

**LENOIR COUNTY TRANSIT  
COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

**Adopted by: Lenoir County Board of Commissioners – January 5, 2009**

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## A. Federal Regulatory Background

For more than twenty years, the federal and state governments have been working to better coordinate human service transportation activities it funds. In 1985, during an oversight hearing on Rural Transportation, Congress heard testimony prompted by concerns of the lack of federal coordination between programs, such as the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Aiming to better coordinate activities, the Secretaries of HHS and DOT signed an agreement establishing the Joint DOT/HHS Coordinating Council on Human Service Transportation (CCHST) in 1986. Since the CCHST's creation, the CCHST has concentrated efforts to identify barriers to coordinated transportation. At one time, the agencies identified sixty-four factors that transportation and human service representatives believed were barriers to transportation coordination. Barriers included uncertainty regarding federal responsibilities for transportation, fragmented accounting and reporting procedures, uncertainty in using resources for recipients other than program constituents, and prohibition against charging fares under the Older Americans Act.

To further support coordination, Congress included several provisions in its 1998 passage of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA -21), Public Law (PL) 105-178. Most notable was the provision to require Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), predecessor program to today's JARC program, projects to be part of a coordinated public transit-human services transportation planning process.

President George W. Bush released an Executive Order on Human Service Transportation Coordination on February 24, 2004, to improve the human service transportation coordination of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with lower incomes. The Executive Order established the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM), representing 11 Federal departments. CCAM has created to:

- promote interagency cooperation
- establish appropriate mechanisms to minimize duplication and overlap of federal programs and services so that transportation-disadvantaged persons have access to more transportation services
- facilitate access to the most appropriate, cost-effective transportation services within existing resources
- encourage enhanced customer access to the variety of transportation and resources available
- formulate and implement administrative, policy, and procedural mechanisms that enhance transportation services at all levels:

There are currently 62 Federal programs run by these Federal departments that provide some kind of transportation service for seniors, people with disabilities, or individuals with lower incomes. These funds result in a myriad of services that are not coordinated or managed efficiently at the State or local level

In May 2005, the CCAM issued a report to the President with recommendations for breaking down federal barriers to transportation for all transportation-disadvantaged populations. The

report detailed action plans for each of the eleven federal agencies who comprise the CCAM. . As a result CCAM launched United We Ride (UWR), a national initiative to implement the requirement of the Executive Order, has a website at [www.unitedweride.gov](http://www.unitedweride.gov).

While it has been a long process, the federal government is working to strengthen its coordination requirements for human service transportation activities. On August 10, 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) PL 109-059. was signed into law. SAFETEA-LU established a federal mandate for public transportation and human service coordination planning. Starting in the Fiscal Year 2007, SAFETEA-LU requires that a human service transportation coordination plan be in place before transportation service providers may acquire funding from three Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs, the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC, Section 5316), and the New Freedom (Section 5317) Programs.

In 2006, the CCAM issued two policy statements that take important steps to bring federal programs together to help people with disabilities, older adults, and lower income families get the transportation they need for their day-to-day mobility. The CCAM policy statements focus on two key areas: (1) coordinated human service transportation planning and (2) vehicle sharing. These policies support communities and organizations receiving federal funding to plan transportation services together and to share resources. The policies were included as part of the recommendations in a 2005 report to the White House on Human Service Transportation Coordination. Each department on the CCAM was charged with taking action to implement these policies.

SAFETEA-LU's requirement of a coordinated plan and United We Ride's goals and objectives are in accord; to afford elderly citizens, persons with disabilities and low income populations greater access to transportation services, to reduce duplication of services and to gain greater efficiencies in the distribution of human transportation services. Encompassed in the coordinated plan must be an assessment of available services, an assessment of clearly defined needs and strategies to address deficiencies for target populations. All projects funded via the aforementioned programs must meet the needs identified in the coordinated plan. Utilizing the Framework for Action, an assessment of Lenoir was conducted through a Public Transportation -Human Services Workshop. The Framework for Action is a self-assessment tool developed through the United We Ride initiative sponsored by the FTA. The Framework was used to identify areas of success and highlight the actions needed to improve the coordination of human service transportation in the area.

## **B. Federal Funding Programs**

SAFETEA-LU requires that projects selected for funding under the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (5310), JARC (5316), and New Freedom (5317) programs be derived from a locally developed coordinated transportation plan and that the plan be developed through a process that includes representative from the public, private, and non-profit transportation and human service providers and the public. The NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT), Public Transportation Division was designated by the Governor in April 2008 to administer both the small urban and nonurbanized area apportionment of funds to North Carolina. NCDOT will only award project funding under the programs that are selected following a call for projects, or application solicitation. The applications are reviewed by a Project Selection Committee consisting of representatives from the Human Service

Transportation Council, with support by the Public Transportation Division and the Department of Health and Human Services staff. The selection committee utilizes pre-determine project evaluation criteria to score each application. Those with the highest score receive the available funding. Two year project funding is awarded.

A brief description of the programs and examples of eligible projects for each follows.

### **Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC)**

The JARC program existed under the previous transportation legislation, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). SAFETEA-LU has changed the funding from an earmark to a formula program based on the number of low-income individuals in the urbanized area. JARC was created to help address the transportation needs of unemployed and underemployed persons trying to access jobs. Public transit primarily serves people entering the central city area; however entry-level jobs were being created in the suburbs. Previously funded JARC projects that are able to document successful implementation will be eligible for funding. New projects must relate to the development and maintenance of transportation services designed to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income clients to and from jobs and activities related to their employment. Examples of eligible projects include:

- Public transit late-night and weekend service.
- Public transit guaranteed ride home program Expanding fixed-route transit routes
- Vanpools or shuttle services to improve access to employment or training
- Car loan programs that assist individuals in purchasing and maintaining vehicles
- Promotion of public transit for non-traditional work schedules
- Voucher programs targeted to persons entering the workforce or on welfare

### **New Freedom**

The New Freedom Program is a newly created program under SAFETEA-LU. The purpose of New Freedom is to expand transportation services for the elderly and persons with disabilities beyond what is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). New Freedom projects must be new service, defined as not in service as of August 10, 2005. Examples of eligible projects include:

- Expansion of paratransit service beyond the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile required by ADA
- Expansion of current hours of operation for paratransit services that are beyond those provided on fixed route services
- Same day ADA service
- Door-through-door service-provision of escorts
- Purchasing vehicles for new accessible taxi, ride sharing and/or vanpool programs
- Expense related to new voucher programs offered by human service providers
- New volunteer driver and aide programs
- Operational planning for the purchase of intelligent transportation technologies

### **Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310)**

This program existed under the previous transportation legislation. The 5310 program provides funds for capital costs associated with providing services to older adults and people with disabilities; generally accessible vehicles are purchased for non-profit organizations.

Additional requirements under SAFETEA-LU include the provision that projects funded under this program must be included in a locally-developed human service transportation coordination plan. North Carolina is one of seven states that are authorized to use up to one-third of the annual statewide allocation for operating costs.

- Purchase of service (POS): the acquisition of transportation service under a purchase of service contract with a public transportation provider
- Vehicles
- Mobility managers and related activities
- Radio and communication equipment
- Vehicle shelters
- Wheelchair lifts and restraints
- Computer hardware and software

## **CHAPTER 2: PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

### **A. Plan Goals**

#### **Purpose of Coordinated Plan**

Projects funded through the Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316 - JARC), New Freedom (Section 5317) and the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310) programs require the development of a local, coordinated public transit-human services plan (CPT-HSTP), which should incorporate private and non-profit transportation and human services providers, and the general public

A diverse group of stakeholders was invited to assist with the CPT-HSTP development process that followed the four SAFETEAU-required steps:

- Assess available services (public, private and nonprofit).
- Identify transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults and people with low incomes.
- Develop strategies and/or activities to address the identified gaps and achieve efficiencies, where possible, in service delivery.
- Identify priorities for implementing the strategy/activities based on resources, time, and feasibility for implementation.

Lenoir County Transit served as the lead agency to convene transportation stakeholders to develop the CPT-HSTP. The stakeholders were invited to participate in a public workshop that, along with surveys returned by stakeholder not in attendance, direct feedback and public comment, comply with the four SAFETEA-LU required steps.

Lenoir County Transit advertised on our local television channel concerning the Transportation Summit that was held November 13, 2008.

### **B. Planning Committee**

Completing this extensive planning process required the participation of many organizations and agencies and the creation of a planning team. The planning team is comprised of representatives of the following organizations:

- \* Lenoir Community College
- \* Partnership for Children of Lenoir and Greene Counties
- \* Lenoir County Council on Aging
- \* Eastpointe Human Services
- \* Emergency Management Services
- \* Employment Security Commission

### **C. Human Service Transportation Coordination Committee**

The Human Service Transportation Coordination Committee was created to guide and assist the core planning committee in the development of the Coordinated Plan, to initiate discussions about coordination opportunities and develop strategies and actions based on the public involvement feedback received throughout the process. The committee membership represented a broad array of interests, including elected officials, city/town/county managers,

appointed transportation advisory boards, local and regional public and human service transportation providers, county social service agencies, Hispanic advocacy organizations, private transportation providers, hospitals, and advocates for persons with disabilities. There were (39) participants in the stakeholders workshop on November 13, 2008, This workshop consisted of representatives from the following organizations that participated in the identification or prioritization of coordinated transportation needs:

- \* Lenoir County Dept of Social Services
- \* Lenoir Community College
- \* Lenoir County Health Department
- \* Lenoir Memorial Hospital
- \* Partnership for Children of Lenoir and Greene Counties
- \* Lenoir County Council on Aging
- \* Lenoir County Greene Lamp
- \* Lenoir County
- \* Lenoir County Raising Awareness for the Developmentally Disabled
- \* Lenoir County Economic Development
- \* Lenoir county Transition Services Council
- \* NCDOT/Public Transportation Division
- \* North Carolina Public Transportation Association
- \* Eastpointe Human Services
- \* Kinston Community Health
- \* Emergency Management Services
- \* Local Taxi Service
- \* NC Courts
- \* Employment Security Commission
- \* Representative of Latino population

**The various Organizations that received an invitation to our Transportation Summit were as follows:**

Commissioners (7)  
County Manager  
Assistant County Manager  
Mayor of Kinston  
Town Manager of LaGrange  
Mayor of Pink Hill  
Department of Social Services  
Council on Aging  
Vocational Rehabilitation  
Health Department  
Eastpointe Mental Services  
Lenoir County Planning  
Lenoir Memorial Hospital  
Homeless Shelter Director  
Transit Advisory Board (12)  
Steve Moore – Duplin County Director  
Phyllis Toler – Craven County Director

Carol Long – Onslow County Director  
Rebecca Clayton – Pitt Area Transit Director  
Johnny Ford – Durham County Access Coordinator  
Randy Bass – Cabarrus County Transit Director  
Public Transportation Division Director – Miriam Perry  
North Carolina Public Transportation Association Executive Director – Amber Wagner  
Department of Transportation Consultant – Tori Smith  
R.A.D.D. – Raising Awareness for the Developmentally Disabled  
Partnership for Children of Lenoir and Greene Counties  
NCDOT/Board of Transportation Representative  
Economic Development Director  
Mayor’s Committee for Person’s with Disabilities  
Electrolux  
Smithfield Packing  
West Company  
Neuse Corporation  
Homeless Shelter  
ICOR  
Kinston Dialysis Centers (2)  
Day Break (Day Care for Senior Citizens)  
Boy’s & Girls Club of Lenoir County  
Parks & Recreation  
Chamber of Commerce  
Pride of Kinston  
Kinston/Lenoir County One-on-One  
Lenoir County Public Schools  
Local Taxi Service (Eagle Cab)  
Representative of Latino population  
North Carolina Courts

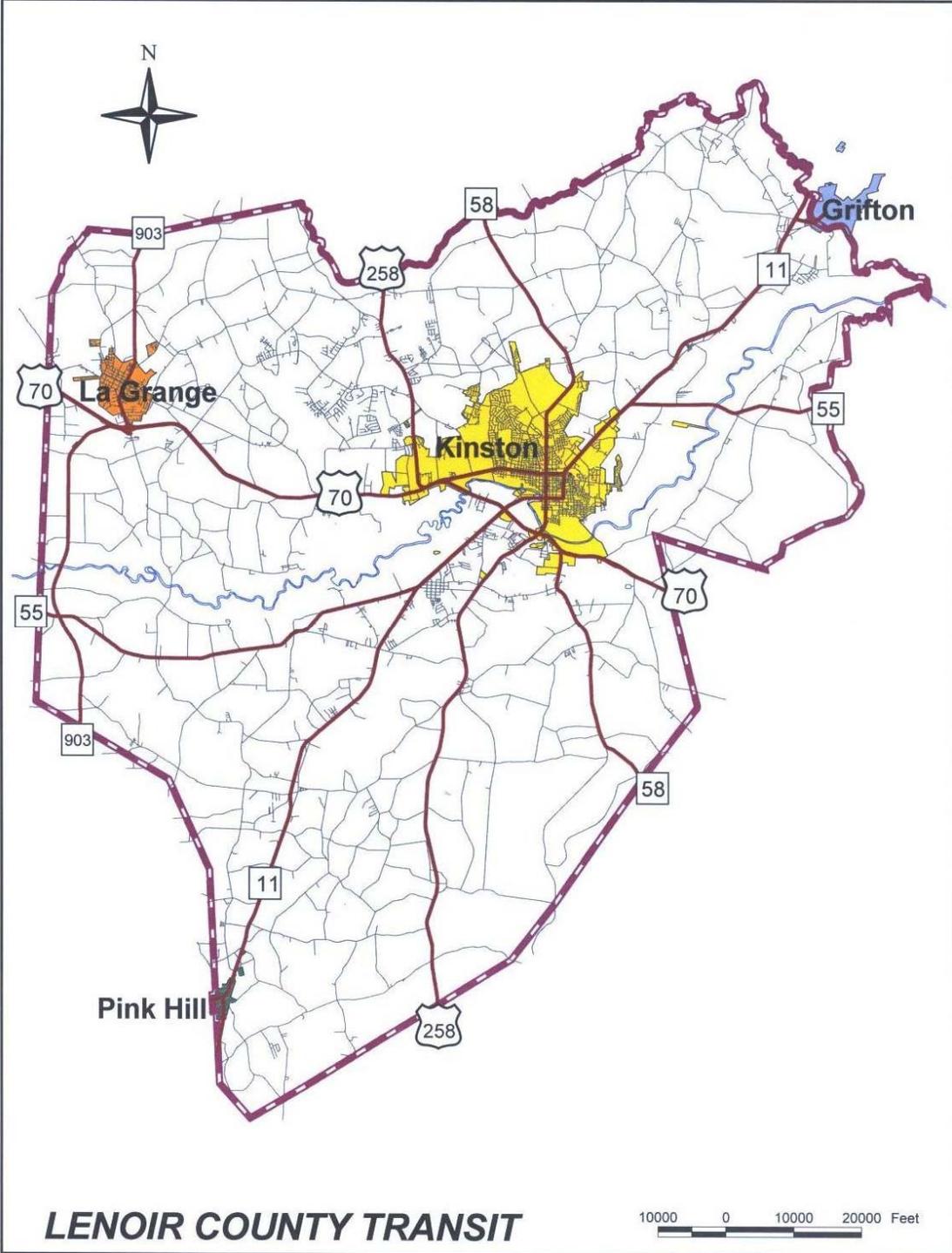
A Framework for Action Self Assessment Tool for Communities titled: “Building The Fully Coordinated Transportation System” was included in everyone’s package to be completed and returned as instructed by our Facilitator Ms. Perry. As of December 14, 2008, there have been no Self Assessment Surveys received.

The Coordinated Plan was approved by the committee on December 31, 2008 and by the Lenoir County Board of Commissioners on January 5, 2009.

#### D. Study Service Area

The coordinated plan covers residents of Lenoir County. However, service could be provided to surrounding counties to access training and employment opportunities and for other services required by persons with disabilities, older persons and low-income individuals if identified as a service priority by the Steering Committee. The plan does not cover services provided by surrounding counties into Lenoir County since this process did not include stakeholders from the surrounding counties. However, five directors from surrounding county and regional community transportation systems served as facilitator assistant(s) for the stakeholder meeting.

The planning area for the Coordinated Plan includes the areas within Lenoir County.



**LENOIR COUNTY TRANSIT**

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## E. Demographics

Lenoir County covering approximately 400 square miles is located in the central coastal plain of North Carolina. Lenoir County is bordered to the north by Greene County, to the west by Wayne County, to the east by Craven County, and to the south by Duplin and Jones County.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census data, Lenoir County has a population of 59,648. Forty percent of the county's population resides in an urban setting, with approximately 24,000 people living in 16.73 square miles of the City of Kinston. The remaining 60% of the population live in the rural areas of Lenoir County. Of that, there are Persons under 5 years old 6.7%, Persons under 18 years old 24.9% and 15.1% Seniors age 65+ persons with a disability, age 5+ 13,923.

A Census breakdown on other Ethnic groups in Lenoir County are persons of Hispanic or Latino origin in Lenoir County is 3.8%, White persons is 57.8%, Black persons is 40.8%, American Indian and Alaska Native persons is 0.2%, Asian persons is 0.5%, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander is 0.1%.

The median household income in Lenoir County is \$30,952, and the percentage of persons below poverty level stands at 17.1%.

Residents of remote rural areas often have difficulty accessing services, especially with transportation costs rising. Of the 59,648 Citizens in Lenoir County, only 23,909 have car, truck, van or motorcycle. The elderly often can no longer drive, and this further complicates the matter. The dependency on public transportation is attributed directly to factors such as low-income, disabilities, minorities, and age. These factors were analyzed based on Census 2000 data.

Lenoir County has six (6) public housing locations with a total of 765 units that are available for the low-income, minorities, and persons with disabilities. Listed are the locations and numbers of units per location. Each location is served by Lenoir County Transit and we have Bus Stop Signs at Carver Courts, Richard Green Apartments, and Simon Bright Apartments for our Deviated Fixed Route.

Carver Courts	East Bright Street	Kinston	178 units
Jack Rountree Apartments	Marilyn Drive	Kinston	125 units
John C. Hood Homes	Lincoln Street	Kinston	30 units
Mitchell Wooten Courts	East Washington Ave	Kinston	108 units
Richard Green Apartments	East Bright Street	Kinston	100 units
Simon Bright Apartments	East Bright Street	Kinston	224 units

## Chapter 3: Assessment of Available Services

### A. Inventory of Existing Services

The coordinated planning process requires a thorough inventory of existing transportation services. An assessment of existing transportation services in Lenoir County - public, private and human service – was conducted. The inventory of services and providers follows:

#### **Public Transportation Providers**

Lenoir County operates a single county public transportation/human system, Lenoir County Transit (LCT), receiving US Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 Nonurbanized Area Formula Program funds. The purpose of the Section 5311 program is to serve the general public needs of individuals who reside in non-urban areas. However, recipients of the funds coordinate the provision of human service transportation to prevent duplication of service and to utilize limited financial resources. Lenoir County Transit, operating as a department of county government, is the designated lead transportation agency approved by the Lenoir County Board of Commissioners to provide human service client transportation on a contractual basis and general public transportation. Lenoir County Transit also administers, on behalf of the county, state operating assistance allocated to each of the county by NCDOT to serve the transportation needs of the elderly, disabled persons, employment transportation for low-income persons, and the general public. LCT administers the state assistance for the elderly, disabled persons and the general public on behalf of each county.

In FY08, LCT provided a total of 53,836 passenger trips. An overview of services include:

- 1) Local services are provided Monday thru Friday for trips to local agencies, medical appointments, community college, group, individual shopping trips, and Older Americans nutrition sites.
- 2) Out of area trips are scheduled only if agency sponsored by Department of Social Services, Council on Aging and Vocational Rehabilitation. The areas are Pitt County two (2) times a day five (5) days a week, Greene County on a as needed basis, and Wayne County on as needed basis providing the agency or agencies provide a 24 hour notice.
- 3) Deviated Fixed Route Service is provided in the inner City of Kinston that began in 2006. This allows passengers to board a Lenoir County Transit Bus at one of our thirty-three (33) Bus Stop locations for only \$1.50 for the General Public and \$1.00 for Seniors. The Deviated Fixed Route operates Monday – Friday from 6:55am until 1:30am. The Route for the Loop #1 & #2 in the early morning beginning at 6:55am is more for the Students attending our local Community College and the route beginning at 5:55pm Loop #11 is our route for the passengers needing transportation to and from work on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Shift. Lenoir County Transit also transports passengers to our local Mall, Walmart, Hospital, or anywhere else they need to go as long as it is on our loop during anytime that our Bus Route is operating. Lenoir County Transit will deviate for the Elderly, Disabled and Passengers needing transportation to and from work providing that the business is on our Bus Route. The Deviated Fixed Route that is operated in the City of Kinston and transports anywhere from 500 to over 800 passengers per month. This

count does not include the number of passengers that is transported on our Demand Response and Subscription Routes that is operated Monday thru Saturday.

#### 4) Community Service

Lenoir County Transit began in October 1994 with seven (7) vehicles providing 13,367 passenger trips and covered 70,465 miles providing transportation to citizens only receiving services from Lenoir County human service agencies. Today, not only does Lenoir County Transit provide services to the human service agencies, but also provides transportation to those that do not qualify for any services. Beginning the year 2000, Rural General Public (RGP) was introduced to Lenoir County. With the RGP, this has allowed Lenoir County Transit to grow enormously.

#### Private Providers

The list of private providers in Lenoir County are; H2 Go located in Kinston that has transportation for the disabled, LaGrange Bus Company located in Lenoir County provides transportation on a "As Needed Basis", Eagle Cab that is a local Cab service provides transportation for any and everyone on a "As Needed Basis", and Coastline Medical Transportation that provides transportation to persons that are elderly or disabled.

#### Is Non-profit Providers

Currently there are no Non-profit transportation providers in Lenoir County that provide Public Transportation.

## Chapter 4: Assessment of Services for Older Adults, Disabled Persons and the Low Income

### A. Process

A facilitated workshop method was used to identify perceived needs, gaps, and barriers in the existing systems. A stakeholder workshop was held at 9:00am on November 13, 2008 at the Lenoir County Cooperative Extension Building involved participants working in teams to complete the Framework for Action survey to assess the status of transportation services within Lenoir County. The teams identified and discussed service needs, gaps, and barriers and recorded them for discussions that would follow. Each group then presented the identified issues and an opportunity to discuss each groups list of service gaps was provided. Duplicate input was accepted, and indeed, encouraged. Participants who had difficulties using this method were paired with team members who could assist them. It is important to note that some of the perceived needs, gaps, or barriers that were identified were largely consistent across the county and across agencies. Some other issues identified may have workable solutions in place, and their identification may more correctly reflect a lack of knowledge about services available through public and community transportation systems.

### B. Public Involvement

A major focus of developing a coordinated transportation plan is public input, more specifically stakeholder involvement. The primary objective of this plan is to encourage public transportation coordination and, thus, provide a network of diverse stakeholders with a common interest in human service transportation an opportunity to collaborate on how to best provide transportation services to the targeted populations identified in the three programs noted above.

Stakeholder outreach and participation is key to the development of the plan. Guidance issued by FTA and the NCDOT specifically requires participation and recommends that it is inclusive, representing a broad spectrum of groups and organizations involved in human service transportation. Participants in the plan development process are listed in Chapter 2.

### C. Service Gaps and Needs

The Coordinated Plan is focused on identifying the most significant unmet transportation needs or service gaps faced by transportation-disadvantaged individuals. These unmet needs were substantiated by facilitating the United We Ride: A Framework for Action initiative during the stakeholder meeting. *See Appendix A: Framework for Action.* Participants conducted an assessment of current public transportation providers, including private and nonprofit providers, and identified public transportation needs. Participants identified areas where service is needed to meet the needs of people with limited incomes, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

The following is a summary of needs, gaps, and barriers identified through the stakeholder workshop breakout groups. Note that some comments are duplicative, but reflects input from each of the four breakout groups.

- Public awareness and access
- Wheelchair taxi

- Bus stop signs (make them more visible) and larger
- Additional routes – use by choice riders
- Coordination of taxi service
- Through the door service for people with disabilities
- Sunday routes (for hospitals, especially)
- Outreach to limited English speaking population
- Shorter wait times – partially a consumer education issue
- Vehicles – appear more appealing and NonGovt'l looking
- Benches)
- Extend hours of service, especially for LCC
- Increased taxi service (\$ for private vendors to have more car seats or vehicles to handle more people)
- More money
- Night and weekend service
- Outreach to Latino community and low income communities
- Strategic marketing and outreach
- Expand agency relationships
- Utilize religious/faith based community
- Employment
- Educate communities about transit service
- More information in reference to routes to job sites and employers – pick up and drop off times and locations
- Monthly passes with unlimited rides
- Need money to assist with transportation needs
- Kinston well served – more service in the county
- Attendants for persons with disabilities
- More lift vans and small vehicles in fleet (mini vans)
- More interface with other counties for work and medical trips
- Difficult to access service in far corners of the county
- Weekend service
- Marketing to the public
- Expand service to Lenoir Community College
- Transportation to preschool for working parents (head start transportation is limited)
- Values existing LCT service – RGP; beautiful collaboration with Department of Social Services and Council on Aging
- Spoke system and/or shuttle service
- Need to cross county lines – Medicaid will not pay for it
- More evening service and weekend service
- Information resources and marketing – is it where it needs to be?
- Quality of service – more equipment more vans, especially accessible vans for elderly even if they are not in a wheelchair
- Through the door transportation
- Customer ease of payment – need fareboxes to avoid having to handle money
- Reduce 24 hour advance call reservation requirement
- Good things about LCT- prices are good
- Driver training – more professional

## Chapter 5: Strategies and Activities to Address the Identified Gaps

A set of strategies and related project actions will help to address the unmet needs and fill the gaps in human service transportation. Each group narrowed its strategies and activities to develop their top 5 activities. The recommended priority actions are shown in the following chapter. Project proposals for funding under either of the three FTA programs will need to address at least one of the strategies or activities listed below. In developing strategies and actions to address unmet needs, some projects will have a greater overall impact on unmet needs than others and are thus a greater priority for funding.

- Public awareness and access
- Wheelchair taxi
- Bus stop signs (make them more visible) and larger
- Night and weekend service
- Outreach to Latino community and low income communities
- Strategic marketing and outreach
- Educate communities about transit service
- More information in reference to routes to job sites and employers – pick up and drop off times and locations
- Monthly passes with unlimited rides
- Need to cross county lines – Medicaid will not pay for it
- More evening service and weekend service
- Information resources and marketing – is it where it needs to be?
- Quality of service – more equipment more vans, especially accessible vans for elderly even if they are not in a wheelchair
- Through the door transportation
- Customer ease of payment – need fareboxes to avoid having

## Chapter 5: Prioritization of Strategies and Activities

### A. Service and Activity Priorities

Needs were prioritized using a dot vote scheme in which each workshop attendee was given five dots with which to express what issues were most important to them. Attendees could allocate the dots as they chose but not more than one dot per strategy or activity. The listing in the section above is arranged by expressed priority within each category. Since only the issues identified at a specific workshop were available for voting at that workshop, not all identified issues were considered by all voters, and since each voter could only choose up to five issues as "most important," there were many ties within categories.

The following identifies the outcome of the service strategies and activities prioritization exercise as expressed by each of the four breakout groups/teams as most important. Again, the lists are duplicative as the intent was to capture the sentiments of each participant and breakout group/team.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Priority

- Public awareness and access
- Night and weekend service
- Educate communities about transit service
- Need to cross county lines – Medicaid will not pay for it

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority

- Wheelchair taxi
- More information in reference to routes to job sites and employers – pick up and drop off times and locations
- Information resources and marketing – is it where it needs to be?
- Outreach to Latino community and low income communities

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority

- Bus stop signs (make them more visible) and larger
- Quality of service – more equipment more vans, especially accessible vans for elderly even if they are not in a wheelchair
- Strategic marketing and outreach
- Monthly passes with unlimited rides

#### 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Priority

- Through the door transportation service
- Customer ease of payment – need fareboxes to avoid having to purchase tickets

Funding applications for the three programs covered by this plan must address the above service and activity priorities based upon eligible activities for each program.

## Chapter 6: Summary

Many of the invited stakeholders assisted in developing the coordinated plan for Lenoir County. The plan follows the required steps:

- Assess available services (public, private and nonprofit).
- Identify transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults and people with low incomes.
- Develop strategies and/or activities to address the identified gaps and achieve efficiencies, where possible, in service delivery.
- Identify priorities for implementing the strategy/activities based on resources, time, and feasibility for implementation.

Upon approval, the plan will serve as document that will support future requests for funding targeted at the low income, elderly persons and disabled individuals who reside in Lenoir County.

As the designated lead transportation provider in Lenoir County by the Board of Commissioners, Lenoir County Transit is familiar with the federal and state rules, laws and regulations pertaining to USDOT's funding programs. In an effort to prevent duplication of service to ensure compliance with the complex program requirements, Lenoir County Transit can provide service under contract to entities that might be selected for funding under the three programs.

Fund metrics will be developed for each of the programs upon award of a grant. Quarterly and annual performance and financial reporting is required. Furthermore, the programs have to be implemented consistent with federal and state policies, rules and regulations and with the NCDOT State Management Plan for the Sections 5310, 5311, 5316 and 5317 Programs (dated 12/08)

### **Items for consideration by the Planning Committee and addressed in this chapter:**

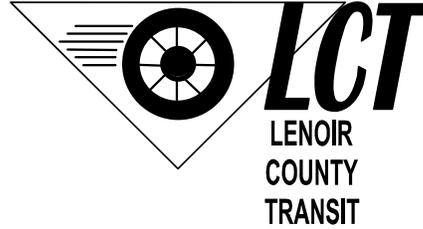
**Review of project applications by Planning Committee? (needs to be representative of all target groups (elderly, low income, disabled) and eligible types of applicants, i.e. nonprofit, public and private agencies**

**Frequency for plan updates?**

**Oversight of services – reports to the TAB? Planning Committee?**

**What if funds are not being spent as quickly as planned, or the reverse, what if they are being spent too quickly?**

**Local Television Advertisement**



201 East King St, Kinston, North Carolina 28501

**November 2008**

**Dear Colleagues, Community Partners and Friends:**

In March 2008, Lenoir County Transit System became part of Lenoir County Government. It has been a busy and exciting year with many changes taking place to enhance transportation services to the citizens of Lenoir County. In an effort to continue building a strong transit system in Lenoir County, Lenoir County Transit is hosting a:

**Transportation Summit – Identifying Unmet Needs in  
Transportation**

**November 13, 2008.**

**8:30 AM – 4:00 PM**

**Cooperative Extension Building  
1791 Hwy 11-55, Kinston, NC 28504**

The Summit will focus on identifying mobility unmet needs for Lenoir County citizens and residents and allow participants to share specific transportation needs.

Please join us November 13, 2008 as together we work to meet the growing transportation needs of the citizens of Lenoir County.

**RSVP by November 12, 2008**

**You may call 559-6457**

**or**

**email [spowell@co.lenoir.nc.us](mailto:spowell@co.lenoir.nc.us)**