



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration



Lower Savannah Aging, Disability & Transportation Resource Center: Regional Travel Management Coordination Center (TMCC) Model and Demonstration Project

Final Report

Background

The Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG) is one of 10 regional planning and development Council of Government agencies in South Carolina and represents six counties in the southwestern part of the state. LSCOG was a recipient of the Mobility Services for All Americans (MSAA) Phase 1 and Phase 2 grants and other grants on behalf of the human service transportation providers serving these six counties and the area's residents in need of increased access to transit in this mostly rural region. This report summarizes the system development and design work conducted to support the TMCC.

Objectives

The U.S. Department of Transportation's vision for coordination is expressed as a Travel Management Coordination Center or TMCC, a coordinated, simplified point-of-access, customer-based travel reservation, information, and trip planning service. LSCOG planned the creation of a TMCC model to procure and deploy Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to demonstrate the impact technology could have on the coordination of human service transportation.

Findings and Conclusions

Through the use of ITS technologies, the Aging, Disability & Transportation Resource Center (ADTRC), the local name of the regional TMCC, is delivering expected efficiencies and carries the promise of considerably greater effectiveness for transportation services in the six targeted South Carolina counties.

LSCOG was awarded Phase 1 and Phase 2 MSAA federal grants for a total of \$980,032 to support the TMCC demonstration project. LSCOG also was able to leverage several other grants to address the large scope of work being undertaken in the region. An American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA) grant helped build a small wing onto the existing LSCOG building in Aiken to house the newly-enhanced ADTRC. The South Carolina Department of Transportation awarded LSCOG funding for technology and mobility management through New Freedom and Job Access Reverse Commute grants, and the South Carolina Lt. Governor's Office on Aging named LSCOG as a sub-recipient of a Systems Transformation grant awarded from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. In total,

LSCOG was able to provide local transportation providers who partnered in the project with an array of technology, software, installation, and training sessions to support the TMCC project.

LSCOG secured and deployed many different technologies as part of the MSAA demonstration project. The project purchased and installed 100 mobile data terminals (MDT) that provide, among other things, automatic vehicle location (AVL) and the ability for dispatchers to instantly update driver manifests and driver communications. The MDT/AVL units also aid in the verification process, as they can be linked with a computer-aided dispatch (CAD) software used for scheduling, routing, billing, and reporting. LSCOG's 5 fixed-route vehicles were equipped with the MDTs; the other 95 were provided to the independent, autonomous human service providers who agreed to be partners with LSCOG in the demonstration project.

Other successful ITS deployed during the demonstration include a new phone and auto attendant call center equipment for the ADTRC in Aiken; enhanced software components to aid in the coordinated scheduling of transportation among the various transportation partners; the purchase of new software that could track in real time the fixed-route vehicles being used in two counties (vs. only demand-response vehicles); and the acquisition of new CAD software and databases for two partners that did not have that technology already in place.

The project created a new website for the ADTRC and web portals for use by the general public and transportation providers who wanted to join in coordinated transportation in the future but lacked the comprehensive software package.

A data warehouse and an outbound notification system also were experimented with during the project, but were found to be of limited benefit and/or prone to problems. LSCOG decided not to renew or further develop this system at the time and will revisit the development of the system at a future date.

Benefits

This project developed a successful model that procured and deployed ITS to demonstrate the impact technology can have on the coordination of human service transportation. The ADTRC TMCC program will increase the mobility of populations in the six South Carolina counties and can be adapted to other areas.

Project Information

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This research project was conducted by the Lower Savannah Council of Governments. For more information, contact FTA Project Manager Jeff Spencer, FTA ITS Team Leader, at (202) 366-0550, jeffrey.spencer@dot.gov. All reports can be found at www.fta.dot.gov/research.