicles among the rural providers in West's Central Texas is becoming an increasing problem with every passing month. Vehicle reliability becomes an ever-increasing problem making the ability to deliver quality transit service a greater and greater challenge on a daily basis. Until this issue is addressed and resolved, substantial constraints will exist not only to **providing additional transit coordination in the West Central Texas Region, but to maintaining existing transit coordination.**

#### **Overcoming the Barrier**

Providing substantial capital assistance for vehicle replacement to rural transit agencies is essential. Vehicles that have reached the end of their



useful life need to be replaced with new and reliable transit revenue vehicles.

Impact - if most or all of the vehicles in the rural transit agencies could be appropriately replaced when they reach the end of their useful lives, the following impacts would be expected:

- Reduced maintenance costs;
- Decreased road calls for broken-down vehicles;
- Increase vehicle reliability.

**Key Barrier and Obstacle # 2 - Resources in West Central Texas Do Not Include Any Direct Local Funding from Any of the 19 Counties in the Region**

At the core of most rural public transit agencies challenge in the United States is the issue of funding. While most large urban agencies can rely on one or more dedicated local funding sources, rural systems especially need to rely on a patchwork of funding sources, along with limited or no local support from county and municipal governments.

None of the counties or municipalities in the West Central Texas Region provides direct financial assistance to any of the rural transit systems. Double Mountain Coach serves seven counties that provide in kind assistance, allowing the in kind services to be leveraged for state and federal funds. No assistance is provided by the twelve counties of CARR or SPARTAN service areas. **Table 3-1** shows the level of direct or in kind local contributions by the West Central Texas rural transit providers.

**TABLE 3-1  
 LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO TRANSIT SERVICES**

County	Rural Provider	FY 2005 County General Fund Contribution	FY 2005 County In Kind Contribution (\$ value)
Brown	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Callahan	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Coleman	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Comanche	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Eastland	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Nolan	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Runnels	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Shackelford	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Stephens	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Taylor (Rural)	CARR	\$ -	\$ -
Mitchell	SPARTAN	\$ -	\$ -
Scurry	SPARTAN	\$ -	\$ -
Fisher	ASBDC	\$ -	\$1,555.33
Haskell	ASBDC	\$ -	\$18,104.02
Jones	ASBDC	\$ -	\$21,587.96
Kent	ASBDC	\$ -	\$10,389.59
Knox	ASBDC	\$ -	\$ 3,732.79
Stonewall	ASBDC	\$ -	\$ 4,194.84
Throckmorton	ASBDC	\$ -	\$ 1,928.61

*SOURCES: ASBDC, CARR, SPARTAN*

The City of Abilene contributes more than \$430,000 per year out of its general fund to operate CityLink. **Table 3-2** shows the diverse range of local sources that CityLink has for its services. However, the local assistance provided from the City of Abilene general fund constitutes the largest single source of local operating funds, and is critical for the system's continued operation. Coordinated funds are also an important component of the revenue mix. Medicaid and Contract Service provided more than \$150,000 per year (in the 2006 budget).

**TABLE 3-2  
 REVENUES SOURCES FOR CITYLINK**

Source	Actual 2004	Estimated 2005	Budgeted 2006
Medicaid	\$ 113,237	\$ 123,482	\$110,000
Passenger Fares	\$ 170,845	\$ 170,000	\$225,000
Charter	\$ 3,042	\$ 9,000	\$9,000
Station Concession	\$ 2,252	\$ 1,800	\$1,800
Advertising	\$ -	\$ -	\$55,000
Contract Service	\$ 66,182	\$ 90,000	\$50,000
Evening Service Fares	\$ 14,730	\$ 15,000	\$15,000
General Fund	\$ 390,000	\$ 430,000	\$430,000
Miscellaneous/One Time Revenues	\$ 12,449	\$ 21,770	\$ 2,700
<b>Local and Farebox Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 772,737</b>	<b>\$ 861,052</b>	<b>\$ 898,500</b>
<b>State Assistance</b>	<b>\$ 493,264</b>	<b>\$ 459,180</b>	<b>\$443,940</b>
FTA funding			
5307 Operating	\$ -	\$ 1,225,000	\$625,000
FTA 3037 JARC	\$ 56,670	\$ 83,550	\$84,400
CDBG Match Access to Jobs	\$ 20,000	\$ 55,000	\$55,000
Workforce Development Access	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$41,000
5307 Planning	\$ -	\$ 128,000	\$96,000
5307 Capital	\$ 30,906	\$ 945,770	\$704,000
5310 Capital	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$35,000
5309 Earmark	\$ -	\$ 225,930	\$1,000,000
<b>Total Federal</b>	<b>\$ 1,411,026</b>	<b>\$ 4,050,252</b>	<b>\$3,985,540</b>
<b>Total All Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 2,677,027</b>	<b>\$ 5,370,484</b>	<b>\$ 5,327,980</b>

\* SOURCES: FY 2006 CITYLINK BUDGET

Additional federal funds are available for the coordinated programs in the amount of more than \$180,000 per year (2006 budget). Elimination of the coordinated funding for CityLink would also negatively impact operations in a very drastic manner. Passenger fares, advertising and other sources are also valuable local revenue sources.

**Table 3-3** showing CARR revenues presents a very different picture. Virtually all revenues are from either coordinating contracts (including Medical Transportation Program) administered by CARR or passenger

fares. Local revenue sources are not available for operations. Existing service is provided from federal funds, state funds, and farebox revenues in coordinated contract revenues.

**TABLE 3-3  
 REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR CARR  
 STATE FISCAL YEAR 2005**

Revenue Source	Total	Percent
Federal 5310	\$ 36,762	4.35%
Federal 5311	\$ 523,390	24.93%
<b>Total Federal</b>	<b>\$ 560,152</b>	<b>29.28%</b>
State 5310	\$ 620,167	34.44%
<b>Contract Revenue</b>		
Medical Transportation	\$ 430,009	25.68%
Head Start	\$ 57,024	1.48%
AAA	\$ 2,648	0.21%
Other	\$ 31,915	2.58%
<b>Total Contract</b>	<b>\$ 521,596</b>	<b>29.95%</b>
Farebox	\$ 113,706	6.31%
Local Contribution	\$ 2,459	0.02%
<b>Total Local</b>	<b>\$ 116,165</b>	<b>6.33%</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,818,080</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>SFY 2005 Expenses</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Operating	\$ 1,432,549	78.56%
Administrative	\$ 364,254	21.44%
Purchased Transportation	\$ -	0.00%
Planning	\$ -	0.00%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,796,803</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Source: TXDOT Reporting For SFY 2005*

**Table 3-4** shows the Double Mountain Coach local funding environment. Coordinated transportation in the form of medical transportation revenue is the single largest local source of revenue. Local contributions are also significant for Double Mountain Coach in the form of in-kind contributions provided by the seven counties in the service area. The in-kind contributions allow Double Mountain Coach to leverage additional federal funds and provide more service. Given the limited opportunities in coordination in-kind contributions are vital to the operation of Double Mountain Coach. However, the drawback of in-kind contributions is that they cannot be utilized to meet operating expenses such as fuel and

salaries. In-kind contributions are limited to the service that the in-kind contribution provides.

**TABLE 3-4  
 DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH  
 REVENUES AND EXPENSES**

Revenue Source	Total	Percent
Federal 5311	\$153,337	26.65%
State Assistance	\$ 256,157	44.53%
Medical Transportation	\$81,742	14.21%
Farebox	\$10,443	1.82%
Local Contribution	\$73,624	12.80%
<b>Total Local</b>	<b>\$84,067</b>	<b>14.61%</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$575,303</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
SFY 2005 Expenses	Total	Percent
Operating	\$356,426	71.63%
Administrative	\$141,184	28.37%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$497,610</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Source: ASBDC*

CARR and Double Mountain Coach have done a commendable job without any direct local revenue source. However, only relatively small incremental improvements will be possible with existing coordination. Coordination alone will not be able to significantly increase the level of rural transportation services unless additional revenue is provided. Public rural transportation is limited throughout the West Central Texas Region as a result a limited local funding.

**Overcoming the Barrier**

Legislation being considered for possible action in the 2007 Texas state legislature session may provide the ability for counties to assess a registration fee of between one dollar and \$10 per vehicle for transportation, including public transit. Given that the local funding that would be achieved through this means would equal approximately one dollar per person per County, a registration fee of one dollar or two dollars could have a significant impact on enhancing existing revenue in the counties which assessed the registration fee. Among the benefits would be:

- Additional local revenue for transit service;
- Ability to leverage additional federal funds from a variety of programs using the local revenue source. The result is that additional local revenue could provide a return of 200% to 500% for planning capital or operating activities.
- State allocations of state funds will weigh favorably for the local contribution to transit service. Regions such as West Central Texas which continue not to support transit through local revenue sources (coordinated funds through contract revenues are not scheduled to count as a local revenue source) will be penalized. The result of not having significant local contributions will be exacerbated by cuts in state funding or funding levels that will remain flat rather than increase.
- County government will have a greater stake in public transportation since it will be financially invested in public transportation. In transit systems that are operated entirely through coordinated local funding, county governments are less invested in transit since they are providing no support towards rural transit services.

### **Key Barrier and Obstacle # 3 - Lack of a Multimodal Facility in the Central City in the West Central Texas Region**

The largest urbanized area in the West Central Texas Council of Governments (WCTCOG) region is Abilene. As the economic heart of the WCTCOG region, the city is home to approximately 125,000 people. As such, Abilene is the natural center for transportation coordination efforts within a significant portion of the WCTCOG region. One critical element that could greatly facilitate the coordination of local, regional, and inter-city transportation services in Abilene would be a multi-modal transit terminal facility, strategically located in downtown.

A multi-modal facility at one time was in the planning stages in Abilene. However, the site selected for the proposed facility turned out to be too controversial and the project was ultimately abandoned. The resulting lack of a multi-modal transit terminal in downtown Abilene is one area for improved coordination within the WCTCOG region. Without the physical structure of the terminal, the region's public transportation providers, intercity bus carrier, and social service and medical service providers have significantly less incentive to cooperate or coordinate in many ways that would be of great benefit to the citizens of the region.

## Overcoming the Barrier

A multi-modal terminal could offer the following advantages to the WCTCOG region around Abilene:

- 1) A multi-modal transit terminal provides a convenient transfer location for all public transportation services within a limited geographic region. The entire WCTCOG region is far too widespread for the multi-modal terminal to effectively be utilized beyond a certain radius; however, the designated public transportation providers in the area, CityLink, serving the City of Abilene, and the Central Texas Regional Transit District (CARR), serving the rural areas around it, could certainly utilize such a facility. For example, CityLink could utilize the facility as a transfer point for its routes. They could also house administrative offices or maintenance in the same facility.

CARR could utilize the same facility as a convenient transfer point for riders that are coming into Abilene for the day. Conversely, the facility could be a convenient location to pick up individuals wanting to go from Abilene to areas served by CARR, which lie outside the CityLink service area.

A multi-modal facility is also the natural origin and destination point for inter-city bus services that serve Abilene. Greyhound bus lines make a handful of stops in Abilene on a daily basis. Residents of Abilene and the surrounding areas could arrive at the facility on local bus service and hop aboard an intercity bus for destinations outside of the WCTCOG service area. When they return home, the reverse trips would be possible.

- 2) The use of a multi-modal transit terminal as a convenient transfer point for local, regional, and inter-city bus services, however, really does not take full advantage of what such a facility might offer. A multi-modal transit terminal in the heart of Abilene could also provide an opportunity for greater inter-agency collaboration or coordination. For example, CARR and CityLink could work more closely together in that environment to schedule trips. There are multitudes of ways in which this could be accomplished, but however it is accomplished both agencies could save precious resources on overhead costs by co-locating within the same office space.

Another possibility that could benefit both CityLink and CARR is for the facility to house space for basic preventive maintenance activities that could be utilized by either entity. A facility that

would house a transfer terminal for local, regional, and inter-city bus service would probably not have adequate space for a full maintenance facility (nor would it necessarily be desired); however, limited preventive maintenance activities might be desirable and greatly enhance the efficiency of both systems. The ability to share some maintenance space could reduce overall maintenance costs on a yearly basis and provide some other efficiency for both providers.

Other alternatives for co-utilization of multi-modal facility space by CityLink and CARR exist, but those listed above are perhaps the most obvious and serve to make the point that a multi-modal terminal can offer many benefits to the various public transportation providers which would enable them to better serve the public while at the same time reducing costs. However, the benefits of such a facility do not have to be limited to the preceding discussion.

- 3) In addition to the Abilene area's designated public transportation providers; a multi-modal terminal could also benefit social service and/or medical service providers as well. Generally speaking, social service and medical service providers often engage in what can be characterized as demand-response types of activities, in order to provide mobility services to their clients/patients. To mitigate costs associated with demand- response types of services, in some instances social service and medical service providers could require clients/patients to meet at a multi-modal terminal in order to be picked up and transported wherever they need to be. A good example would be if a medical service provider needed to take a number of people to Dallas for treatment on a specific day of the week. In that instance, a multi-modal terminal would be particularly helpful. Certainly many cases involving social service or medical service transportation will not be able to take advantage of such an opportunity, but any amount of cost savings is usually worth taking full advantage of, since those resources can be used in other areas.
- 4) Aside from being a focal point for transportation-related services for the Abilene region, a multi-modal terminal can also achieve other local objectives, depending on whether it is implemented fully. For example, assuming that the multi-modal terminal is the primary origin/destination point for inter-city bus services and the transfer point for local and regional transit services, a multi-modal terminal facility can also serve as an information center. The City of Abilene or the Abilene Chamber of Commerce or some other entity can establish a welcome center within the facility.



## **Key Barrier and Obstacle # 4 - Boundary Issues with Respect to the City of Abilene and Rural Taylor County**

City of Abilene boundaries and the complications with respect to service that exist along the city line have been an issue of concern to stakeholders and transit providers. CityLink provides service only within the corporate boundaries of the City of Abilene. Service on CityLink is not allowed if the address is located on the other side of the street from the boundaries of the City of Abilene. As a result, the effect of grouping of trips and use of services is constrained by the urban boundary. Another impact is the perception the individuals living beyond the city boundary are receiving a drastically lower level of service.

CARR provides service outside of the City of Abilene in rural Taylor County. Providing service especially on the western boundary of the City of Abilene is often challenging for CARR. CityLink vehicles are in the vicinity but prohibited from picking up passengers. The result is that passengers immediately outside the City of Abilene are not picked up although a potential low-cost alternative exists. The requirements of rural transit service provided by CARR and the requirements of ADA Complimentary Paratransit Service provided by CityLink are different. While CARR is not required to provide customers with next-day advanced request service, CityLink must provide such service within the City of Abilene for qualified passengers.

### **Overcoming the Barrier**

Developing flexible inter-local agreements with respect to passengers in and around Abilene, scheduling where the best groupings can occur and flexibility in city and rural travel is allowed. Limited flexibility in passenger pickup may be able to create a win-win situation for CityLink and CARR. By allowing CityLink vehicles to venture a short distance outside of the city limits when it makes sense from a scheduling perspective, may aid in its overall service efficiency. Likewise, CARR could assist CityLink in picking up passengers within the city limits of the City of Abilene. An agreement would need to be developed where passengers who were picked up out of the transit agency's respective service area could be accounted for and properly compensated.

This approach is easier to implement if the scheduling software systems used by the various providers are the same. While flexible pickup of passengers would be possible without the scheduling software being compatible it would be more challenging and more labor-intensive.

## **FUNDING BARRIERS**

- *Local funding in CityLink Abilene limited to Abilene General Fund – no dedicated funding source.* While the general fund for the City of Abilene has been a reliable source for CityLink, funding levels can vary significantly from year to year based on other needs within the City of Abilene;
- *Difficulty in meeting increasing demand for transit.* Rural systems in West Central Texas struggle to meet increasing demands for transportation services.
- *State funding has not grown significantly in recent years and in many cases has been reduced in real dollars;*
- *Passengers who use transit service are often on limited incomes.* Rural fares cannot be increased in a manner that will cause passengers to be unable to afford to travel. As a result, transit agencies are unable to increase fares to cover a significant portion of operating costs.
- *Lack of ability to adjust for rising fuel prices with a funding escalator with the exception of the Medicaid contract.* Fuel prices have increased by over 40% in the last year, however it has been a challenge for transit systems to gain the additional revenue to meet that unexpected and rapid increase in fuel costs which is especially relevant for rural systems, and is a very significant component of their operating costs.

## **REGULATORY BARRIERS**

Regulatory barriers can be a very significant challenge to coordination. Removing them can be something beyond the control of her transit agency or the region. Unless the barriers are overcome increased costs resulting from service inefficiencies, or reduced service quality, can be unfortunate outcomes.

- *Requirements of providing Medicaid Service can skew or limit service delivery for other purposes.* The requirements of delivering Medicaid service, especially in the latest contract can require the diversion or utilization of resources in terms of staff and vehicles that can make delivery of other services problematic. Medical Transportation Services are delivered most effectively when they can be combined with other trips in a manner that can meet all programs needs effectively. Unfortunately, many of the provisions of the current Medical Transportation Services contract inhibit effective coordination among different transportation programs.

- *Program requirements for human services can skew or limit service delivery for other purposes.* Often, human or social service programs have specific requirements regarding when clients need to arrive at the designated service center, when they needed to depart, or how many hours they need to be at the service center.
- *ADA Paratransit requirements are costly and can result in service limitations in other areas.* Providing ADA Complementary Paratransit requires strict compliance with a variety of ADA provisions that limits the flexibility available in scheduling for transit agencies and effectively meeting rising demand. Additionally, increasing service demand for ADA Paratransit services can result in additional resources of staff and vehicles being required to comply with ADA regulations. Increasing ADA demand and increasing ADA service cost can often result in the reduction of fixed route services, which often serve persons with disabilities as well.
- *Barriers requiring persons to be transported on the basis of trip purpose rather than rationally grouped passengers and trips according to origin and destination.* Often, program requirements will prevent transit agencies from effectively grouping trips in a geographically sound manner. Passengers from different programs will be segregated based upon program requirements resulting in reduced efficiency and increased costs.

## **OPERATIONAL BARRIERS**

Operational barriers often result from the trade-offs the transit agencies must consider in the delivery of service. Another source of operational barriers is the nature of the service being provided.

- *Requiring 24 hour notification limits the flexibility of consumer travel.* Advance notification of travel is beneficial to the transit agency in order to develop a coherent and efficient scheduling template for the next day of service. However, passengers often decide to travel with less than 24 hour advanced notice. Mobility for passengers who use services with 24 hour notification is therefore constrained as a result of the policy.
- *Demand-response service rather than fixed route service requires greater resources and limits who can be served.* Providing demand-response service is more labor-intensive than fixed route service. Individuals are needed to schedule the service in advance. Customer requests are then built into a schedule for service. Dispatchers are much more needed in a demand-response environment than they are in a fixed route environment.

- *ADA paratransit was mentioned as a regulatory barrier, but is also an operational barrier.* Since complying with ADA paratransit guidelines is required, operating efficiency is constrained by ADA guidelines. One example is the zero denial requirements. No significant level of denial of trips to qualified ADA paratransit passengers is allowed. As a result, certain trip requests will require a high level of resources and will be highly inefficient to provide.
- *Providing work trips can be expensive, requiring precise scheduling and limiting the ability to provide other services.* Rural transit service can provide medical and shopping transportation generally more effectively than work transportation. Work trips require that passengers are always arriving at their workplace before they are due to start working. Historically, rural demand-response service and ADA paratransit service have had difficulty in providing timely trips to work. Being successful in providing timely trips to work in a demand-response environment often requires diverting resources from other trips.
- *Limited use of automated scheduling software among transit providers and incompatibility of existing software.* Only CityLink uses automated scheduling software (Trapeze Pass). All of the rural transit providers use different types of scheduling software.
- *Age of vehicles creates vehicle road calls and reduces service reliability.* Many of the vehicles used in all of the transit services in the West Central Texas region have reached the end of their vehicle life as determined by manufacturer specifications. However, the shortage of available capital funding to replace vehicles is often the fiscal reality. As a result, transit agencies keep vehicles beyond the end of their useful life. Repair costs increase dramatically as high ticket items such as transmissions and engines often have to be replaced. The older vehicles are less reliable, and more prone to breakdowns, requiring road calls. Increasing operating costs and vehicle unreliability resulting from increased maintenance needs, and the increase in vehicles breaking down. Service is not as good since when a vehicle breaks down passengers on board are delayed from the reaching their destinations. Federal funding for replacement of vehicles has been an ongoing challenge. For several years, TXDOT has sought a federal earmark for rural transportation revenue vehicles, but the effort has not been successful. The result has been highly-constrained funding for rural vehicle replacements.
- *Maintaining adequate staffing, especially of drivers is an ongoing dilemma for transit agencies.* If transit agencies wage rates are too high, increases in operating cost require the reduction of service. However, paying drivers lower rates results in higher levels of

turnover and greater difficulty in recruiting new drivers. Several negative outcomes result from this. First, existing drivers will tend to work a lot of overtime resulting in higher operating costs. Second, the high number of hours drivers may be required to drive can result in additional turnover. Third, high turnover means that there will be a large amount of new drivers. Effective demand-response drivers need to be experienced in providing service to their customers and navigating the service area. New drivers have difficulty doing so and as a result provide less efficient and less effective demand-response service.

- *Limited technical expertise available with respect to maintenance at most agencies.* Many rural transit agencies contract out for maintenance services. Local repair shops may or may not have the ability to effectively repair transit vehicles. Repair of wheelchair lifts is often a skill that few maintenance personnel possess. As a result, wheelchair repair requires lengthy travel or less timely repair.
- *Limited expertise available with respect to marketing at most transit agencies.* Marketing is a specialized skill, and particularly small and medium-size transit agencies often lack the resources or knowledge to provide effective marketing. As a result, marketing efforts are often rudimentary.
- *Limited expertise available with respect to advanced technology at most transit agencies.* Small and medium-sized transit agencies do not have the luxury of an Information Technology department knowledgeable in transit related hardware and software. As a result, small and medium-size transit agencies are required to use staff who must self-teach themselves the hardware and software.

## **GEOGRAPHIC AND JURISDICTIONAL BARRIERS**

Barriers to transportation coordination also exist as the result of either geographic or jurisdictional boundaries that proscribe the type of service or provider that will deliver service. Some jurisdictional barriers may be overcome with coordination; geographic barriers may be more difficult to overcome that are unchanging and may be characteristic of a specific area.

- *West Central Texas is sparsely-populated and distances for travel are often 50-100 miles consuming large amounts of time and resources.* Short trips can be done more efficiently and more productively. Each longer trip generally requires expending a large amount of resources in both staff and vehicles. Many trips in West

Central Texas are long trips, often exceeding 50 or even 100 miles. Providing those trips is integral to delivering transportation services within the region. However, the longer trips are costly and require greater resources.

- *Sparse population can often make trip grouping challenging.* Scheduling demand-response trips limits how efficient the service can be. When attempting to schedule trips in sparsely-populated areas, the challenge is even greater. The result is that often trips are scheduled with very low rates of productivity.
- *Limitation of providers to provide service to more than one potential desirable urban destination.* Passengers within West Central Texas region want to travel to destinations other than Abilene. Such travel needs are particularly true for passengers who live in "border counties". Potential passengers who live in counties such as Comanche, Scurry, Knox, Kent, and Throckmorton may look for destinations outside of the West Central Texas region. However, transportation agencies can find it difficult to transport one individual to a location outside of the region, since it is extremely costly in terms of drivers and vehicles.
- *City of Abilene boundary and the complications with respect to service that exist along the city line.* CityLink provides service only within the corporate boundaries of the City of Abilene. Service is not allowed even on addresses that are located on the other side of the street from the boundaries of the City of Abilene. As a result, the effect of grouping of trips and use of services is constrained by the urban boundary. Another impact is the perception the individuals living beyond the city boundary are receiving a drastically lower level of service.
- *All transit agencies are located in different cities:*
  - CityLink is in Abilene;
  - CARR is in Coleman;
  - Double Mountain is in Aspermont;
  - SPARTAN is in Levelland;

Each transit agency has a different geographic perspective and serves a different area. Coordination is more challenging as results of the geographic dispersal of the four public transit providers in the West Central Texas region.

## **POLITICAL BARRIERS**

Political barriers in many respects are the most difficult barriers of all to overcome. Perceptions and values exist among agencies and individuals that will often inhibit the ability of transportation coordination even when its value can be clearly demonstrated.

- *Each of four transit agency represents different constituents and interests with varying missions.* CARR is an independent rural transit agency representing 10 counties in the eastern and southern portions of the West Central Texas region. Double Mountain Coach is part of the Aspermont Small Business Development Corporation, and serves seven of the northern counties in the West Central Texas region. SPARTAN is part of the South Plains Community Action Center, and is located outside of the West Central Texas region, but provides service to counties in the western part of the region. CityLink is the only urban transit provider in the region, and the only provider of fixed route and ADA paratransit service with service limited to the City of Abilene.
- *Turfism is another significant barrier when considering transportation coordination.* Agencies and organizations are proprietary and protective of the services they provide. A natural wariness exists to allowing another provider to deliver transportation service. Concerns remain that losing control of transportation services will either weaken the agency or undermine the quality of service provided to the client or customer. Often turfism is primarily a fear of change. However, the existence of turfism can make coordination of transportation services problematic.
- *Limited availability of local matching funds narrow a transit agency's options.* Not a single County in the West Central Texas region provides direct financial assistance to any of the public transit operators within the region. As a result, the level of service that any of the rural transit agencies can provide is significantly constrained.
- *Opposition to previous efforts for a downtown Abilene multimodal terminal scuttled construction of the planned multimodal terminal.* A study was conducted in 2001 and 2002 by the Goodman Corporation to develop a multimodal terminal in downtown Abilene. However, opposition to the intended site resulted in the plan for multimodal terminal being placed on hold. Attempts to revive the plans for a downtown multimodal terminal at a different location have started recently.

- *Nineteen county governments and city governments representing different interests. West Central Texas has 19 different county and dozens of municipal governments. Public transportation is not a high priority for most of these entities. The City of Abilene has a very developed transit system. Maintaining the existing transit system is a greater priority for the City of Abilene; regional coordination is secondary.*
- *Cultural differences in operation and approach between human service (client-based) agencies and transit agencies. Human service agencies that provide transportation services for their clients do so as a means to an end. Transportation for the clients is a means to get the client where they need to go to receive the agency's service. The means to provide service for their clients through transportation is viewed as a necessary ancillary task. Tracking transportation service is a lower priority for human service agencies and is conducted in a less formal manner than it normally is in the transit agency. Transportation service for the transit agencies is their reason for being. Therefore, how transportation service is viewed by the transit agency is significantly different than how it is viewed by the human service agency. That difference in perspective can be a challenge for both transit agency and human service provider to bridge.*



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The West Central Texas Council of Governments beginning in 2005, has been working to develop a regional transportation service coordination plan consistent with House Bill 3588 and Texas Department of Transportation requirements. West Central Texas developed a project team including the external consulting team of A&R Consulting. Over the last several months, a study has been conducted.

The study has involved human service providers, social service providers, stakeholders, transit agencies, and planning agencies. Project kickoff was in April 2006, and the initial phase focused on interviewing the key transportation providers and stakeholders. A provider survey was conducted in April and May 2006. Public meetings were also held in May 2006 together community input in Abilene, Brownwood and Haskell. Existing stakeholders throughout the region were interviewed. Profiles were developed of each public transit provider in the region (CARR, Double Mountain Coach, CityLink and SPARTAN). Other transportation service providers in the region were also profiled.

Public meetings were held in May 2006 in Brownwood, Haskell and Abilene. Comments on existing service barriers and unmet transit needs were taken. A Technical Memorandum was prepared in June 2006. The memorandum on existing transportation conditions, profiled all of the existing transit services including the human service providers in the West Central Texas region. Each County was also profiled in depth, examining the level of existing transit service, analyzing county demographics and potential transit need. An additional technical memorandum was developed in July 2006 which discussed effective means and approaches towards coordination.

These two technical memoranda were used during two half day workshops conducted in August 2006 in Brownwood and Abilene. The half day workshops refined the key barriers and constraints that existed, and inhibited the development of coordinated transit services and enhanced transit services in West Central Texas. Additionally, key opportunities to improve coordination and existing transit in West Central Texas were also identified during the workshop

A technical memorandum had been prepared as a result of the workshop to specifically focus on the existing barriers and constraints for transit services. Findings and Recommendations summarizes the key findings with respect to transit services and coordination in West Central Texas, and develop practical solutions that will allow the improvement in

effectiveness and efficiency of transit service and coordinated transit service in West Central Texas

### **Findings and Recommendations**

Through the course of the research conducted in the public meetings held in West Central Texas regarding coordination, a variety of observations regarding the state of transportation and transportation coordination in West Central Texas has emerged.

One clear observation of this Regional Coordination Project is that West Central Texas region currently has a significant level of transportation coordination, today. Rural transit agencies frequently develop through coordination and expand into providing public transit services. Coordinating transit services in such cases is ingrained in the rural agency organizational culture. The City of Abilene, while operating with a significant component of local support, has already expanded services and funding beyond the parameters of general public transit, as relates to a small urban transit system. Specific findings and recommendations developed are based upon the premise that public transportation coordination does not need to be invented in West Central Texas.

An underlying assumption of transportation coordination is that efforts will improve existing non-coordinated transportation service. Rural public transportation in West Central Texas is based on coordination. Implicit in the assumption is that financial and operating resources exist that are funding only traditional public transportation. In the case of rural public transportation in West Central Texas, that is not true. West Central Texas has delivered a significant amount of public transit service based upon the coordinated transportation model. Unmet needs are primarily due not to a lack of coordination, but to a lack of funding. State funding has remained flat or has been reduced in the last decade.

#### ***Finding # 1 - The West Central Texas Region Has a "Best Practice" Approach with Respect to Medical Transportation Program***

The Medical Transportation Program is **the outstanding example of successful recent regional coordination in West Central Texas**. Leadership in the coordination effort was assumed by the Central Texas Rural Transit District (CARR). Creation of a new regional coordinated operating model was necessary involving all four of the public transit providers in West Central Texas.

Up until June 2006, West Central Texas had several Medicaid providers. The newest MTP Request for Proposal (RFP) issued in the fall of 2005 by TXDOT precluded the existing arrangement from continuing. Regional coordination by an existing provider or another entity would be needed in

order to administer the contract. Region 7, West Central Texas we need to be administered by a single entity. Additional transit providers could become subcontractors to the administering entity.

The West Central Texas Council of Government evaluated the proposal and decided that it was not best equipped to lead the coordinated arrangement. CARR decided to pursue the contract, and has successfully enlisted the three other regional public transit providers; Double Mountain Coach, SPARTAN and CityLink to become subcontractors in the Medical Transportation Program to CARR, and each agency would provide Medicaid service in their respective service areas. The alignment was strategically sound given the operating environment within West Central Texas. CARR, with several facilities located around the region, and with the most extensive experience in regional coordination in West Central Texas among the public transit providers, was best suited to lead the effort.

TXDOT awarded the contract to CARR for Region 7 – West Central Texas. CARR developed contracts and worked with the other providers through inter-local agreements and development of a common reporting framework to allow for Medicaid to work throughout the region.

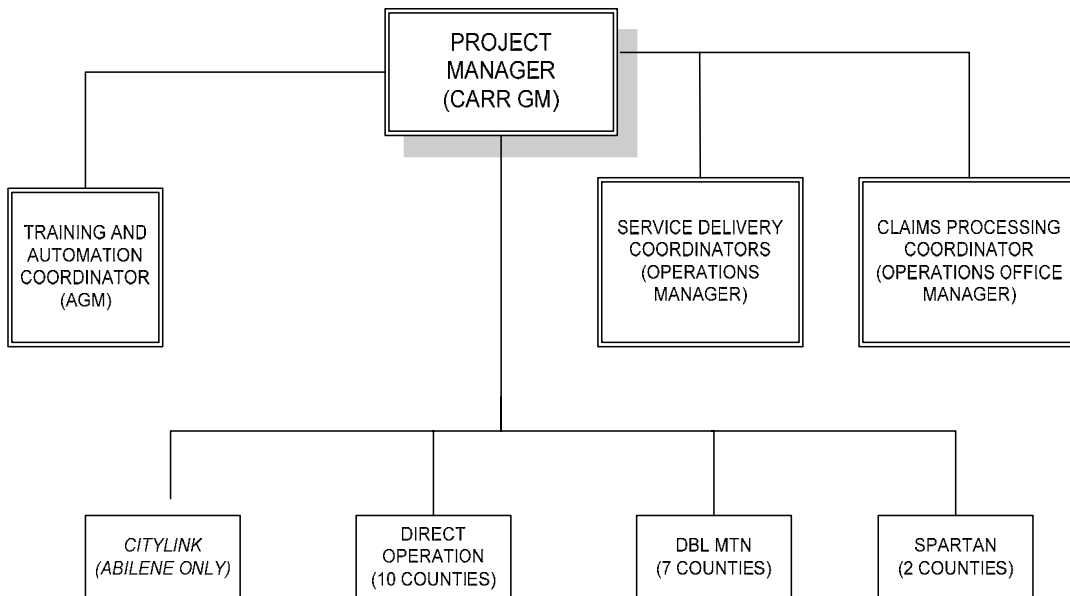
Responding to the RFP for Medical Transportation required that a coordinated transportation model for medical transportation be developed in the West Central Texas region. The response by CARR was to create a workable coordination model which allowed transit providers to continue to provide medical services within their area, but to also effectively coordinate on a regional level.

Service under the new contract commenced in June 2006, and while many of the stipulations of the new state contract have been challenging to implement CARR and the regional providers have successfully developed a new coordinated regional system for Medical Transportation in West Central Texas.

However, a highly significant unexpected benefit has resulted from the coordination arrangement. Administering the coordinated contract required frequent interaction among transit agency staff at the four transit agencies. Staff needed to address (on a daily basis) a wide range of issues regularly including: service delivery, dispatch, customer service, scheduling and billing. As a result of the need to resolve operating, administrative and other issues greater communication was required in all staff levels among the four public transit agencies in West Central Texas.

Given the geographic distance of the four transit agencies (in terms of dispersed administrative and operating headquarters) interaction among the staff had occurred less frequently in the past. Now staff in each of the four agencies has developed a greater professional familiarity with their counterparts, and increased comfort level in working together to resolve the issues related to the Medical Transportation Program. A sense of teamwork among the four public transportation providers has developed with respect to administering the Medical Transportation Program. While this achievement is not as tangible as the regional contract, the development of this change in organizational culture among the four transit agencies is significant beneficial in two ways. First, it allows the administration of the Medical Transportation Program in effectively coordinated manner. Genuine coordination exists when the people administer the program on a day-to-day basis, are buying into the process. Second, the development of a team approach with respect to Medical Transportation Program makes additional coordination in additional areas efforts more practical. **Diagram 4-1** shows the Medical Transportation Program coordination model

**DIAGRAM 4-1  
 WEST CENTRAL TEXAS  
 MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM  
 OPERATING MODEL**



***Recommendation # 1 - Coordinated Transportation Successfully Achieved in This Program Should Be Used to Leverage Additional Efforts at Coordination***

Implementation of the Medical Transportation Program in West Central Texas has been successful beyond expectations. Creating a strong team oriented environment with respect to the Medical Transportation Program is both a success, and provides an opportunity for additional coordination

Trust, understanding and teamwork among staff create a valuable opportunity. The four public transit agencies have proven they can work together successfully on a frequent basis. While coordinated efforts have occurred in the past, the extent and significance of the coordination that has occurred among the transit agencies with respect to Medical Transportation Program is significantly more extensive. The Medical Transportation Program as it has been administered since June 2006 is a significant success. West Central Texas is now coordinating a transit service at substantially higher level than at the beginning of Calendar 2006.

However, the changing relationship among the four transit agencies' staffs provides an opportunity for further coordination. Additional coordination can occur with the confidence of past and present success.

Additional specific recommendations will be developed in later recommendations. Leveraging the existing staff coordination can be facilitated by several steps:

- In person or teleconference meetings (given the distances) on a quarterly basis to discuss overall challenges with administration of the Medical Transportation Program. While day-to-day interaction remains the core of a coordinated effort, initiatives to examine recurring challenges with respect to the Medical Transportation Program will allow a more effective coordinated strategic approach.
- Joint training activities conducted on a regional basis. Training programs offer a chance for staff to interact on a personal level, and enhance the existing comfort level.
- Future coordination efforts should involve all transit agencies meeting and determining the appropriate course of action.

***Finding # 2 - Additional Transit Coordination Occurs in West Central Texas***

Coordination in West Central Texas was not discovered as a result of the Medical Transportation Program. Each of the four public transit agencies had been engaged in coordinated transportation for a long time.

The rural transportation providers are based on a coordination model. However, the coordination was focused upon the areas they serve. In other words, prior to the coordinated effort that occurred with the implementation of the Medical Transportation Program, coordination primarily occurred within the transit agencies' service areas

### **Coordination and the Development of Rural Transit Agencies**

Rural public transit agencies are often the product of historical coordination efforts begun by human or social service agencies. Similar historical development occurred in many rural agencies with a similar pattern of development. All three of the WCTCOG rural transit agencies have similar patterns of development:

- A human service agency or agencies had difficulty getting its clients to its facility so that services could be provided;
- Transportation service developed to meet this specific need;
- Additional agencies had similar transportation challenges, and contracted with the human service agency for its transportation services;
- Transportation services expanded and the agency realized it could use its funding to leverage federal transit assistance;
- The transportation service emerged as a rural service provider and remained either as a part of the founding agency or became an independent transit agency.

Rural transit agencies frequently develop through coordination and expand into providing public transit services. Coordinating transit services is ingrained in the rural agency organizational culture as the appropriate way to do business. Rural agencies are generally a newer development than most urban agencies. They emerged with human/social service coordination as the key trigger for their organizational development.

Instrumental to developing a coordination plan is determining what level of coordination currently exists. West Central Texas has been an area where needs for transit service have far outstripped resources. Transit and other agencies have demonstrated an ethic to provide the most service possible for their clients and customers. While improvements in the existing level of coordination are both necessary and possible in West Central Texas, a substantial amount of coordination already exists.

Urban transit agencies have usually had quite a different history. Many large (and many small) urban transit agencies emerged as the result of the failure of private companies to continue to deliver public transit

service between about 1960 and 1980. Urban bus systems were successors to private bus companies providing existing transit service that was no longer financially feasible to operate without public funding. Is the difference in how rural and urban systems emerged relevant with respect to developing coordination strategies? Yes, because how and why the transit agency developed affects how it develops services and lot shapes its perspective. It is important to understand how an agency developed. Here are some of the differences with respect to coordination.

- Rural systems are more based on coordination with human services;
- Urban systems use coordination as a means to expand existing services;
- Rural public transit service usually is a means of expanding beyond human service transportation
- Coordinated transit for urban systems is a means of expanding beyond fixed route service and ADA Paratransit;
- Rural transit services usually have coordinated transportation as their core operation;
- Urban transit systems normally have fixed route service and (since 1990) ADA Paratransit as their core operations;

Despite these differences, CityLink has developed coordination as a significant component of this service. Effective transit coordination for CityLink has meant expanded services and increased revenues.

## **CARR AND COORDINATION**

Transit service at CARR is actually primarily dependent upon its contracts with outside agencies to ensure that it can match available state and federal dollars and provide service. The Medicaid contract is the largest of its contracts to provide coordinated services, but it is not the only service. Rural general public transportation is not shown, but the financial ability of CARR to provide general public transportation is largely based on its coordination effort. Coordinated transportation provides the local match needed to leverage federal funds to provide public transit. In other words, coordination has led to public transportation.

Additional coordination efforts that are regional in nature are undertaken by CARR. Among the four transportation providers, CARR has initiated the greatest level of regional coordination.

- Provides leadership role in Regional Coordination Plan as co-lead with WCTCOG. CARR is the co-lead along with West Central Texas Council of Governments in the development of the Transportation Regional Coordination Plan. The leadership role is consistent with other initiatives of CARR within West Central Texas.
- Provide office and wait area for other transportation providers and passengers in Abilene. Abilene is not in CARR's service area, but is a primary destination of its customers. CARR has offered the use of the facility to other providers, as a waiting area for drivers and customers.
- Coordinates inter-county service for seniors with SNAP in Sweetwater;
- Serves on local and regional boards including: TXDOT District 5310 Elderly and Disabled Advisory Board for Abilene and Brownwood, West Central Texas Workforce Development Board, Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council.

## **DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH AND COORDINATION**

Double Mountain Coach has a different operating model than CARR. A large number of trips are out of the service area to Abilene. Most trips are either, general public transportation trips or Medicaid trips. Medicaid trips are part of the regional coordination effort.

Two additional types of coordination service are provided by Double Mountain Coach. First, Double Mountain Coach provides transportation to the Greyhound Station in Abilene which allows its customer the ability to easily access intercity bus service to Dallas, Midland-Odessa and more distant locations. Second, coordinated transportation with area nursing homes is provided. Outside of Medicaid Transportation, coordination efforts have historically been focused on the seven counties that Double Mountain Coach serves.

## **SPARTAN AND COORDINATION**

SPARTAN primarily provides its transportation services to areas outside of the West Central Region. Coordination efforts are focused in the South Plains Region where SPARTAN is located. However, SPARTAN is also involved in local and regional coordination efforts.

SPARTAN is a provider of Medicaid services for trips originating in Mitchell and Scurry County. SPARTAN also works with CARR to coordinate trips and transfer with of passengers to Abilene, Big Spring and Lubbock between the respective providers.



Among the three rural providers, SPARTAN is different than the other two rural providers. Located west of Lubbock in Levelland, SPARTAN is geographically linked with the South Plains region not the West Central Texas Region. Mitchell and Scurry counties are border counties in West Central Texas, and are linked to both regions. However, their inclusion in the SPARTAN service area creates a greater linkage with the South Plains Region in the West Central Texas Region.

## **CITYLINK AND COORDINATION**

CityLink is a small urban provider. Their core service is fixed route service where more than 500,000 trips annually are provided. Measured in passenger trips, CityLink is by far the largest provider in the region providing more than 75% of the region's transit trips.

Coordination has emerged as a significant element in what CityLink does. CityLink has gone beyond the traditional core services and in doing so has met many of the goals of coordinated transportations including increased service in meeting different transit needs.

Evening service is not a given in small urban transportation services. Ridership declines during the evening, yet there are significant needs for service after 6:00 PM. CityLink has leveraged Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funds to be able to provide general demand response service for passengers until midnight Monday through Saturday. The evening service is successful and provided 17,629 evening trips during Fiscal Year 2005, primarily for employment.

CityLink has coordinated senior trips with the City of Abilene Senior Services providing trips for persons who require lift assisted service (and are ADA certified). Although the City of Abilene Senior Services provides a separate service, coordination exists between CityLink and the Senior Services. The Betty Hardwick Center provides transportation for its clients; CityLink provides an available supplement service for Betty Hardwick Center clients. CityLink has also worked to provide dedicated service to after-school programs through contracts with Boys and Girls club of Abilene and West Central Texas Council of Governments Youth Programs.

### ***Recommendation # 2 - While Organizational Consolidation of the Rural Transit Providers and/or the Urban Provider Are Not Practical, Additional Institutional Coordination Should Occur***

Given the current organizational alignment consolidation of rural services is difficult from a practical standpoint in the West Central Texas region. Additionally, the argument for justification for transit

consolidation in terms of improving service or reducing costs as a result of consolidation are not clear. CARR has operated as a growing rural transit agency in the eastern and central portions of the West Central Texas region.

South of the West Central Texas region, the Concho Valley region has consolidated their rural and small urban transit agencies. The transition has been successful in Concho Valley, and has resulted in improved levels of service, increased service levels and reduced operating costs. West Central Texas is a very different operating model, and applying the Concho Valley model to West Central Texas is not to be recommended because:

- West Central Texas has three rural providers none of which are located in the same city as the urban provider. In the case of Concho Valley, the rural provider and urban provider were both located in the City of San Angelo.
- The City of Abilene has been historically an effective small urban provider with a wide range of traditional public transit and coordinated transit services. Ridership on CityLink is more than three times the level of ridership on the San Angelo Street Railroad Company (SASRC). Urban transit service in San Angelo was in crisis, survival was contingent upon changing the operating model.
- Concho Valley Transit and SASRC wanted to consolidate. Creating a consolidated system was seen as desirable, and to all parties' mutual benefit. No such consensus or perception exists among rural or urban providers in West Central Texas. The four regional transit agencies wish to continue provide service. Consolidation would need to be implemented over the objections of the existing transit systems.
- Coordination is working. The success of the Medical Transportation Program shows considerable progress with respect to coordination that can be achieved without consolidation. Staff has developed an ability to work together to deliver Medicaid transportation in the West Central Texas region.
- CARR and Double Mountain Coach operate differently and serve the needs as identified by their respective boards.

If consolidation of rural services is not the answer for West Central Texas, what is? As identified in Recommendation # 1, additional coordination can be successfully achieved, especially in the current environment. Efforts in coordination should focus on a regional level rather than in the specific individual regions.

One exception may be the two counties currently served by SPARTAN. Two approaches are possible. First, the status quo could be maintained. Mitchell and Scurry counties have now been served effectively by SPARTAN for several years. Both counties are on the border between West Central Texas in the South Plains region. In a sense, they have a "foot" in each region. The second approach would be to consolidate public transit services and Scurry in Mitchell County with CARR. Having an office in Sweetwater provides some geographic ability to serve these two counties. However, the fact that CARR is located in Coleman, more than 125 miles from either County will make service challenging. Therefore, it is recommended to maintain the status quo with respect to Mitchell and Scurry Counties.

***Finding # 3 - Employment Transportation Especially in Rural Areas Is Inadequate***

Transportation needs in the West Central Texas region exists for a diverse group of people, and for a variety of purposes. Rural areas develop their service on the basis of coordinated transportation models. Human service and social service transportation involved clients for medical trips, trips to senior nutrition centers, and trips to shelter workshops. Many of the trips involved were non-work trips. All three rural transit providers operate demand response service.

Demand response service, whether it is in a rural setting or ADA Complementary Paratransit is challenged to provide extensive transportation to employment. Service provided with (either a fixed time a pickup and drop-off time) which tends to be more effective as a means of providing work transportation. Demand response service generally has a floating arrival or departure time due to the nature of its service which can make adequate work transportation system problematic.

CityLink has addressed the of employment transportation through two strategies. First, fixed route service is provided during the days Monday through Saturday. Although the need to update the existing routes is considered a significant issue, the current system does provide a means for many persons, especially those with limited mobility options, to get to work during the day on fixed route transportation. Second, evening general paratransit service since it is primarily dedicated to work trips, provides a means of persons to get to where we work during the evening Monday to Saturday. As a result, a large number of the employment transportation trips can be met.

The three rural transit providers have employment trips as part of their overall service but have stated that providing work trips is not one of the strengths of this service.

**Recommendation # 3 - Pilot Projects to Enhance Transportation to Employment Should Be Developed Utilizing JARC Funding**

Providing additional service in the West Central Texas region will require that additional funding sources are identified and used. What is suggested is that a pilot program be developed to create dedicated work trips within the West Central Texas region. Developing a pilot project to provide a transit alternative for persons to access work in Abilene is recommended. Using Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funding is recommended. **Table 4-1** shows the number of work trips in Taylor County from other counties in the West Central Texas region. Nearly 4/5 of all work trips into Taylor County occurred from two counties, Callahan County to the east and Jones County to the north. While the work trips coming from the 2000 census are not to be transit trips (with perhaps a few exceptions), travel patterns indicate a lot of people working in Taylor County coming from Callahan and Jones County.

Developing dedicated work routes from either Callahan or Jones County should be considered. Additional research and analysis needs to be conducted regarding the feasibility of this service, the anticipated costs and a practical plan to implement service. Performance measures will need to be developed to ensure that the pilot service is capable of meeting pre-established goals.

**TABLE 4-1  
 WORK TRIPS TO TAYLOR COUNTY**

County	Population	Destination Taylor County	% Outside Taylor in Region
Brown	37,964	54	0.79%
Callahan	12,905	2,813	41.37%
Coleman	9,235	125	1.84%
Comanche	14,026	28	0.41%
Eastland	18,297	195	2.87%
Fisher	4,344	67	0.99%
Haskell	6,093	109	1.60%
Jones	20,785	2,547	37.46%
Kent	859	4	0.06%
Knox	4,253	7	0.10%
Mitchell	9,698	10	0.15%
Nolan	15,802	285	4.19%
Runnels	11,495	173	2.54%
Scurry	16,361	29	0.43%
Shackelford	3,302	257	3.78%
Stephens	9,674	72	1.06%
Stonewall	1,693	18	0.26%
Taylor	126,555	54,925	N/A
Throckmorton	1,850	6	0.09%
<b>TOTAL WCT</b>	<b>325,191</b>	<b>61,724</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

While subscription bus service would make sense, vanpools are another option. Vanpools are used in urban areas to provide transportation services to reduce costs of transportation and as a means of reducing traffic congestion and air pollution. However, vanpools have also been used in rural areas. Muscle Shoals, in northwest rural Alabama has used vanpools for several years as a means of getting persons to employment. Subscription bus service could also be provided by a rural provider as a means of providing dedicated transportation for employees to specific worksites.

***Finding# 4: Lack of A Multi-Modal Terminal in Downtown Abilene***

The largest urbanized area in the West Central Texas Council of Governments (WCTCOG) region is Abilene. As the economic heart of the WCTCOG region, the urbanized area is home to 107,041 people. As such, Abilene is the natural center for transportation coordination efforts within a significant portion of the WCTCOG region. One critical element that could greatly facilitate the coordination of local, regional, and inter-

city transportation services in Abilene would be a multi-modal transit terminal facility, strategically located in downtown.

A multi-modal facility at one time was in the planning stages in Abilene. However, the site selected for the proposed facility turned out to be too controversial and the project was ultimately abandoned. The resulting lack of a multi-modal transit terminal in downtown Abilene is one area for improved coordination within the WCTCOG region. Without the physical structure of the terminal, the region's public transportation providers, intercity bus carrier, and social service and medical service providers have significantly less incentive to cooperate or coordinate in many ways that would be of great benefit to the citizens of the region.

**Recommendation # 4: Develop a Multi-Modal Terminal for Downtown Abilene**

A multi-modal terminal could offer the following advantages to the WCTCOG region around Abilene:

A multi-modal transit terminal provides a convenient transfer location for all public transportation services within a limited geographic region. The entire WCTCOG region is far too widespread for the multi-modal terminal to effectively be utilized beyond a certain radius; however, the designated public transportation providers in the area, CityLink, serving the City of Abilene, and the Central Texas Regional Transit District (CARR), serving the rural areas around it, could certainly utilize such a facility. For example, CityLink could utilize the facility as a transfer point for its routes. They could also house administrative offices or maintenance in the same facility.

CARR could utilize the same facility as a convenient transfer point for riders that are coming into Abilene for the day. Conversely, the facility could be a convenient location to pick up individuals wanting to go from Abilene to areas served by CARR, which lie outside the CityLink service area.

A multi-modal facility is also the natural origin and destination point for inter-city bus services that serve Abilene. Greyhound bus lines make a handful of stops in Abilene on a daily basis. Residents of Abilene and the surrounding areas could arrive at the facility on local bus service and hop aboard an intercity bus for destinations outside of the WCTCOG service area. When they return home, the reverse trips would be possible.

The use of a multi-modal transit terminal as a convenient transfer point for local, regional, and inter-city bus services, however, really does not take full advantage of what such a facility might offer. A multi-modal transit terminal in the heart of Abilene could also provide an opportunity for greater inter-agency collaboration or coordination. For example, CARR and CityLink could work more closely together in that environment to schedule trips. There is a multitude of ways in which this could be accomplished. However that is accomplished both agencies could save precious resources on overhead costs by co-locating within the same office space.

Another possibility that could benefit both CityLink and CARR is for the facility to house space for basic preventative maintenance activities that could be utilized by either entity. A facility that would house a transfer terminal for local, regional, and inter-city bus service would probably not have adequate space for a full maintenance facility (nor would it necessarily be desired); however, limited preventative maintenance activities might be desirable and greatly enhance the efficiency of both systems. The ability to share some maintenance space could reduce overall maintenance costs on a yearly basis and provide some other efficiency for both providers.

Other alternatives for co-utilization of that space by CityLink and CARR exist, but those listed above are perhaps the most obvious and serve to make the point that a multi-modal terminal can offer many benefits to the various public transportation providers, which will enable them to better serve the public at the same time reducing costs. However, the benefits of such a facility do not have to be limited to the preceding discussion.

In addition to the Abilene area's designated public transportation providers; a multi-modal terminal could also benefit social service and/or medical service providers as well. Generally speaking, social service and medical service providers often engage in what can be characterized as demand response types of activities, in order to provide mobility services to their clients/patients. To mitigate costs associated with demand response types of services, in some instances social service and medical service providers could require clients/patients to meet at a multi-modal terminal in order to be picked up and transported wherever they need to be. A good example would be if a medical service provider needed to take a number of people to Dallas for treatment on a specific day of the week. In that instance, a multi-modal terminal would be particularly helpful. Certainly, many (if not most) cases involving social service or medical service transportation will not be able to

take advantage of such an opportunity, but any amount of cost savings is usually worth taking full advantage of, since those resources can be used in other areas.

Aside from being a focal point for transportation-related services for the Abilene region, a multi-modal terminal can also achieve other local objectives, depending if it is implemented fully. For example, assuming that the multi-modal terminal is the primary origin/destination point for inter-city bus services and the transfer point for local and regional transit services, a multi-modal terminal facility can also serve as an information center. The City of Abilene or the Abilene Chamber of Commerce or some other entity can establish a welcome center within the facility.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of a multi-modal terminal, outside of providing convenient space to consolidate various transportation services, is as a catalyst for economic development. The Federal Transit Administration's Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) allows for public transportation-related pedestrian improvements to be constructed within a 1,500-foot radius of a transit terminal facility. In other words, the improved sidewalks, enhanced lighting, street furniture, trash receptacles and other amenities that can all be constructed to facilitate access to the terminal facility under the LCI paradigm can also be utilized to make a more attractive downtown Abilene and thus spur some economic development.

Another incentive to construct a multi-modal transit facility in the downtown is that other planned local investments made in related improvements can be counted as part of the local share match requirement for the facility. For example, if a local property owner, the City, or the County were planning to make related pedestrian improvements within the 1,500-foot radius of the multi-modal terminal, that investment could be used to leverage five times (5X) the amount of federal funds to go toward the construction of the facility. Should the value of land necessary for the development of the facility be donated for construction of the facility (fee simple or easement), that value can also be counted as local share toward the Federal match requirement. The economic incentives of creating such a facility are really only outweighed by the benefit



## **Finding # 5 - Transit Agencies Use Different Scheduling and Dispatch Software**

Scheduling and coordination of transit service by different providers can be enhanced in many ways if the same scheduling and dispatch software utilized. Among the advantages of the same software is:

- Trip information can be shared among providers;
- Client information can be shared among providers;
- Data and performance information can be derived in a similar manner;
- With automated scheduling software, travel times can be synched;
- Methods of mutual operational passenger assistance (transferring trips among providers based upon operational contingencies) can be easily executed;
- Staff will easily understand route their counterpart is working with.

Different scheduling software is used among the public transportation providers. CityLink, the largest provider uses Trapeze Pass scheduling software. Trapeze Pass is the most commonly used scheduling software among urban transit station systems in the United States. It is heavily utilized for ADA Complementary Paratransit Service. The software is an integrated program that includes mapping, a wide variety of program modules, and ability for the transit agency to set a variety of system parameters designed to balance on-time performance and productivity. Effectiveness with Trapeze Pass is only partly dependent upon the software but more largely dependent upon the ability of key staff (schedulers and dispatchers) to effectively utilize the software and the scheduling parameters in a manner consistent with the operating environment.

CARR uses a proprietary software that provides customer service information in a scheduling template through its database. It is not true scheduling software since it does not allow automated scheduling based on a mapping component which is tied into routing.

Both Double Mountain Coach and SPARTAN use Shah Software. The software is effective dispatch and reporting software for small rural transit services. Automated scheduling software is not necessary for service the size of Double Mountain Coach. SPARTAN is also utilizing Shah Software. Providing a substantial we hire level of service makes automated scheduling valuable for SPARTAN. However, developing automated scheduling software at SPARTAN is still a work in progress

**Recommendation # 5 – Develop a Pilot Program Whereby CARR and CityLink have Compatible Software (Trapeze Pass)**

Unified and common scheduling software for all transit providers while desirable in theory is not the most effective short and middle term strategy. As was mentioned in the finding above, Double Mountain Coach service does not need automated scheduling software. However, CityLink and CARR would be a more reasonable match for compatible software. Several potential advantages could accrue from this approach:

- CARR is the regional provider of Medicaid services, and easily the largest rural transit provider in West Central Texas. The size of its operation could lend itself to automated scheduling software. CityLink already has established automated scheduling software system that works well. Having CARR utilize the same system, would allow potential advantages in terms of service quality and increased productivity.
- CityLink has used its software for several years and has developed familiarity with it. Potential exists for CityLink to provide some level of assistance to CARR during implementation.
- CityLink and CARR offer services in geographically contiguous areas. Specifically, the boundary issue as it affects the city of Abilene is a specific area of interest. The potential to effectively implement alternative solutions to the current situation would be greatly enhanced if those systems were using the same scheduling software.
- Joint future purchase of AVL/MDT for enhanced customer service would become another potential advantage. The technology of AVL/MDT would have significant advantages in both in urban and rural transit environment. Emergency situations could be responded to more quickly. Lost vehicles could be directed more effectively towards the destinations. Coordination of trips resulting from either delays or vehicle breakdowns could be done more effectively. Pooling resources may allow purchase of this software. However, implementation will likely require consolidation of dispatch, scheduling and reservations in some form.
- As occurred with Medical Transportation Program, enhanced cooperation and teamwork between CityLink and CARR would develop allowing better response to a variety of operational challenges.

Implementation would involve the purchase and implementation of scheduling software by CARR. The Pilot Program could potentially be funded through the New Freedom initiative. Since the program would

allow transportation issues to be addressed in an area where problems exist with respect to transportation of persons with disabilities ("The Abilene Boundary Issue") common software would be a vital means of addressing the issue.

***Finding # 6 - The Boundary Issue with Respect to Abilene***

City of Abilene boundary and the complications with respect to service that exist along the city line has been an issue of concern to stakeholders and transit providers. CityLink provides service only within the corporate boundaries of the City of Abilene. Service on CityLink is not allowed even on addresses that are located on the other side of the street from the boundaries of the city of Abilene. As a result, the effect of grouping of trips and use of services is constrained by the urban boundary. Another impact is the perception the individuals living beyond the city boundary are receiving a drastically lower level of service.

CARR provides service outside of the city of Abilene in rural Taylor County. Providing service especially on the western boundary of the city of Abilene is often challenging for CARR. CityLink vehicles are in the vicinity, but prohibited from picking up passengers. The result is one of two outcomes; the passengers immediately outside the city of Abilene are not picked up although a potential low-cost alternative exists. The requirements of rural transit service provided by CARR and the requirements of ADA Complimentary Paratransit Service provided by CityLink are different. While CARR is not required to provide with next day advanced request; CityLink must provide service within the City of Abilene for qualified passengers.

***Recommendation # 6 - Develop an Inter-Local Agreement between CARR and CityLink to Address Boundary Issues. New Freedom Funding Section 5317 could be a funding source.***

Develop flexible inter-local agreements with respect to passengers in and around Abilene, scheduling where the best groupings can occur and flexibility in city and rural travel is allowed. Limited flexibility in passenger pickup may be able to create a win-win situation for CityLink and CARR. By allowing CityLink vehicles to venture a short distance outside of the city limits when it makes sense from a scheduling perspective, may aid in its overall service efficiency. Likewise, CARR could assist CityLink in picking up passengers within the city limits of the City of Abilene. An agreement would need to be developed where passengers who were picked up out of the transit agency's respective service area could be accounted for and properly compensated.

Recommendation # 6 is far easier to implement if the software systems are the same. Hence, an effective implementation of this recommendation would likely be tied to the implementation of Recommendation # 5. While flexible pickup of passengers would be possible without the scheduling software being compatible it would be more challenging and more labor-intensive without such compatibility.

Given that the boundary issue impacts persons with disabilities within Abilene and adjacent to Abilene, 5317 New Freedom Funding may be an appropriate venue for funding this recommendation. Improved transportation resulting from enhanced coordination along the urban/rural boundary could expand mobility options for persons with disabilities beyond the requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and hence, be consistent with the proposed guidelines for funding Section 5317 projects.

***Finding #7 - None of the 19 Counties in West Central Texas Provide Any Direct Local Funding for Rural Transportation***

At the core of most rural public transit agencies challenge in the United States is the issue of funding. While most large urban agencies can rely on one or more dedicated local funding source, rural systems normally need to rely on a patchwork of funding sources, along with limited or no local support from county and municipal government.

None of the counties or municipalities provides direct financial assistance to any of the rural transit systems. Double Mountain Coach serves seven counties that provide in kind assistance, allowing the in kind services to be leveraged for state and federal funds. The City of Abilene does contribute more than \$430,000 per year out of its general fund to operate CityLink. The local assistance provided from the city of Abilene general fund constitutes the largest single source of local operating funds, and is critical for the systems continued operation. Coordinated funds are also an important component of the revenue mix. Medicaid and Contract Service provided more than \$150,000 per year (in the 2006 budget). Additional federal funds are available for the coordinated programs in the amount of more than \$180,000 per year (2006 budget). Elimination of the coordinated funding for CityLink would also negatively impact operations in a very drastic manner. Passenger Fares, advertising and other sources are also valuable local revenue sources.

CARR revenues are from coordinated revenues. Local county or municipal revenue sources are not available for operations. Existing

service is provided from federal funds, state funds, and farebox revenues in coordinated contract revenues.

Coordinated transportation in the form of medical transportation revenue is the single largest local source of revenue for Double Mountain Coach. Local contributions are also significant for Double Mountain Coach in the form of in-kind contributions provided by the seven counties in the service area. The in-kind contributions allow Double Mountain Coach to leverage additional federal funds and provide more service. Given the limited opportunities in coordination, the in-kind contribution is vital to the operation of Double Mountain Coach. However, the drawback of in-kind contribution is that cannot be utilized to meet operating expenses such as fuel and salaries. In-kind contributions are limited to the service that the in-kind contribution provides.

***Recommendation # 7 - Additional Local Revenue Sources Need to Be Utilized to Expand Rural Transportation***

CARR and Double Mountain Coach have done a commendable job without any direct local revenue source. However, relatively small incremental improvements will only be possible with existing coordination. Coordination alone will not significantly enhance rural transportation service unless additional revenue is provided. Public rural transportation will remain as it is today significantly limited throughout the West Central Texas.

Rural counties elsewhere in Texas do provide local direct assistance to rural transportation. The assistance level is often modest (\$2000-\$5000 per year). However, the commitment provides an important component in rural transportation. Coordinated transportation revenue remains valuable in rural areas and is integral to the effective provision of rural transit service. However, the combination of local support and coordinated transportation revenue can be viewed as optimal.

**Table 4-2** shows the Golden Crescent model with a mixture of coordination and county funding. The seven county region per capita income levels are compatible to West Central Texas.

**TABLE 4-2  
GOLDEN CRESCENT LOCAL FUNDING**

County	Rural Provider	FY 2005 County General Fund Contribution	FY 2005 Coordination Revenue	Total Local Revenue FY 2005	County Population	Per Capita Contribution	Per Capita Local Only
Calhoun	Calhoun SCA	\$15,349	\$19,574	\$34,923	20,647	\$ 1.69	\$1.35
DeWitt	Golden Crescent	\$4,320	\$34,123	\$38,443	20,507	\$1.87	\$4.75
Goliad	Goliad County	\$14,399	\$16,852	\$31,251	7102	\$4.40	\$ 0.49
Gonzales	Gonzales SCA	\$9,279	\$68,056	\$77,335	19,587	\$3.95	\$2.11
Jackson	Friends of Elder Citizens	\$14,417	\$25,317	\$39,734	14,339	\$2.77	\$0.99
Lavaca	Lavaca County	\$46,226	\$63,818	\$110,044	19,210	\$5.73	\$0.42
Victoria	Golden Crescent	\$4,320	\$34,799	\$39,119	23,485	\$1.67	\$5.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>\$108,310</b>	<b>\$262,539</b>	<b>\$370,849</b>	<b>124,877</b>	<b>\$ 2.97</b>	<b>\$1.15</b>

One option to enhance local revenue is to develop a means for counties to contribute an amount for transportation from the general fund. Admittedly, it will be very challenging given that historically West Central Texas counties have not provided support for public transit.

*A recommended alternative for additional funding is to develop an alternate revenue source for West Central Texas counties. Among the benefits of additional funding are:*

- Additional local revenue for transit service;
- Ability to leverage additional federal funds from a variety of programs using the local revenue source. The result is that additional local revenue could provide a return of 200% to 500% for planning capital or operating activities.
- State allocations of state funds will weigh the local contribution to transit service. Regions, such as West Central Texas which continue not to support transit through local revenue sources (coordinated funds through contract revenues are not scheduled to count as a local revenue source) will be penalized. The result of not having significant local contributions will be exacerbated by

cuts in state funding or funding levels will remain flat rather than increase.

- County government will have a greater stake in public transportation says it will be invested to its contribution. In transit systems that are operated entirely through coordinated local funding, county governments are less invested in transit since they are providing no support towards rural transit services.

***Finding # 8 - CityLink in Abilene Can Enhance Its Fixed Route Service, and Enhance the Overall Level of Regional Transportation***

Abilene has developed a hub and spoke bus system. The current route structure was developed in the 1980s. Virtually all routes run through the downtown transit center on South 2nd. Traditional fixed route systems often use the hub and spoke system which was most effective when the employment, retail and medical centers of the city were located in the central area.

In Abilene, as in virtually all American cities this is no longer the case. Retail services in Abilene are largely concentrated in the southwestern area of the city with some significant growth occurring in the northeastern area of the city. Medical services are generally dispersed in the South and West but are generally located away from downtown. Employment is significantly concentrated away from downtown as well.

What does the fixed route system of Abilene have to do with regional coordination? Well more than 70% of the passenger trips in West Central Texas occur on the fixed route service of Abilene. Therefore, changes that positively impact the fixed route service will increase accessibility to transit. A more effective fixed route service could also be attractive to persons visiting Abilene and traveling on transit services.

***Recommendation # 8 - CityLink Should Conduct a Fixed Route Bus Study Designed to Enhance System Productivity and Increase Ridership***

A redesign of CityLink fixed route services so that they will better match existing growth, employment and retail patterns resulting in increased ridership and improved service. Redesigning fixed route service configurations matter. Waco redesigned its fixed route service in 1998 and it resulted in a 20% increase in ridership. A 20% increase in ridership on CityLink would mean 100,000 more passengers per year.

Again, this is not a classic coordination issue; however improving the alignment of CityLink routes closer to passenger needs may allow clients

of human service agencies to better access service on fixed routes. The result is reducing the level of transportation required by the human service transportation provider yet providing an equivalent level of service. Another benefit may be that by providing a more attractive fixed route service, passengers who currently use ADA complementary paratransit service may be more able to use fixed route service.

**Finding # 9 – Fares Are Different on Different Services**

The rural systems operate a different fare structure. Double Mountain Coach fare structure is 50 to 75% lower than the CARR fare structure. A trip of 40 miles costs a riders on double Mountain Coach \$2; the same trip on CARR is \$8. The fare structure on SPARTAN is similar to the fare structure on CARR. CityLink fares are different than rural fares. **Tables 4-3 and 4-4** show the significant disparities in fares on CARR versus Double Mountain Coach.

**TABLE 4-3  
 CARR FARE STRUCTURE**

Mileage Range	Fare (One Way)
0 - 5 miles (Local)	\$ 1.00
6 - 10 miles	\$ 2.00
11-15 miles	\$ 3.00
16-20 miles	\$ 4.00
21-25 miles	\$ 5.00
25-30 miles	\$ 6.00
31-35 miles	\$ 7.00
36- 40 miles	\$ 8.00
41-45 miles	\$ 9.00
46-50 miles	\$ 10.00
51-55 miles	\$ 11.00
56-60 miles	\$ 12.00
61-65 miles	\$ 13.00
66-70 miles	\$ 14.00
71-75 miles	\$ 15.00
76-80 miles	\$ 16.00
81-85 miles	\$ 17.00
86-90 miles	\$ 18.00



**TABLE 4-4  
 DOUBLE MOUNTAIN COACH FARES**

Mileage Range	Fare (One Way)
0 - 5 miles (Local)	\$ 0.50
<b>OUT OF TOWN SERVICE</b>	
6 - 20 miles	\$ 1.00
21-40 miles	\$ 2.00
41-60 miles	\$ 3.00
61-80 miles	\$ 4.00
81-90 miles	\$ 5.00
90 miles and over	\$ 6.00

***Finding # 9 - Develop a Fare Media That Can Be Utilized on All Four Transit Systems***

A debit card that can be scanned on the different transit services is not feasible in the near-term. What would be more practical in the short term is a low tech solution. A punch card or ticket with tabs of specific values (i.e. \$1 per tab or punch) could be used on all of the systems for trips across a dollar or more. However, that solution would be very difficult to account for, and could be subject to fraud and abuse.

Therefore, for this idea to be effectively implemented another solution will need to be developed. Technologically, using scanners to develop a common fare media is a long way off. Research needs to be conducted to determine if there is an intermediate technology that can be used to develop an effective common fare media that is reliable, easy to account for, and not easily subject to fraud and abuse.

***Finding # 10 – Rapidly Aging Vehicle Fleet Limits the Ability of All of the West Central Texas Region Transit Agencies to Provide Existing or Future Service in a Reliable Manner***

The problem with revenue vehicles in West Central Texas has three components.

*A) Age of vehicles creates additional vehicle road calls and reduces service reliability.*

Transit revenue vehicles used by rural public transit are generally Type 2 or Type 3 cutaway vans or smaller passenger or mini-vans. Most of these have useful lives of three to four years or 150,000 or at most, 200,000 miles. Replacing revenue vehicles is important to providing a reliable revenue vehicle fleet. When a substantial number or a majority of the

transit vehicles of an agency exceed their useful life, vehicles reliability declines. Unless the mix of vehicles improves, a transit agency will struggle to maintain service reliability for its existing service. Expansion, which may be a potential outcome of coordination, becomes extremely difficult, due to the lack of reliable vehicles. Among the rural providers, most of the rural revenue vehicles in the West Central Texas Region exceed 150,000 miles, and more than a third of the rural revenue vehicles in the West central Texas Tech region exceed 200,000 miles. According to the transit agencies, the situation has worsened in the last few years, for two reasons. First, vehicle replacement funding has been insufficient to replace all of the vehicles which have reached the end of their useful life. As a result, transit revenue vehicles that have reached the end of their useful life have continued to be pressed into service. Second, the mandate to use alternative fuel vehicles has resulted in significant purchases of propane vehicles by two of the three transit providers in the West Central Texas Region. The new vehicles have been substantially less reliable than was expected. The alternative fuel vehicles break down frequently and the amount of down time has been significant. Lacking reliable new vehicles has been created a cycle whereby the transit agencies have been forced to use the older vehicles to substitute for the new vehicles, increasing the mileage on the older vehicles. **Diagram 4-2** shows the cumulative impact of recent events and their effect on vehicle reliability.

West Central Texas rural transit agencies have needed to keep vehicles well beyond the end of their useful life. Repair costs increase dramatically as high- ticket items such as transmissions and engines often have to be replaced. The older vehicles are less reliable and more prone to breakdowns, requiring more frequent road calls. Major repairs result in extended downtime for revenue vehicles. Operating and maintenance costs increase as a result of declining vehicle reliability. Greater cost and effort is needed by drivers, supervisory and maintenance personnel to ensure that daily service needs are met.

The quality of customer service is harmed by increased vehicle unreliability. Passengers that are on board are delayed from the reaching their destination. Passengers are more likely to face late pickups as a result of insufficient numbers of vehicles being available due to the number of vehicles undergoing repairs. Breakdowns with passengers on board require long waits in rural area for assistance to arrive. Often passengers need to wait substantial periods of time in isolated areas without air conditioning or heat due to vehicle breakdowns. Several such incidents have occurred among the Region's providers.

*B) Requirement to purchase alternative fuel vehicles and their reliability.*

TXDOT has mandated the use of alternate fuel vehicles including Compressed Natural Gas and/or propane. Complying with the mandate has resulted in more costly service for rural providers. Propane vehicles have showed substantially less reliability than their diesel- and gasoline-powered counterparts. What has resulted is a higher level of repairs, both planned and unplanned. Obtaining reliable maintenance expertise that can effectively service propane vehicles can be very challenging, especially in rural areas.

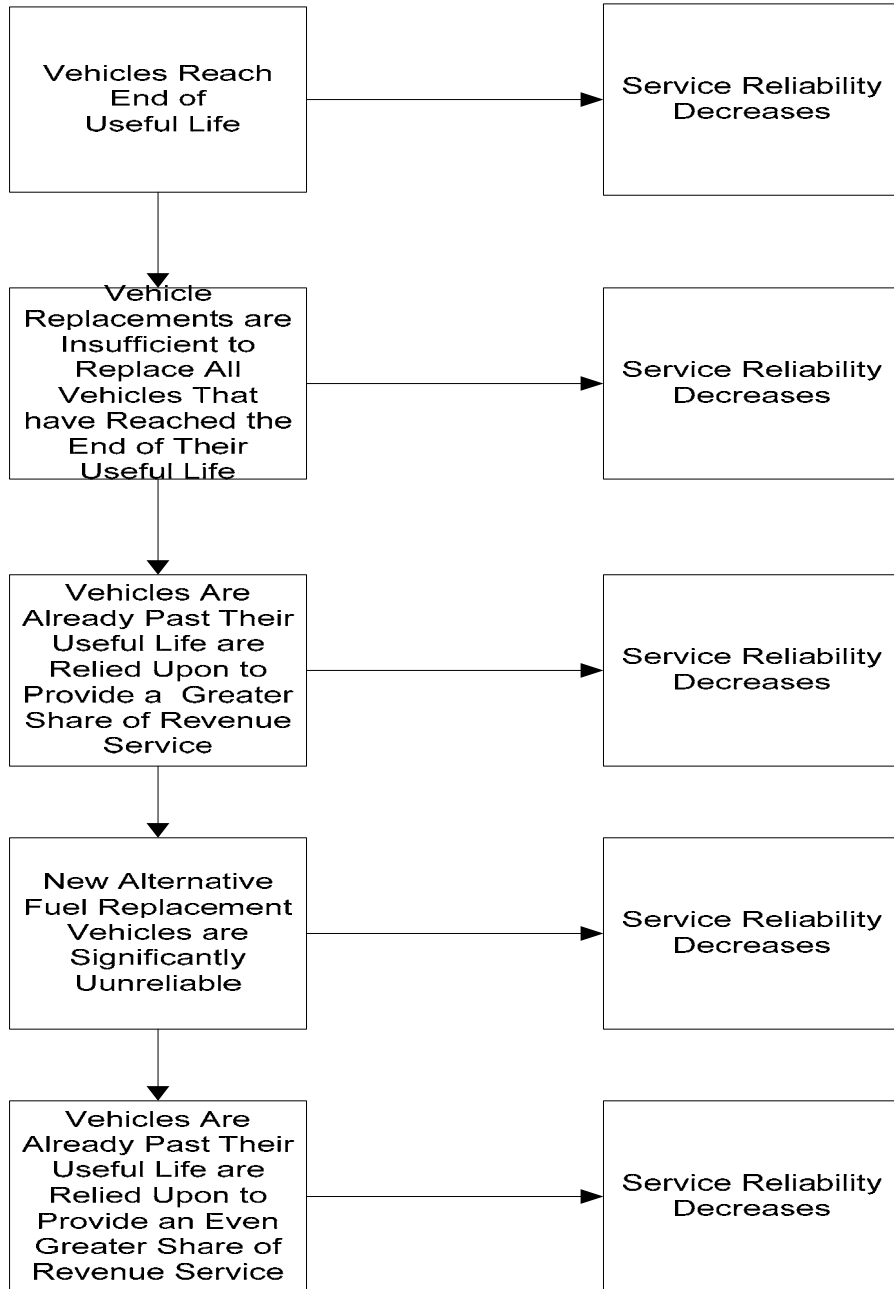
Newer vehicles (assuming they are reliable) can mitigate the problems associated with revenue vehicles at the end of their useful life. However, the program vehicles have not mitigated the West Central Texas Region vehicle reliability issues. As a result of the unreliable nature of the alternate fuel vehicles, vehicle reliability issues have been exacerbated. Breakdowns with alternative fuel vehicles have resulted in several disturbing incidents due to their suddenness and the locations in which they have occurred.

*C) Flexibility in revenue vehicle size fleet.*

Rural transit agencies often transport small numbers of passengers. Accessible vans with one or two wheelchair tie-downs are often sufficient to meet passenger demand for specific trips. Vans can cost up to 50% less than Type 2 or Type 3 cutaway vans. Additionally, operating costs in terms of maintenance and fuel are substantially less than with Type 2 or Type 3 cutaway vans.

The issue of adequate vehicles for revenue service is currently the highest priority among the rural transit providers of the West Central Texas Region. Reliable vehicles are a fundamental component of quality transit service. When vehicle reliability declines, the result is that the quality of transit service declines as well. The age and mileage of transit vehicles among the rural providers in West's Central Texas is becoming an increasing problem with every passing month. Vehicle reliability becomes an ever-increasing problem making the ability to deliver quality transit service a greater and greater challenge on a daily basis. Until this issue is addressed and resolved, substantial constraints will exist not only to **providing additional transit coordination in the West Central Texas Region, but to maintaining existing transit coordination.**

## DIAGRAM 4-2 REDUCED VEHICLE RELIABILITY PROCESS



Providing substantial capital assistance for vehicle replacement to rural transit agencies is essential. Vehicles that have reached the end of their useful life need to be replaced with new and reliable transit revenue vehicles.

Impact - if most or all of the vehicles in the rural transit agencies could be appropriately replaced when they reach the end of their useful lives, the following impacts would be expected:

- Reduced maintenance costs;
- Decreased road calls for broken-down vehicles;
- Increase vehicle reliability;

***Recommendation # 10 – Increase the State Earmark Allotment for Vehicles for the Transit Agencies in West Central Texas***

Increased coordination will not occur when transit agencies lack reliable vehicles. The increasing problem of vehicle reliability must be addressed not avoided. New vehicles provided to transit agencies need to be reliable; rural transit agencies are a perilous service to “beta test” innovative technologies since reliability is so crucial. Additional reliable vehicles for the rural agencies are essential – otherwise not only will new coordination be endangered but existing coordination will be harmed as service will be reduced as more vehicles become inoperable.

***Recommendation # 11 - Allow Greater Flexibility in Meeting the Goal of Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions***

Lifting of restrictions enabling purchase of other vehicle types – i.e. hybrids, flex fuel, very low emission diesel. Providing transit agencies with a variety of option of purchasing vehicles in rural areas is a more practical to effectively reduce the cost of maintenance and increased service and vehicle reliability.

## APPENDIX A REGIONAL INVENTORY

Agency Name	Contact Person	Email Address	Phone	Comments	Mailing Address
West Central Texas Council of Governments	Jim Compton	<a href="mailto:jcompton@wctcog.org">jcompton@wctcog.org</a>	325-672-6544	Regional Council of Government	PO Box 3195 Abilene, TX 79601
<b>PUBLIC TRANSIT AGENCIES</b>					
Central Texas Rural Transit District (City and Rural Rides - CARR)	J.R. Salazar	<a href="mailto:carr@webb-access.net">carr@webb-access.net</a>	325-625-4491	Provides rural public transit service in 10 West central Texas counties; Primary Texas Medical Transportation Program Provider for Region 7	PO Box 712 Coleman, TX 76834
Aspermont Small Business Development Corporation (Double Mountain Coach)	Kim Lowack	-	940-989-3538	Provides rural public transit service in 7 West Central Texas Counties; subcontractor for 7 counties in region under MTP program	PO Box 188 Aspermont, TX 79502
CityLink - City of Abilene	Brad Patrick	<a href="mailto:bradpatrick@abilenetx.com">bradpatrick@abilenetx.com</a>	325-676-6403	Provides fixed route, ADA Paratransit, general evening paratransit and other coordinated programs	1189 S 2nd Street, Abilene TX 79602
South Plains Area Regional Transportation (SPARTAN)	Roger Cardenas	<a href="mailto:roger.cardenas@spcaa.org">roger.cardenas@spcaa.org</a>	806-894-3800	provides rural transportation in two West central Texas counties; subcontractor for 7 counties in region under MTP program	PO Box 610 Levelland, TX 79336
<b>HUMAN SERVICE RECIPIENTS OF 5310 VEHICLES</b>					
City of Abilene Senior Citizens	Janet Whisenhunt	<a href="mailto:janet.whisenhunt@abilenetx.net">janet.whisenhunt@abilenetx.net</a>	325-734-5304	provides service to five senior lunch programs and adult senators in Abilene with 6 vehicles, provides limited medical transportation for seniors	P.O. Box 50 Abilene, TX 79604
Shackelford County Community Resources Center	Susan Jones		325-725-2447	provides limited service with one vehicle to medical appointments in Abilene; also coordinates with CARR	PO Box 876 Albany TX 76430
Sweetwater Nutrition Activities Program (SNAP)	Tonya Challis	<a href="mailto:snap02@sbcglobal.net">snap02@sbcglobal.net</a>	325-236-6344	provides service to senior midday meals with two vehicles one is 5310 received in 1995	PO Box 450 Sweetwater, TX 79561
Sears Methodist Retirement System, Inc	Cheryl Harding	<a href="mailto:cghardin@sear-methodist.com">cghardin@sear-methodist.com</a>	325-437-1184	uses five vehicles supplied under 5310 to provide services for its clients in retirement and nursing centers	2617 Antilley Road Abilene TX 79606

Agency Name	Contact Person	Email Address	Phone	Comments	Mailing Address
<b>OTHER HUMAN SERVICE PROVIDERS</b>					
West Texas Rehabilitation Center	Bridgitte Lett	<a href="mailto:blett@wtrc.com">blett@wtrc.com</a>	325-793-3500	provides work-related transportation to individuals with developmental disabilities; also provides some shopping related transportation	4601 Hartford Abilene, TX 79604
Mesa Springs Retirement Village	Celia Davis	<a href="mailto:webmaster@ehendrick.org">webmaster@ehendrick.org</a>	325-670-2000	has one	1242 N 19th Street Abilene TX 79601
VA Abilene	Jimmy De Foor	<a href="mailto:defoorj@taylorcountytexas.org">defoorj@taylorcountytexas.org</a>	325-674-1341	one van travels to Big Spring twice weekly for veteran transportation	400 Oak Street Suite 170 Abilene TX 79602
Fisher County Faith in Action	Valeska Weems	<a href="mailto:susanmartinez123@aol.com">susanmartinez123@aol.com</a>	325-735-2929	medical transportation and other services for residents in Fisher County	PO Box 132 Rotan, TX 79546
The Oaks at Radford Hills	Kim Parsons		325-677-3236	provides supplemental transportation needs for residents - Citylink provides major public transportation needs	725 Medical Drive Abilene, TX
<b>OTHER STAKEHOLDERS</b>					
City of Brownwood	Ron Watson	<a href="mailto:rwatson@ci.brownwood.tx.us">rwatson@ci.brownwood.tx.us</a>	325-646-5775	second-largest city in West central Texas, highest rural ridership amount West Central Texas counties	P.O. Box 1389 Brownwood, TX 76804
Abilene MPO	Robert Allen	<a href="mailto:robert.allen@abilenetx.us">robert.allen@abilenetx.us</a>	325-676-6243	urban MPO director worked with project sub consultant to develop multimodal center in Abilene	400 Oak St, Abilene, TX 79604
West Central Texas Area Agency on Aging	Gail Kaiser	<a href="mailto:gkaiser@wctcog.org">gkaiser@wctcog.org</a>	325-672-8544	Utilizes different providers and senior centers for transportation services	P.O. Box 3195 Abilene, TX 79604
West Central Texas Workforce Development Board	Mary Ross	<a href="mailto:mary.ross@workforcesystem.org">mary.ross@workforcesystem.org</a>	325-795-4200	utilizes Citylink fixed route and evening general response service	400 Oak St, Abilene, TX 79602
Breckenridge Senior Center Services	Debbie Robinson	<a href="mailto:debs81858@hotmail.com">debs81858@hotmail.com</a>	325-559-8742	receives senior	210 North Smith St Breckinridge, TX 76424
Central Texas Opportunities	Hanna Adams	<a href="mailto:ctocs@web-access.net">ctocs@web-access.net</a>	325-625-4167	provides Head Start and other community services - contracts with CARR; CARR used to be part of Central Texas Opportunities	PO Box 712 Coleman, TX 76834
The Ark	Laurie Prickett	-			PO Box 1202 Brownwood, TX 76801

<b>Agency Name</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Mailing Address</b>
<b>ADJACENT REGION CONTACTS</b>					
NORTEX Regional Planning Commission	Nora Hodges	<a href="mailto:nhodges@nrtextrpc.org">nhodges@nrtextrpc.org</a>	940-322-5281 extension 113	contact from NORTEX region;	P.O. Box 5144 Wichita Falls, TX 76307
Concho Valley Council of Governments (CVCOG)	Susan Crippin	<a href="mailto:scrippin@cvcog.org">scrippin@cvcog.org</a>	325-944-9666	contact from CVCOG region	PO Box 60050 San Angelo, TX 76906



## **APPENDIX B WORKSHOPS FOR WEST CENTRAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Stakeholders and transit providers met on Tuesday, August 8 in Brownwood, and Wednesday, August 9 in Abilene, for half day workshop. Each workshop was designed with four goals in mind. First was to provide those in attendance with an environment where we could discuss what had been discovered in reviewing transit services and coordination activity in West Central Texas. Second was developing feedback on key unmet gaps and needs within the West Central Texas region with respect to public transportation and human service transportation needs. Third was developing an understanding of the variety of challenges i.e., barriers and funding that needed to be addressed in order to achieve progress in terms of enhanced transit service and improved regional coordination. Finally, the workshop was an opportunity to gain feedback and interest in the future potential pilot programs and coordination strategies. Utilizing the feedback developed from these workshops, it was envisioned that keen gaps in key strategies would be brought into greater focus, so that priorities could be allocated when preparing project findings.

Two workshops were held in Brownwood, Texas on Tuesday, August 8, and Abilene, Texas on Wednesday, August 9. Alan Rodenstein of A&R Consulting moderated the workshop and made four of the five PowerPoint presentations. Brent Riddle of the Goodman Corporation, assisted in moderating the program, and presented on the issue of local funding alternatives for West Central Texas. Attendance was sparse at the Brownwood workshop, but some feedback was developed through that meeting. However, the workshop in Abilene, Texas was well attended by approximately 15 individuals, who are from a wide variety of programs and interests. The result was a lively exchange of ideas and suggestions.

The following memorandum will document many portions of the workshops. The goals and the goals and program agenda are included in **Appendix A**. Also included is a copy of the consolidated PowerPoint presentations presented to the group during the workshops, which is included in **Appendix B**. Several information charts and graphs were used to do presentations, and they are included in **Appendix C**.

## UNMET NEEDS

Presentations were provided in work that had been done on the West Central Texas Transportation Coordination Project to date. Discussion included, the survey of providers, the review of his in existing transit services both public transit and human service transportation, a review of the Texas coordination effort and an understanding of what transportation coordination was attempting to achieve, in some discussion on the level of existing transit need in service in West Central Texas. During the Abilene session, participants were divided into two groups. The summary of the first group is shown in standard text, and the summary of the second group is shown in italicized text.

- Holiday and travel for medical appointments for clients without Medicaid - need to coordinate with medical transportation clients;
- Intermodal transit center to include facilities that could be used by transit riders, including:
  - Day Care Center;
  - Transfer Center;
  - Dining Service;
  - Medical Transportation Center;
  - Shortened Medical Transportation waiting for rural transportation;
  - Coordinate site selection.
- Rural Public Extended Service is needed. Service is not available in rural areas on weeknights or on weekends;
- City of Abilene to coordinator provides elderly and disabled services on the curb to curb basis. Encouragement of this will require influencing decision-makers through the communication of need by user groups such as Area Agency on Aging. Senior Centers and AARP.
- Issues related to urbanized verse rural boundaries, and the confusion in providing seamless transportation along the boundary areas. Interlocal agreements between rural and urban providers may be able to better effectively meet these needs.
- *Work-related trips are a significant unmet need. Rural transit agencies, is primarily demand response providers, can often more effectively meet medical and shopping transportation trips than they can work-related trips. Among the limitations for work trips are limited operating hours-not working nights and weekends. Another limitation is the constraints brought upon by routing issues how can work trips the effectively prioritize to ensure that people get to and from work in a timely manner. Late work trips can often result when occurring frequently in a passenger being terminated from the job. Another aspect of this unmet need is the lack of targeted*

- funding of the lack of funding that has been targeted from this area, especially in rural areas for the purpose of work trips.*
- *Boundary issues remain a challenge specifically the urban rural boundary. Extensive technology and human interaction is needed for this to work. Encouragement can be found in the manner that staff has worked a Double Mountain Coach, Central Texas Rural Transit District, CityLink and SPARTAN have worked with respect to the implementation of the current medical transportation contract. The West Central Texas region has developed of greater ability to coordinate service as result of the experience of the current medical transportation contract. Transit staffs from different organizations have similar professional functions (such as dispatchers or billing) have interacted to resolve day-to-day challenges. As a result, transit organizations have developed and enhanced ability to work together towards achieving the delivery of transportation services in an effective and efficiently.*
  - *Marketing and education efforts are insufficient in the region. People are not aware of what's out there and are often unfamiliar are aware of how to access services in West Central Texas. Funding for marketing and consumer education is often very limited, and efforts of marketing and education and outreach are often infrequent.*

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR**

## **ENHANCED COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES IN WEST CENTRAL TEXAS**

Following the group presentations of transit needs, a detailed project presentation was conducted on existing barriers and constraints to coordination and transit service as well in West Central Texas. The contention being, that limited local support from the counties and cities in the rural areas, limited the amount of potential public transit service. Another presentation was conducted on funding issues as they relate to West Central Texas. Included in the presentation was the potential for new funds through coordinated transportation to be available as a result of the New Freedom Initiative (Section 5317) and Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316). Coordination was now also becoming necessary in accessing Elderly and Disabled Funds (Section 5310).

During the Abilene workshop, the participants were divided into two groups, and cast with developing three recommendations that they felt were the most critical for the region. The reason behind asking for a smaller number of recommendations was an attempt to assist in crystallizing the critical priorities of the region with respect to public transportation and transportation coordination. Again, the first groups recommendations are in regular text in the second groups recommendations are in italicized text.

- Resolving Boundary Issues between Abilene in the immediately adjacent areas. It was felt the grant funds from “United We Ride” could be utilized to fund a coordinated effort along the urban/rural boundary.
- Development of a multimodal terminal in the City of Abilene. The multimodal terminal would be able to be used by CityLink, rural transit providers, intercity private bus companies (Greyhound, Coach USA, and Kerrville Bus Lines), taxi companies, and could provide a variety of services tailored to the needs of bus passengers.
- *Educating customer’s agency is on the need of coordinated scheduling. This effort would involve transit agencies conducting informational meetings for doctor’s medical facilities and other types of providers at a convenient time in order for them to understand that the coordination of times can result in increased use of these services through coordinating transportation times. Another challenge is that the statewide medical transportation centers are often not knowledgeable of physical addresses as they relate to*

- Medicaid transportation providers, and will often allocate trips in a very inefficient manner.*
- *Increased efforts for work trips through dedicated transit routes for work trips or related possible efforts.*

## **WCTCOG WORKSHOPS GOALS AND AGENDA**

### **Goals of Workshop**

- Provide Environment to discuss project findings and educate larger group of stakeholders
- Develop feedback appraisal of unmet gaps and needs in a group setting
- Understanding of range of challenges needed to meet goals (barriers and funding)
- Gain feedback on interest in potential pilot programs and coordination strategies from group sessions

*Dates: Tuesday August 7 in Brownwood and Wednesday August 8 in Abilene*

### **Workshop Agenda**

8:00 - Continental Breakfast

8:30 - Introductions and Discussion of Sessions Goals (10 min) A&R

8:40 - Presentation by Consultants of Project to Date and Questions (25/10 min) A&R

9:15 - Exercise to Identify Unmet Needs and Gaps (Groups of 6-8) (30 min)

9:45 – Group Presentations (15 min)

10:00 - Discussion of Barriers and Obstacles (15 min) A&R

10:15 - Break (15 min)

10:30 – Local Funding and Financial Challenges (15 min) TGC

10:45 – Means to Improve Coordination and Service (15 min)

11:00 - Exercise to Develop Recommendations (Groups of 6-8)

11:30 – Group Presentations (15 min)

11:45 – Conclusion and Next Steps (15 min)

## APPENDIX C

### MEMORANDUM

TO: News Media in the 19-county  
West Central Texas Council of Governments Region

FROM: Alex Koons, Coordinator, Regional Transportation Planning  
Project  
West Central Texas Council of Governments

SUBJECT: PUBLIC MEETINGS ON TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

DATE: May 8, 2006

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Enclosed is an item pertaining to the above series of public meetings. Your coverage of these events will be appreciated.

I will be glad to discuss other details of the meetings with you; for further specific information, please contact me at the address or phone number shown on this letterhead.

AK:jc

enclosure

MEMORANDUM

TO: Human Services Agencies and  
Transportation Service Providers in the 19-county  
West Central Texas Council of Governments Region

FROM: Alex Koons, Coordinator  
WCTCOG Regional Transportation Planning Project

SUBJECT: Regional Transportation Public Meetings

DATE: May 8, 2006

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Several days ago I wrote to you concerning a project being undertaken by West Central Texas Council of Governments and Central Texas Rural Transit District concerning coordination of public transportation and development of a regional transportation service plan per requirements of HB 3588. In my memo I requested your help with a survey that is part of this process. Thanks to all of you who have responded so far.

In that memo I also mentioned public meetings that will be conducted this month for the purpose of gaining further input for the planning process from transportation consumers and providers. The meetings have been scheduled as follows:

<u>DATE:</u>	<u>LOCATION:</u>	<u>TIME:</u>
May 15, 2006 5:30 P.M. MONDAY	Adams Street Community Center  511 East Adams Street, Room C Brownwood, Texas	
May 16, 2006 5:30 P.M. TUESDAY	Experienced Citizens Center  1401 South 1 <sup>st</sup> Street Haskell, Texas	
May 17, 2006 5:30 P.M. WEDNESDAY	WCTCOG Conference Room  841 North Judge Ely Boulevard Abilene, Texas	



Transportation Public Meetings  
May 8, 2006  
page two

The sessions should last approximately one hour. A brief overview of the legislation and the planning process will be presented, followed by a time during which participants will be invited to share their thoughts on transportation subjects. Whether the area of interest concerns public transit, agency-provided services, need for additional services or examples of success, all input will be welcomed. Other meetings will be conducted later in the summer.

Several copies of a poster concerning the meeting nearest you are enclosed for your use. We would appreciate your help in placing these on bulletin boards, in service vehicles, in lobbies, or providing them directly to clients; please make additional copies as needed. If you know of clients that would have a particular interest in this subject, please offer them a special invitation.

For additional information, please contact Alex Koons at WCTCOG, (325) 672-8544, [akoons@wctog.org](mailto:akoons@wctog.org), or Adel Hunter at CTRTD, (325) 625-4491, [adelcarr@web-access.net](mailto:adelcarr@web-access.net), or visit the website [www.wctcog.org](http://www.wctcog.org).

Again, my thanks for your help in this process. We hope that you will plan to attend one of the meetings!

AK:jc

Meeting notices enclosed

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PUBLIC MEETINGS SLATED TO DISCUSS IMPROVING COORDINATION OF  
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The 78<sup>th</sup> Legislature, in House Bill 3588, created opportunities for coordination of publicly-funded transportation throughout the state. West Central Texas Council of Governments (WCTCOG) and Central Texas Rural Transit District (CTRTD) of Coleman have been given lead responsibility for development of a coordinated transportation services plan for the West Central Texas region. WCTCOG has secured the services of a consultant firm to assist with the technical aspects of the plan. At every point in the planning process, input from the public is being sought.

Providers and users of transportation services as well as other interested persons are invited to attend one of three public meetings to discuss their needs and interests. The meetings have been scheduled as follows:

<u>DATE:</u>	<u>LOCATION:</u>	<u>TIME:</u>
May 15, 2006 MONDAY	Adams Street Community Center 511 East Adams Street, Room C Brownwood, Texas	5:30 P.M.
May 16, 2006 TUESDAY	Experienced Citizens Center 1401 South 1 <sup>st</sup> Street Haskell, Texas	5:30 P.M.
May 17, 2006 WEDNESDAY	WCTCOG Conference Room 841 North Judge Ely Boulevard Abilene, Texas	5:30 P.M.

The sessions should last approximately one hour. A brief overview of the legislation and the planning process will be presented by the consultant, followed by a time during which members of the public will be invited to share their thoughts on transportation subjects. Whether the area of interest concerns public transit, agency-provided services, need for additional services or examples of success, all

input is welcome. The meetings will be the first in a series that will be conducted throughout the summer.

For additional information, please contact Alex Koons at WCTCOG, (325) 672-8544, or visit the website at [www.wctcog.org](http://www.wctcog.org). Comments are welcomed at [akoons@wctcog.org](mailto:akoons@wctcog.org).

## TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC MEETING

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The **West Central Texas Council of Governments** and **City And Rural Rides** have joined with the **Texas Department of Transportation** to study ways transportation services may better serve the public.

### **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Providers and users of transportation services as well as other interested persons are invited to attend the public meeting listed below:

**Date: Monday, May 15, 2006**

**Time: 5:30 – 6:30 pm**

**Location: Adams Street  
Community Center  
501 East Adams St  
Room C  
Brownwood, Texas**

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### **YOUR THOUGHTS ARE IMPORTANT - PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND!**

For additional information, please contact Alex Koons at WCTCOG, (325) 672-8544, or visit the website at [www.wctcog.org](http://www.wctcog.org).  
Comments are welcomed at [akoons@wctcog.org](mailto:akoons@wctcog.org).



## TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC MEETING

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### **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Providers and users of transportation services as well as other interested persons are invited to attend the public meeting listed below:

**Date:** **Tuesday, May 16, 2006**

**Time:** **5:30 – 6:30 pm**

**Location:** **Experienced Citizens Center  
1401 South 1st Street  
Haskell, Texas**

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### **YOUR THOUGHTS ARE IMPORTANT - PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND!**

For additional information, please contact Alex Koons at WCTCOG, (325) 672-8544, or visit the website at [www.wctcog.org](http://www.wctcog.org). Comments are welcomed at [akoons@wctcog.org](mailto:akoons@wctcog.org).

## TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC MEETING

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The **West Central Texas Council of Governments** and **City And Rural Rides** have joined with the **Texas Department of Transportation** to study ways transportation services may better serve the public.

### **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Providers and users of transportation services as well as other interested persons are invited to attend the public meeting listed below:

**Date:** **Wednesday, May 17, 2006**

**Time:** **5:30 – 6:30 pm**

**Location:** **WCTCOG Offices  
841 N. Judge Ely Blvd.  
Abilene, Texas**

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### **YOUR THOUGHTS ARE IMPORTANT - PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND!**

For additional information, please contact Alex Koons at WCTCOG, (325) 672-8544, or visit the website at [www.wctcog.org](http://www.wctcog.org). Comments are welcomed at [akoons@wctcog.org](mailto:akoons@wctcog.org).