

NON-PROFIT VEHICLE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Transit Authority of River City (TARC), Louisville, Kentucky

SUMMARY OF THE STRATEGY:

TARC provides preventive maintenance for local non-profit human service agencies that operate their own client transportation services.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION:

Among TARC's coordination initiatives is a non-profit vehicle maintenance program, under which the transit agency provides preventive maintenance for local human service agencies that operate their own client transportation services. Currently, more than 52 vehicles from 11 local agencies participate in TARC's preventive maintenance program.

Under this program, the local agencies drop their vehicles off at TARC's maintenance facilities for routine preventive maintenance (including oil changes and other preventive services at planned intervals). Two TARC maintenance employees maintain the nonprofit agency vehicles. (TARC's total maintenance staff is approximately 110 positions.) Unscheduled repairs are not provided under this program.

CONDITIONS THAT PROMPTED THE STRATEGY:

TARC has been involved in mobility management activities since 2005, beginning with a series of workshops to create a vision for meeting transportation needs through effective use of resources. A Transportation Steering Committee was formed as an outcome of the workshops,

AGENCY PROFILE

Organization Type: Transit Authority

Service Area: urbanized areas of five counties in the Louisville Metropolitan area in Kentucky and Indiana. Louisville's 2010 population was 741,096; the Louisville Metro area totaled 1,307,647.

Resources:

- **Fleet size:** 224 buses and trolleys and 89 paratransit vehicles
- **Staff size:** approx. 600
- **FY 2012 Operating Budget:** approx. \$69.7 million

Service Summary:

- **Modes Operated:** fixed-route, paratransit, vanpool
- **Days and Hours of Service:** varies by route; TARC operates 7 days/week
- **General Public Cash Fare:** \$1.75 (July 2012)
- **Passenger Trips/Year:** > 14 million

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and the Committee became the Regional Mobility Council (RMC). The RMC leads the coordinated planning process for the JARC and New Freedom programs. TARC provides staff support for the RMC, which is currently chaired by an AARP State Office representative.

TARC had the capacity to provide local human service agencies an opportunity to reduce their vehicle maintenance costs

through the provision of routine maintenance service on their vehicles. This program assists agencies in providing client transportation services, increases the range of transportation options available in the community and diverts some ADA trips.

Some agencies prefer to transport their own clients rather than referring them to the ADA paratransit service because this provides additional services to their clients (such as door-through-door assistance) that a public transit agency does not provide.

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGY:

TARC provides this service to assist local non-profit human service agencies, enabling them to continue to provide many trips which could be eligible for ADA paratransit service.

KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS:

The following are key factors for success for mobility management in general:

- Starting slowly, investing time to develop personal relationships with collaborators, and getting the right people around the table.
- Choosing an agency with a broad community-wide perspective to

guide the initial coordination process (in Louisville, this was a partnership between TARC and the United Way. The two agencies organized the initial visioning workshops (along with the sponsorship of a local bank).

- Maintaining focus on the complete mobility picture and designing an overall structure of mobility services in the region.

CHALLENGES:

- A related initiative that TARC also explored was creation of a vehicle lending library for local nonprofit agencies. Under this program, TARC had hoped to provide vehicles that human service agencies could use if they did not have their own vehicle, as a backup when their regular vehicles were being repaired or to temporarily increase their fleet size. However, the requirements associated with federally-funded vehicles were found to be a barrier to implementing that initiative. However, TARC has been able to donate vanpool vehicles to nonprofit agencies after the vehicles have fulfilled federal criteria for useful life and no longer have any federal financial interest.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

RECOMMENDED FOR:

- Larger transit agencies with available vehicle maintenance capacity.
- Transit agencies with high ADA paratransit demand, seeking to encourage human service agencies to provide client transportation that would otherwise be eligible for ADA paratransit.

- Human service agencies with clients that need additional assistance (such as door-through-door assistance) beyond that with the public transit agency is able to offer.

RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESS:

- Establish collaborative relationships between transit and human service agencies.
- Ensure that the transit agency only takes on maintenance of many additional vehicles as it can accommodate without compromising the timeliness or quality of the maintenance services provided to all participants.

METHODS FOR DOCUMENTING RESULTS:

- Number of participating agencies, vehicles per agency, and preventive maintenance services per year per agency.
- Preventive maintenance costs per year per participating human service agencies
- Number of rides per year provided by each human service agency that were likely deferred from ADA paratransit.
- Compare the net cost to the transit agency to provide preventive maintenance to another organization as compared to the net cost to provide ADA paratransit rides for clients of that organization. For example, 10 clients riding round-trip 5 days per week would total approximately 1,000 rides per year. At a net ADA paratransit operating cost of \$22 per trip, it would cost the transit agency \$22,000 per year to transport these individuals to and from the agency program. If the human service agency operated its own vehicle to provide these trips, it is likely that the preventive maintenance cost for that vehicle be closer to half that amount.