



## MEMORANDUM

TO: MPO Policy Board  
FROM: MPO Staff  
DATE: July 12, 2006  
RE: Regional Transit Service & Operations: Paratransit, ADA Compliance,  
and University Services

The following examples review Paratransit and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance in various Regional Transit Authorities across the country. This information was requested by the MPO Policy Board at the June 21, 2006 meeting and is to serve as guidance as discussions continue regarding how to handle ADA compliance under a regional transit system.

### **Gainesville Regional Transit System (RTS), Florida:**

- RTS operates a fleet of 85 buses for fixed route service and 7 vans for demand response transportation throughout the City of Gainesville and adjacent portions of unincorporated Alachua County. RTS serves an area of approximately 140,000 people in 73 square miles. In 2002, RTS reported 6,302,952 unlinked bus passenger trips and 37,288 unlinked demand response trips.
- Additional paratransit or transit services are provided under contract with the University of Florida to provide campus services. A partnership was formed with the University in 1998 due to decreasing ridership on City buses. Transit services are included in student fees. Since 1998 ridership has increased from less than 1 million annual riders to more than 6 million today.
- RTS operates a contract with a third party (MV Transportation) to provide ADA paratransit services. RTS provides 9 vehicles for use by the third party. This is done so the RTS can resume ADA paratransit if necessary. MV Transportation handles all reservations, customer service, and cancellation requests. MV Transportation provides the following services: ADA Transportation, Medicaid Transportation, and Transportation Disadvantaged Program.

### **Knoxville Area Transit (KAT), Tennessee**

- KAT serves 174,860 people in 100 square miles. In 2002, KAT provided 2,082,934 annual unlinked bus trips and 31,854 unlinked demand response trips. KAT directly operates 11 demand response vehicles and 68 buses.
- KAT offers various services to the University of Tennessee. Ten different routes travel through University of Tennessee on weekdays, connecting the campus to various services in the area. KAT also offers discounts for students, including “Freshmen ride free” during fall semester. There are also several free trolley lines that provide a link between UT and the downtown area. A member of UT sits on the Knoxville Transportation Authority Board.

- The majority of regular, fixed route bus service is lift equipped. KAT also offers a paratransit service (“LIFT”) for people who require door-to-door transportation service.

**Spokane Transit Authority (STA), Washington:**

- A “public transportation benefit area” (PTBA) was established, which includes Spokane County, the cities of Airway Heights, Cheney, Medical Lake, Millwood, Liberty Lake, Spokane, and Spokane Valley, as well as some unincorporated portions of the county. The Transit Authority provides three types of services: fixed route, paratransit, and rideshare. STA serves a population of 370,210 people in 371 square miles. In 2004, STA reported 7,740,360 passengers on their fixed route network and 456,969 passengers on paratransit routes.
- Faculty, staff, and students at Eastern Washington University can ride any Spokane Transit bus for free by showing their university ID card. University parking service, the university, and associated students of EWU pay for this program.
- STA’s Operations Division encompasses four departments: Transportation (including fixed route and rideshare), Paratransit, Vehicle Maintenance & Facilities, and Plaza Coordinator/Customer Service. The Paratransit Department is responsible for all paratransit service conducted by STA or a private contractor. Paratransit service is provided weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays throughout the paratransit service area. Provided services are in compliance with federal and state laws for service to the disabled. Purchased transit is used during peak times on weekdays and all day on Saturdays. All buses purchased since 1990 are in accordance with ADA standards. The paratransit fleet is comprised of 67 owned vehicles, each with a capacity for up to 14 passengers; the contracted service fleet is comprised of 31 vehicles.

**Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA), Massachusetts:**

- The City of Worcester and 36 neighboring communities comprise the Worcester Regional Transit Authority. WRTA serves a population of 282,698 and covers 136 square miles. There are three services that are either directly operated by WRTA or operated under contract with public and private agencies: fixed route bus, ADA complementary paratransit, and community paratransit. In 2004, WRTA reported 3,521,263 trips on fixed routes and 269,626 trips on paratransit services. WRTA directly operates 43 buses and 18 demand response vehicles; it purchases 1 bus and 122 demand response vehicles.
- WRTA operates an extensive demand responsive system, offered to comply with ADA requirements and provide senior citizens with mobility options. Specifically, WRTA has established two demand responsive services. The first is a complementary demand response service that operates within a ¾ mile proximity to the bus routes. This service is primarily provided through a contract with Paratransit Brokerage Services, Inc. The second is a community paratransit service offered to elderly and disabled residents throughout the region.
- WRTA relies on several agencies to make reservations, schedule trips, and operate the paratransit service. WRTA contracts with RTA Transit Service/Van Division who has responsibility for ADA service in Worcester and along WRTA routes. For reporting purposes, RTA Transit Service (which also operates the bus system) is viewed as directly operated by WRTA. Purchase of service agreements exist with a number of operators.

## Comparisons

Area	Transit Service Population	Annual Ridership	Transit Service Miles (approximate)	Paratransit – Contract or Directly Operated	Paratransit Fleet Size
Charlottesville	CTS: 81,449 JAUNT: 3100	CTS: 1,286,519 passengers UTS: 2,875,807 passengers JAUNT: 195,469 passenger trips	CTS: 27 square miles JAUNT: 2500 square miles	JAUNT: owned	64 owned vans
Gainesville	140,000	6,302,952 unlinked bus trips 37,288 unlinked demand response trips (2002)	73 square miles	Contract with 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party	9 owned vans
Knoxville	174,860	2,082,934 annual unlinked bus trips 31,854 unlinked demand response trips	100 square miles		11 owned vans
Spokane	370,210	7,740,360 fixed route passengers 456,969 paratransit passengers (2004)	371 square miles	Both	67 owned vans 31 contracted vans
Worcester	282,698	3,521,263 fixed routes trips 269,626 paratransit services trips (2004)	136 square miles	Both; Contracts with several 3 <sup>rd</sup> party providers	18 owned vans 122 contracted vans