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Research Results Digest 354

A REVIEW OF HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND GRANT PROGRAMS

This digest presents the results of NCHRP Project 20-65, Task 26, "An Analysis and Evaluation of States' Implementation of the FTA 5310, 5316, and 5317 Programs." The research was conducted by AECOM, Arlington, Virginia, with Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning (ITP), Rockville, Maryland, serving as a subconsultant. Sara Carini of AECOM was the Principal Investigator. The other authors of this report are Lora Byala, Shana Johnson, and Eric Randall of Foursquare ITP and Laura Riegel of AECOM.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) instituted a planning requirement as a condition of federal funding for its human services-related grant programs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with lower incomes. As a result, since 2007, FTA has required the establishment of a locally developed, coordinated public transit/human services transportation plan (Coordination Plan) for all FTA human services transportation programs. The Coordination Plan must be developed through an inclusive process that involves representatives from public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers, as well as the public. The intent of this requirement is to bring the right people to the table to discuss human services transportation issues and identify opportunities to assist more people, reduce service gaps and overlaps, and increase the cost effectiveness of the services provided.

A brief description of each of the FTA human services transportation programs is provided as follows.

- **Section 5310 Transportation for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Grant Program *(1).*** The program was created in 1975, under the National Mass Transportation Assistance Act. The goal of Section 5310 is to improve mobility for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities. States are the designated recipients of Section 5310 funds, and the funds are apportioned by a formula based on the number of elderly persons and persons with disabilities in each state. Eligible activities include capital expenses (e.g., vehicles and communication equipment); purchase of transportation services under a contract, lease, or other arrangement; and mobility management.
- **Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Grant Program *(1).*** Section 5316 was established in 1998, under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Section 5316 seeks to improve transportation services that provide access to employment and employment-related activities for welfare recipients and low-income

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individuals. Section 5316 also provides for transportation services to suburban or other reverse commute employment opportunities. States are the designated recipients of JARC funds in urbanized areas with populations less than 200,000 and in rural areas. In urbanized areas with populations greater than 200,000, the designated recipient may be the designated recipient of Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program funds, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), state, or another public agency. Eligible activities include capital, planning, and operating expenses.

- **Section 5317 New Freedom (NF) Grant Program *(1).*** This program was created in 2005, under SAFETEA-LU, to address the transportation mobility options available beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 requirements. The focus of the program is to assist persons with disabilities in overcoming transportation-related barriers to employment. States are the designated recipients of NF funds in urbanized areas with populations less than 200,000 and in rural areas. In urbanized areas over 200,000 in population, the designated recipient may be the designated recipient of Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program funds or an MPO, state, or other public agency. Eligible activities include capital and operating expenses that support new public transportation services or alternatives beyond those required by ADA, including job and job-related services transportation.

NCHRP Project 20-65, Task 26, entitled "An Analysis and Evaluation of States' Implementation of the FTA 5310, 5316 and 5317 Programs," focused on two key related, but separate, objectives:

1. Determine the level of effort and costs associated with the development of coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans.
2. Determine the perceived success of the Coordination Plans and the perceived success states and other grantees are having in awarding FTA Section 5316 JARC and Section 5317 NF funds and meeting the Coordination Plan objectives.

To meet these objectives, tasks included conducting an Internet survey of state Departments of Transportation (DOTs); performing more detailed telephone interviews with states, local transit agencies, private service providers, MPOs, Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), and access groups; and analyzing FTA and state JARC and NF grant awards. *NCHRP RRD 354* presents the findings of these tasks to assist states and grantees in identifying ways to enhance their processes. In addition to state and grantee best practices, suggestions made by respondents for improving the accomplishment and effectiveness of the human services transportation grant programs, Coordination Plans, and the related requirements are reported. No conclusions are expressed regarding any of the suggested changes in the programs or requirements; the state and local agency comments are reported without elaboration.

NCHRP RRD 354 is organized as follows. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the research effort. Chapter 2 reviews the approach and findings of the Internet survey of state DOTs. Chapter 3 summarizes the selection of states for further interview and the results of the telephone surveys. Chapter 4 highlights the JARC and NF appropriations and obligations by state and urbanized areas. Chapter 5 presents a comparison of the level of effort and success associated with the development of the Coordination Plans as well as opportunities for improving the success and effectiveness of the plans and grant programs. The Internet survey form, telephone interview questionnaire, and individual telephone interview summaries are contained in the Appendices of this report, which are available online at http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/165471.aspx.

Internet Survey

As part of this study, the research team conducted an Internet survey of state DOTs. The survey used multiple choice questions and opportunities for additional comments to help: (1) determine the extent to which respondents believe this coordinated planning effort has met FTA goals of enhancing transportation access, minimizing duplication of services, and facilitating the most appropriate and cost-effective transportation possible with available resources; and (2) ascertain the cost of developing and maintaining these Coordination Plans (in terms of time and money) to ensure that resources are being used wisely and effectively, resulting in the better, more cost-effective and coordinated programs that the plans are expected to foster.

The "Human Services Transportation Plans and Grant Program" Internet survey completed by 21 state DOTs highlights several areas where the Coordination Plans have been relatively successful, such as enhancing transportation access for target populations, increasing commitment/participation in the plan development at both the state and local levels, improving coordination, and creating a general understanding of eligible JARC and NF grants. However, the respondents stated that the federal requirement for the Coordination Plans has placed a significant administrative requirement on already short-staffed state and local agencies. Respondents felt that the coordination planning process is time consuming and many agencies stated they are not able to hire new staff or consultants to assist with the process. As a result, agencies feel that the responsibilities often fall on existing staff, many of whom have already been asked to take on additional responsibilities.

In addition to the administrative responsibilities placed on state and local agencies, the survey respondents highlighted several areas of concern in regards to obligating the JARC and NF grants. The responses indicated that the obligation of these funds generally has not improved with the Coordination Plan requirement. There frequently is a lag in funding JARC and NF projects, and several respondents have had problems obligating these funds before they expire. In fact, 24 percent of responding agencies reported that they have had JARC or NF funds expire before they could be obligated. The agencies stated that one of the primary reasons that obligating these funds is such a problem for the survey respondents is the difficulty in identifying local matching funds for projects. Local funds are limited and the higher matching requirements of the JARC and NF grant programs (particularly the 50 percent match for operations), coupled with the uncertainty that these funds will be there in the future, make it more difficult to identify local funds for these projects. The majority of survey respondents (70 percent) stated that there is reluctance in their states to start new services with JARC and NF funds. The primary reason provided by the respondents (79 percent) was the concern that these funds are not sustainable. They stated that they do not want to introduce new services and then have to take them away when/if these grant programs or the apportionments received are reduced.

Given these concerns, the agencies were asked if they had any suggestions to improve the use and management of the JARC and NF grant programs so that the coordination goals of the FTA, state, and localities continue to be met, while the administrative burden these grant programs place on the state and local agencies is reduced. Nineteen of the 21 survey respondents offered suggestions for improving these grant programs. All of the survey respondent suggestions attempted to improve the management of the grant programs and to find means to fund more projects, whether through proposing consolidation with other grant programs, increasing funding, reducing restrictions, lowering operating matching requirements, or increasing flexibility. The suggestions from the survey respondents are summarized in Figure 1.

The most frequently suggested improvement for the JARC and NF grant programs by the survey respondents was the consolidation of the Section 5316 JARC and Section 5317 NF grant programs with other federal grant programs such as Section 5310, 5311, and 5307. With consolidation, the respondents indicated that the individual grant program goals could still be reflected in program and planning requirements, including dedicating percentages of funding to each program goal. Section 5310, Transportation for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities, was the most frequently mentioned program for consolidating the JARC and NF grants, and several respondents indicated that these grant programs could also be consolidated with Section 5311, the Rural and Small Urban Areas grant program. By consolidating the JARC and NF grants with Section 5310 and/or 5311, the respondents felt that the states could manage the program more efficiently, while still developing a Coordination Plan (as required for Section 5310) and serving similar target populations.

Several respondents also felt that consolidating Section 5316 and 5317 into one grant program would allow more flexibility in transferring funds and meeting the greatest transit needs. They believed that this would allow the funds to be used to serve any one of the target populations and fund projects that best meet the transit needs of the state. Additionally, it was suggested by some that the obligation by population size requirement be eliminated for the new consolidated grant program. The survey respondents indicated that combining the JARC and NF grant programs would allow greater flexibility in awarding projects and moving funds from one area to another, and would be more efficient for states to manage.

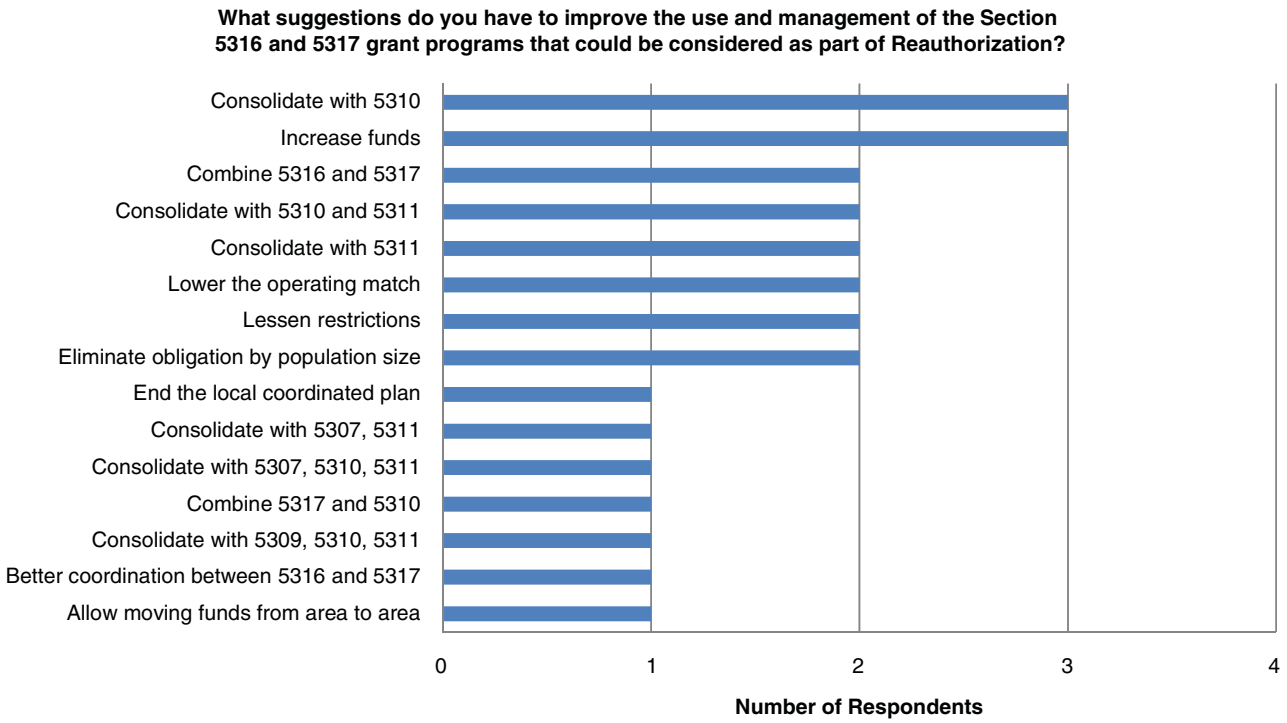

Figure 1 Responses on improving the use and management of JARC and NF grant programs.

Telephone Survey

As part of this study, the research team conducted telephone surveys with contacts in six states. Based on the results of the Internet survey conducted in late 2009, six states were selected to participate in follow-up discussions via telephone interviews. Only state DOT representatives that indicated a willingness to discuss their responses further were contacted, and the six states were selected with the goal of having a mix of geographic locations, urbanized versus rural states, and states indicating varying levels of satisfaction with the human services Coordination Plan process and results. The states selected for further discussion were: Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, and Washington.

Each state DOT representative was contacted for the purpose of further discussion of their responses to the Internet survey, clarification of their responses (if needed), and identification of agencies and contact persons within the state for further discussion. The objective was to identify a set of agencies within the state to interview for their perspectives on the human services Coordination Plans and the associated grant programs. Within each state, the study team attempted to contact a cross-section of agency types, including MPOs, RPOs, transit agencies, human services transportation providers, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

The purpose of the interviews was two-fold:

1. Determining the extent to which the respondents believe coordinated public transit/human services transportation plans have met FTA goals of enhancing transportation access, minimizing duplication of services, and facilitating the most appropriate and cost-effective transportation possible with available resources; and
2. Ascertaining the cost of developing and maintaining these Coordination Plans (in terms of time and money) to ensure that resources are being used wisely and effectively, resulting in the better, more cost-effective and coordinated programs that the plans are expected to foster.

A cross-state comparison highlighting some of the key differences between the states is described in the following section. It is important to note that the cross-state comparisons are based on generaliza-

tions made about each state that were derived from the four or five interviews conducted in each state.

Perceived Effectiveness of Plans

One key finding that was fairly consistent across all six states interviewed is that, on the whole, all found the Coordination Plans to be effective. While some states had individual agencies that reported mixed or negative feelings about the plan requirement, the overall assessment by all states interviewed was positive.

Plan Development and Costs

The methods used to develop the Coordination Plans varied from state to state. Except for Washington State, most agencies did some combination of in-house plan development along with the use of consultants, and in some cases the level of assistance used by the agencies varied by whether the agency was in an urban or rural area. In addition, many local agencies had a difficult time quantifying the Coordination Plan development costs, particularly if the plan was developed in-house and the main expense was staff time. Often the best cost estimate available was an estimate of the number of staff people or the percentage of a person or team's time devoted to the Coordination Plans. As a result, the overall costs associated with the development of the Coordination Plans at the local level vary significantly in level of detail, ranging from $10,000 to $85,000 or one to six staff members working on all aspects of the human services transportation grants, including Coordination Plans, sub-recipient agreements, contracts, legal, and engineering.

Perceived Coordination Plan Results

Most of the states interviewed emphasized improved relationships between public and private agencies as a result of the Coordination Plan, particularly Missouri, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington indicated that the plans built upon existing coordination that they were already doing regarding human services transportation. Finally, many of the states noted either that they believe human services transportation did not necessarily improve because of the plan, or it was difficult to tell if it had. One reason for this was the respondents' concern for the lack of associated funding and the lack of desire by most states to use available funds to establish new services, for fear of not being able to continue funding them when the grant money ran out. The Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Virginia DOTs all indicated that their preferred projects do not include new operating services.

Indication of Redundant or Burdensome Elements of Plan Development

There were a wide variety of issues raised with regard to parts of the Coordination Plan or planning process that the states find redundant or burdensome. The challenges discussed by the respondents ranged from how projects are prioritized at the local versus state level to concerns about the public meeting and Spanish translation requirements. Some states felt that the administration of the plan is burdensome, and some did not; there was no real consensus between the states on this issue.

Project Identification, Prioritization, and Selection

A few states noted that while prioritization is done at the local level, the state makes the final decision on what to fund, taking away some of the control from the locals. Respondents indicated that this is done more often in rural areas for which the state DOT is the designated recipient for grant funds, whereas in urban areas the designated recipient is more likely to be a local agency or government. Most states noted that the prioritization of projects is based on gaps in service and where the proposed grant fits into the goals and objectives of the Coordination Plan.

Perceived Project Continuation Needs/ Impediments to Using the Grant Programs

A common theme across all states interviewed was that the lack of money available for local matches becomes a burden in the continuation of projects funded through the grant programs, as well as an impediment to using the grant programs in the first place. The lack of money for the local match seemed to be more of an issue in rural areas than it was in urban areas. Finally, the NF regulation that it be used for new service was also an impediment to using the Section 5317 grant program for many respondents, because these agencies did not feel that they would be able to continue to sustain new service when the grant money ran out.

Sources of Matching Funds

Sources of the local match requirement for the grant programs varied by the state interviewed and by area within these states, with some states providing the local match and some agencies relying on local governments or even local organizations. Often urban areas were required to find a local match, while the state provided the match in rural areas. Pennsylvania and Washington, however, were two states that provided the local match to recipients regardless of their location in the state. In a few creative cases, such as in Ohio, agencies used other federal grants to match the Section 5316 and 5317 FTA grant programs. Other states found it was not possible to coordinate between the human services transportation grant programs and other federal grant programs.

Performance Measures

Some states interviewed were more diligent than others in utilizing performance measures for determining grant funding allocations. Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina seemed to have the most consistent processes for utilizing performance measures. These states primarily use standard service indicators to gauge performance of the programs funded by the grants.

Major Concerns/Desired Changes Expressed

A consistent area of concern expressed by the states interviewed was the desire to remove the local match requirement due to the difficulty in identifying and sustaining local matching funds. Another common concern expressed was the lack of understanding regarding the requirements for NF grants. A few states also indicated they are unhappy with the grant administrative process, including the length of time it takes to apply for and receive the grant money. In addition, some respondents indicated that they are uncomfortable about reviewing new projects and the continuation of old projects simultaneously, and that the grant awards do not necessarily account for project sustainability beyond the initial grant funding.

Numerous states interviewed expressed a desire to have the same criteria and rules for both JARC and NF, with some respondents suggesting that the programs be combined. However, one state, namely Ohio, suggested that rather than combine the two very similar programs, the NF program could be differentiated further to make it more applicable to seniors who do not have physical limitations that keep them from driving but simply do not feel comfortable doing so. Finally, several states expressed a desire for more standardized, outcome-based performance measures to review the programs.

FTA Grants Data

Using data from the FTA website, Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 and FY 2007 *FTA Statistical Summaries* (the *FY 2008 FTA Statistical Summary* was not available at the time of the analysis), and the U.S. Government Accounting Office's (GAO) Report: *Progress and Challenges in Implementing and Evaluating the JARC Program* (May 2009), the following tables examine the portion of JARC and NF funds that have been appropriated to and obligated by the states. These tables help identify the extent to which states and their grantees are having difficulty obligating the appropriated funds before they expire, as these grants must be obligated within 3 years of appropriation. Any funds not obligated after 3 years will be reapportioned among all recipients in the next FY appropriations, e.g., lapsed FY 2006 funds are reapportioned as part of FY 2009.

Table 1 and Table 2 summarize the total appropriated funds (for all states and urbanized area designated

Table 1 Summary of total JARC funds appropriated and obligated between FY 2006 and FY 2008.

FY	Appropriated	Obligated in FY 06	Obligated in FY 07	Obligated in FY 08	Transferred Out (as of 9/30/08)[1]	Remaining	% Unobligated
2006	$136,620,000	$5,291,004	$22,731,680	$87,374,069	$2,621,612	$18,603,175	13.6%
2007	$144,000,000		$7,204,231	$47,596,190	$1,909,878	$87,289,701	60.6%
2008	$156,000,000			$22,376,472	$859,596	$132,763,932	85.1%
Total	**$436,620,000**	**$5,291,004**	**$29,935,911**	**$157,346,731**	**$5,391,086**	**$238,656,808**	**54.7%**

[1] States are allowed to transfer JARC funds to Section 5307 Urbanized Area formula grant program and Section 5311 Rural Transit Assistance Program.

Source: FTA, http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_9293.html.

Table 2 Summary of total NF funds appropriated and obligated between FY 2006 and FY 2008.

FY	Appropriated	Obligated in FY 06	Obligated in FY 07	Obligated in FY 08	Total Obligated	% Unobligated
2006	$77,200,000	$1,269,027	$6,786,605	$59,556,856	$67,612,488	12.4%
2007	$81,000,000		$2,537,311	$28,079,915	$30,617,226	62.2%
2008	$87,500,000			$12,233,883	$12,233,883	86.0%
Total	**$245,700,000**	**$1,269,027**	**$9,323,916**	**$99,870,654**	**$110,463,597**	**55.0%**

Source: FTA, http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_7188.html.

recipients) for the JARC and NF grant programs for FY 2006 through FY 2008. They reveal that nearly 45 percent of the FY 2006 through FY 2008 JARC and NF appropriations have been obligated; however, nearly 14 percent of FY 2006 JARC appropriations lapsed and more than 12 percent of FY 2006 NF appropriations lapsed. Additionally, roughly 40 percent of FY 2007 JARC and NF funds have been obligated and 15 percent of FY 2008 JARC and NF funds have been obligated.

While the tables indicate that there were some initial delays in obligating JARC and NF funds, they also demonstrate that the amount of JARC and NF funds obligated in the appropriation year is increasing and the amount obligated in each successive year is also increasing as states and grantees gain familiarity with the required coordinated planning process and grant administration associated with the new NF program and the new formula-based allocation of JARC funds under SAFETEA-LU.

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

As shown in Table 1, the states and urbanized areas have obligated (or transferred out) $118 million of FY 2006 JARC appropriations (approximately 86 percent), $57 million of FY 2007 appropriations (approximately 39 percent), and $23 million of FY 2008 appropriations (approximately 15 percent). While the obligation percentages increased during the 3-year obligation period after appropriation, FY 2006 still had $18.6 million (or 13.6 percent) in JARC appropriations lapse at the end of FY 2008. However, based on discussions with FTA staff, the amount of JARC funds lapsing continues to decline as states and grantees become better acquainted with the process, have identified appropriate grant recipients, and have gained comfort with the Coordination Plan development.

New Freedom (NF)

As shown in Table 2, by the end of FY 2007, only 6.6 percent of FY 2006 and FY 2007 NF appropriations had been obligated. However, it is important to note that by the end of FY 2008, an additional $87.6 million of FY 2006 and FY 2007 NF appropriations were obligated, bringing the percentage of FY 2006 and FY 2007 appropriations that had been obligated up to 62 percent. The relatively recent introduction of the Section 5317 program and the changes in requirements that have taken place have caused some confusion among planning organizations and transportation providers. As experience with the programs and coordinated planning process continues to grow, more applications are likely to be submitted, further reducing the amount of lapsed funds.

Conclusions and Findings

The findings from the Internet survey of state DOTs and the telephone interviews with local coordinated planning participants in Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, and Washington helped identify the perceived costs and benefits associated with the human services transportation Coordination Plans and grant programs. An evaluation of these costs and benefits resulted in the development of several findings in regards to the respondents' perceived accomplishment and effectiveness of the Coordination Plans and the related requirements for states. The findings from respondents identified in the following section revolve around three central themes: ***flexibility, administrative burden,*** and ***transparency.***

- **Several respondents suggested the consolidation of Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grant programs.** The most frequently suggested improvement for the human services

transportation grant programs was the consolidation of the Section 5316 JARC and 5317 NF programs with other grant programs such as Section 5310, 5311, and 5307. Respondents noted that with consolidation, the individual grant program goals could still be reflected in program and planning requirements, including dedicating percentages of funding to each program goal. Section 5310 Transportation for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities was the most frequently mentioned program for consolidation with JARC and NF and was viewed as the most logical by respondents, given the similar target populations and requirement for the Coordination Plan. Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program and 5311 Rural and Small Urbanized Area Program provide funding for more traditional transit services for general populations, contradicting the intentions of the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grant programs. As a result, there was general agreement by those surveyed and interviewed that the planning requirements for Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs are very similar, and that a combination of these grant programs would make planning and administration easier for all concerned.

The respondents stated that by consolidating the three grant programs, state administrators would have greater flexibility to meet local customer needs without the multiple requirements associated with each of the individual grant programs. Many respondents indicated that they believe the administration of multiple funds that are relatively small in funding levels is time-consuming and requires significant staff resources for state and local agencies that are already short-staffed. Since many agencies are unable to hire additional staff or consultants to assist with the process, the responsibilities often fall on existing staff, many of whom have already been asked to take on additional responsibilities.

While the Internet survey and telephone interview respondents highlighted the benefits associated with the consolidation of Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grant programs, other organizations have indicated that there could be potential drawbacks to consolidation as well. A recent AARP study on *Policy Options to Improve Specialized Transportation* noted that several aging and disability organizations have expressed concerns that the consolidation of these programs could have unintended consequences, including reducing the quality of Section 5310 services because the target populations of these grants programs do not necessarily have the same transportation needs *(2).* In addition, the AARP study highlights that there are some major issues associated with the consolidation of these grant programs that have not been evaluated sufficiently, including the identification of designated recipients and how the grant money would get to providers. Under the current grant programs, the designated recipient is the state for Section 5310 and either the state or local agency in large urban areas for JARC and NF. As a result, the suggestion to consolidate these grant programs would need to be evaluated more closely.

- **Suggested federal grant process improvements.** The study respondents indicated that they felt the federal grant process could be improved to be more transparent, timely, sustainable, and flexible. Planning organizations observed that the multiple levels of prioritization and project selection may interfere with transparency to local officials and stakeholders, which would adversely impact the commitment and perceived benefits of the coordinated planning process. These respondents suggested that more guidance from FTA on the grant selection and prioritization process could improve the understanding of all stakeholders (local and state) in what the federal priorities are and how grant awards match up with the intention of the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs.

  In addition, respondents stated that improvements to the administrative process, particularly the length of time it takes to apply for and receive grant money, are desired. They noted that the year it can take between grant application and receipt of funds also impacts the link between planning efforts and the projects. In addition, they believe annual competition for funding of long-term, ongoing projects is redundant and wasteful; several respondents felt that distribution of funds on a longer schedule (i.e., funding for 4 years) or on a programmatic basis would be more effective for these types of projects. Many respon-

dents added that greater flexibility for state and local recipients to redirect at least portions of the grant money to meet emergent needs or redirect funds from projects that no longer need or cannot use the funding in a timely manner could also improve the grant administration process.

- **Requests for additional federal guidance on performance measures.** Study respondents expressed a strong desire and need for additional federal guidance on performance measures that look beyond basic service indicators and consider the effectiveness of funded projects in promoting job sustainability; effectiveness of the providers in supplying these services against the baseline conditions (such as unemployment, senior/disabled population, and distribution of customers and destinations); and measuring the number of customers graduating from the need for JARC transportation. Quantitatively, relatively few interviewees mentioned performance measures playing a significant role in evaluating the effectiveness of projects, primarily because they believe customer-focused measures have been lacking.

  Those states interviewed that did utilize performance measures in some manner primarily relied on standard transportation service indicators to gauge the performance of the programs funded by the grants. However, many respondents believe the use of standard performance measures fails to sufficiently measure the human services aspect of the projects and often favors urban areas over rural because often rural areas have higher transportation costs due to longer distances, dispersed customers and destinations, and little other infrastructure to support human services customers, which may make rural transportation appear ineffective or inefficient.

- **Requests for additional federal guidance that strengthens the link between the planning process and grant funding.** There was concern expressed by some planning organizations interviewed that providers do not always see the benefit of coordinated planning efforts, given the distinction between the planning process and the grant approval and disbursement process. Those interviewed felt that federal guidance that strengthened the link between the planning process and the grants would be appreciated by both the planning organizations and the service providers; this could be accomplished by providing more technical advice, tying grant money to performance measures, and rewarding cooperative efforts.

  Many respondents suggested that some funding could be tied to the planning process and performance measures, preferably those identified at the federal level to help improve the perceived transparency and equity of federal grant distribution. This could include consideration of the existing conditions and backgrounds of areas. Some respondents indicated that performance measures should also go beyond basic service indicators or cost data to be more results-oriented or outcomes-based. They felt that data should be collected on the success of projects in getting customers to the services they need and in the effectiveness of the providers in supplying these services against the baseline conditions.

  The respondents' support for performance measures and the perceived opportunity for an improved federal grant process comes back to the effectiveness of the coordinated planning process. These respondents believe that by using performance measures and data, and linking federal funds to the results of this process, coordinated planning could make better use of quantitative information and link plans to results more closely. They believe that stakeholders making use of a performance-driven coordinated planning process would get even more out of the process of developing and working to implement the Coordination Plan.

CHAPTER 2 INTERNET SURVEY OF STATE DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION (DOTs)

As part of the research effort, the research team conducted an Internet survey of state DOTs. The survey used multiple choice questions with opportunities for additional comments. The purpose of the survey was to help: (1) determine the extent to which respondents believed their coordinated planning effort had met FTA goals of enhancing transportation access, minimizing duplication of services, and facilitating the most appropriate and cost-effective transportation

possible with available resources and (2) ascertain the cost of developing and maintaining these Coordination Plans (in terms of time and money) to ensure that resources are being used wisely and effectively, resulting in the better, more cost-effective and coordinated programs that the plans are expected to foster.

The questions in the survey were divided into four sections:

1. Perceived Success of the Public Transit/Human Services Coordination Plans
2. Cost of Public Transit/Human Services Coordination Plan Development
3. Awarding Section 5316 JARC and Section 5317 NF Grants
4. Please Tell Us About Yourself

Once a survey was created using SurveyMonkey.com, an e-mail invitation to the survey was sent to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Standing Committee on Public Transportation members by Shayne Gill, the AASHTO Public Transportation Program Manager. The e-mail invitation described the purpose of the study and the Internet survey, and provided a web link to the survey. The web link could be forwarded to others within the agency for assistance with the survey; however, the link created a new survey response for each person.

This chapter summarizes the findings of the "Human Services Transportation Plans and Grant Programs" Internet survey. The results and responses for each section of the survey are summarized in the following section, "Summary of Survey Responses." The final section in this chapter, titled "Conclusions," highlights the coordination planning successes and challenges reported by survey respondents and identifies respondent suggestions that might alleviate or reduce these challenges. The blank survey form is contained in Appendix A, which is available online at http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/165471.aspx.

Summary of Survey Responses

Please Tell Us About Yourself

Of the agencies contacted, 21 state DOTs completed the survey, for a response rate of 42 percent. Responses represented a valuable mix of regions throughout the country. Table 3 summarizes the responses received by region.

While the sample size of the survey was slightly smaller than the desired 50 percent response rate, the variety of responses from states throughout the country provided a good pulse on the major issues encountered with the human services transportation plans and grant programs. The results of the survey provided a solid starting point for the more detailed telephone interviews conducted during late 2009 and early 2010.

Table 3 Survey responses by region.

Northeast	**4**
Connecticut	
Delaware	
New Hampshire	
Vermont	
Midwest	**5**
Michigan	
Minnesota	
Ohio	
Pennsylvania	
South Dakota	
South	**5**
Arkansas	
Kentucky	
Missouri	
South Carolina	
Virginia	
Southwest	**3**
Arizona	
New Mexico	
Nevada	
West	**3**
Alaska	
Oregon	
Washington	
Unknown[1]	**1**
Total Responses	**21**

[1] One survey respondent declined providing any information about the state in order to remain anonymous.

The responses for each of the three remaining sections of the Internet survey are summarized as follows: (1) Perceived Success of the Public Transportation/Human Services Coordination Plans, (2) Cost of Public Transit/Human Services Coordination Plan Development, and (3) Awarding Section 5316 JARC and Section 5317 NF Grants.

Perceived Success of the Public Transportation/Human Services Coordination Plans

The first section of the Internet survey focused on the perceived success of the Coordination Plans, specifically in meeting FTA goals, as well as state and/or local goals. The survey attempted to identify lead participants in the Coordination Plans, the level of success achieved, and whether this level of success could have been achieved without the plans. All

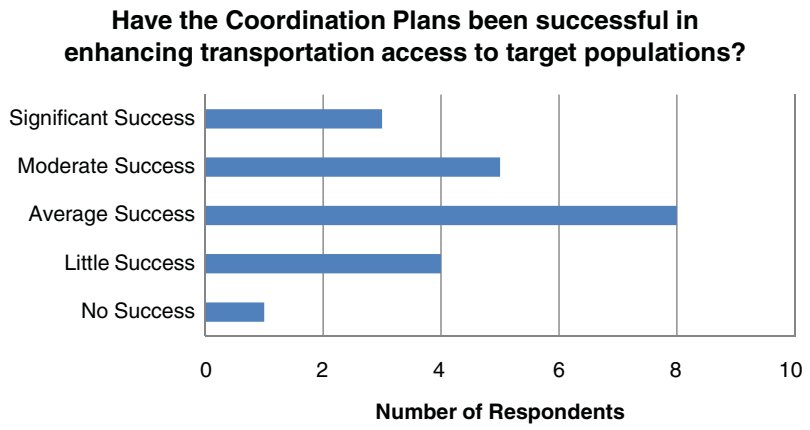

Figure 2 Perceived enhancement of transportation access for target populations.

21 survey respondents completed this section of the survey. A few questions were skipped, but there were no fewer than 19 responses to any question in this section of the survey.

FTA Goals. In general, the majority of survey respondents (62 percent) felt that the Coordination Plans were achieving average to moderate success in meeting FTA's goal of enhancing transportation access for the target populations (the collective group of persons with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with lower incomes) in their state. However, respondents indicated that the plans have achieved average to little success in meeting FTA's goals of minimizing the duplication of transportation services (81 percent) and facilitating the most cost-effective transportation possible with available resources (76 percent). Figures 2, 3, and 4 highlight the respondents' opinions on how well the Coordination Plans have met FTA goals.

State or Local Goals. In determining whether additional state or local goals were met as a result of the federally required Coordination Plans, the survey first explored whether states had any local and/or state planning requirements already in place that were used to satisfy the federal requirement. Over one-half of the respondents (57 percent) already had some local and/or state planning requirements, indicating that the federal requirement did not represent a completely new process for all states. Figure 5 summarizes the type of state and/or local planning requirements already in place for some of the responding states. It should be noted that not all states provided an explanation or description of their state and/or local planning requirements.

Even with more than one-half of respondents indicating that they had similar state or local planning requirements already in place, 52 percent of respondents

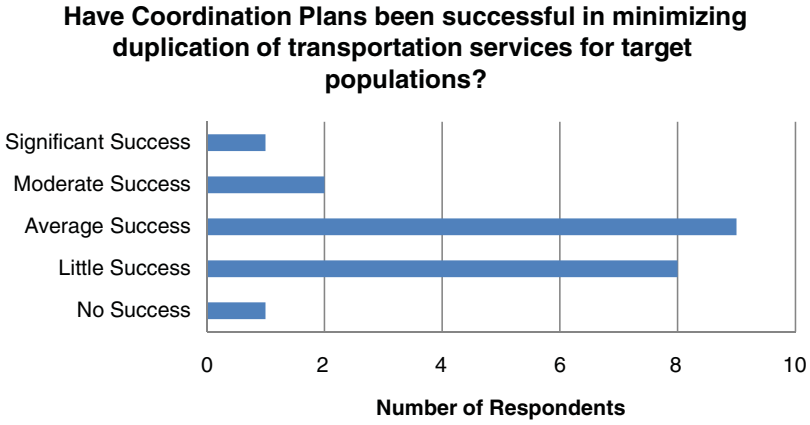

Figure 3 Assessment of duplication of transportation services for target populations.

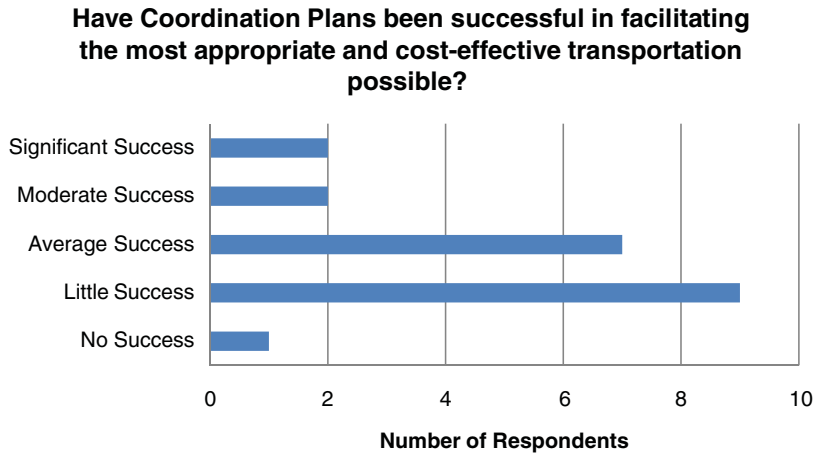

Figure 4 Perceived facilitation of most appropriate and cost-effective transportation possible.

indicated that additional state or local goals had been met by the federal Coordination Plan requirement. For some states the federal requirement tied their local Coordination Plans to funding or brought the coordination effort up to the state level. These varied additional goals included the following (one response each):

- State coordination, rather than local
- Tied coordination plans to funding
- Mobility Management projects in areas without transit
- Developed regional coordination councils
- Interagency Committee on Special Transportation goals
- Governor created transportation committee
- Did not have state/local specific goals
- Demand response state-funded program
- 5317 provides alternative to paratransit

While additional state and local goals have been met by the federal Coordination Plan requirement, only 26 percent of respondents indicated that the plans have led to additional state funds being allocated to public transit. Of the five respondents who stated that additional funds were allocated, two indicated that the additional funding was an indirect result of having the right people involved in the planning process, which fostered the identification of other sources of matching funds. Additionally, two respondents stated that the plans made better use of JARC/NF funding, and one did not provide an explanation.

Participation in Coordination Plans. In general, a wide variety of agencies and groups were involved in the coordination planning process. The most commonly listed lead participants in the process were the state DOT (33 percent), MPOs (25 percent), and

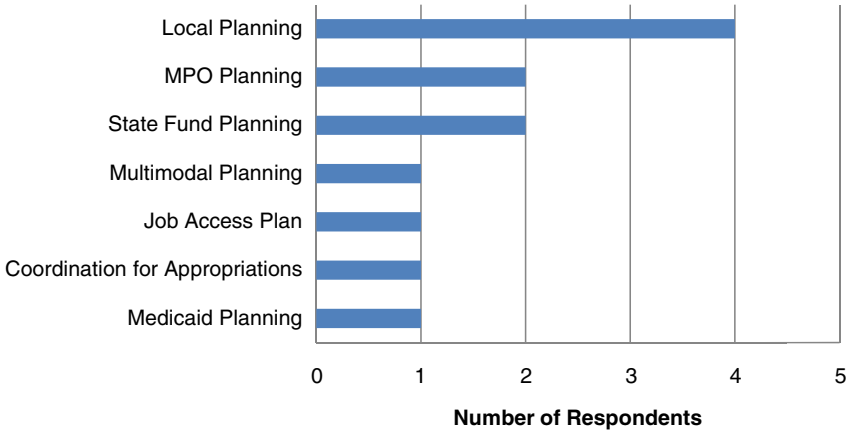

Figure 5 State and/or local planning requirements used to satisfy federal Coordination Plan requirement.

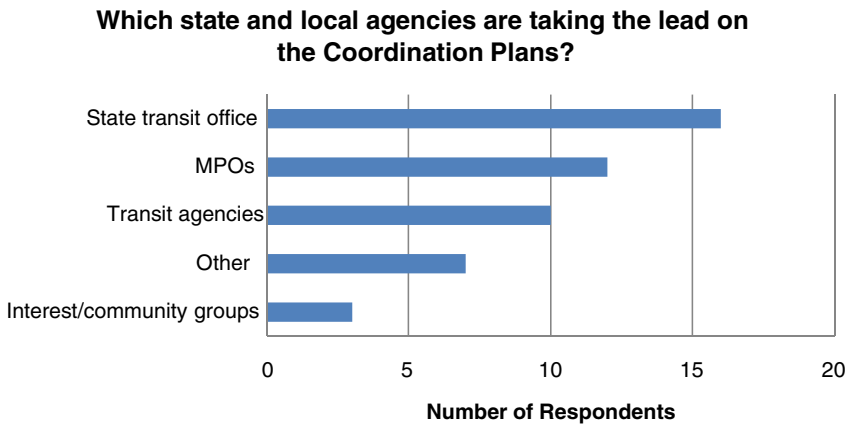

Figure 6 Lead agencies for the Coordination Plans.

transit agencies (21 percent). Figure 6 highlights the lead participants in the planning process for the responding states.

The agencies identified by the respondents as "other" included regional planning agencies (three respondents) and 5310 recipients, counties, Native American tribal governments, private sector, public transit provider, state planning bureau, and transit districts (each mentioned by one respondent).

The survey respondents acknowledged that the level of commitment/participation in the development of the Coordination Plans has been relatively strong at both the state and local levels. Over 70 percent of the survey respondents indicated that the level of commitment/participation at the state and local levels was average or better, as shown in Figure 7 and Figure 8.

When asked to provide an explanation of the ratings for state and local commitment/participation, respondents used the opportunity to describe the situation in their states. The two most common explanations (with two responses) were that the state paid for and supported the planning, resulting in higher levels of commitment and participation, and that it was impossible to include all participants in the process, particularly in terms of attracting new agencies to the process. Respondents felt the funding level and restrictive federal requirements for the JARC and NF grant programs often make it difficult to attract participants to the process. To increase participation of Section 5310 participants, one state offered an incentive for the participating agencies' applications for vehicle grants. The explanations for levels of commitment and participation at the state and local level are summarized in Figure 9.

Perceptions of Level of Coordination Achieved. The last two questions of this section asked whether the

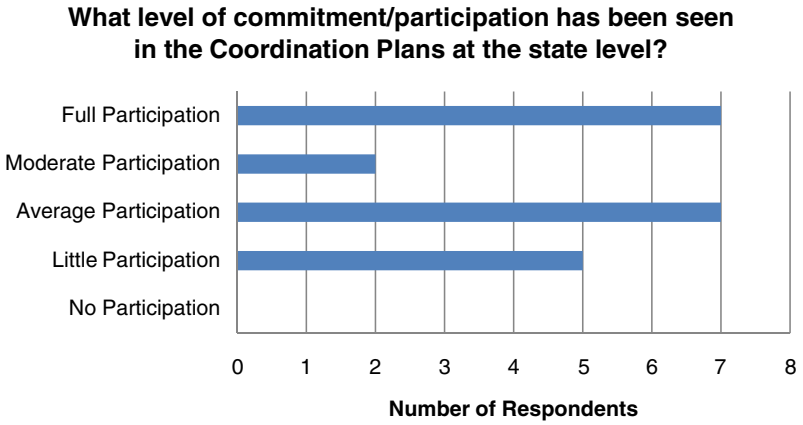

Figure 7 Reported state commitment/participation in the Coordination Plans.

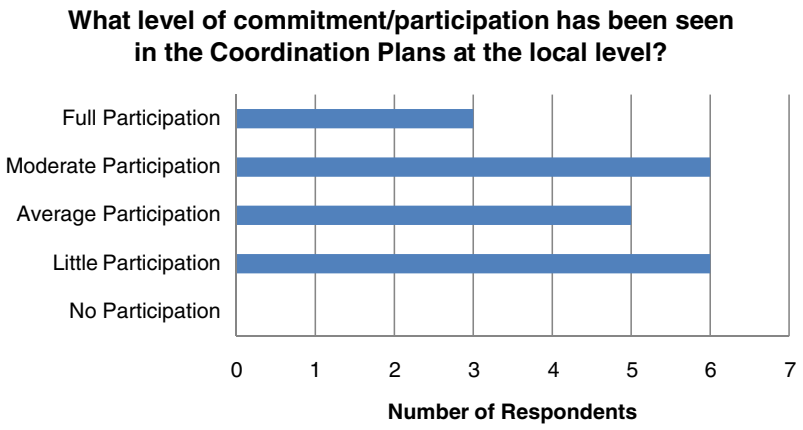

Figure 8 Reported local commitment/participation in the Coordination Plans.

state achieved the same level of coordination on transportation for the target populations before the federal requirements were introduced and whether the same program objectives could be achieved without the Coordination Plans. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents believed that the level of coordination was not the same as before the federal requirement, as shown in Figure 10. Of the 11 respondents that provided an explanation for their answer, six (55 percent) indicated that the coordination is better now, two (18 percent) indicated that there is now increased awareness and additional stakeholder participation, and two (18 percent) stated that the federal requirement duplicates or overlaps existing state requirements. Additionally, one respondent explanation indicated that, to date, the achievement of the plan primarily has been pointing out what services are lacking.

While most of the respondents indicated that the level of coordination had improved after the federal requirement for Coordination Plans, 62 percent of respondents believed that the same objectives could be met without the plans, as shown in Figure 11. Of the 10 respondents that provided an explanation for their answer, five indicated that their state already had the same type of planning requirement in place, but not the funds to pay for it; two stated that the federal requirement sped up the process; two responded

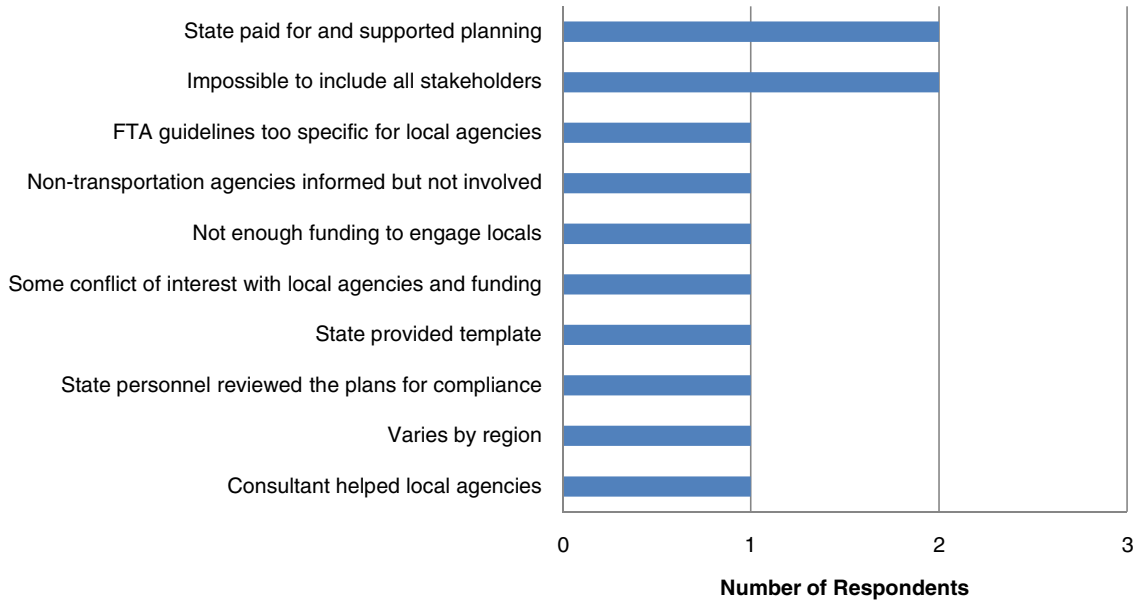

Figure 9 Explanation of levels of commitment/participation at the state and local levels.

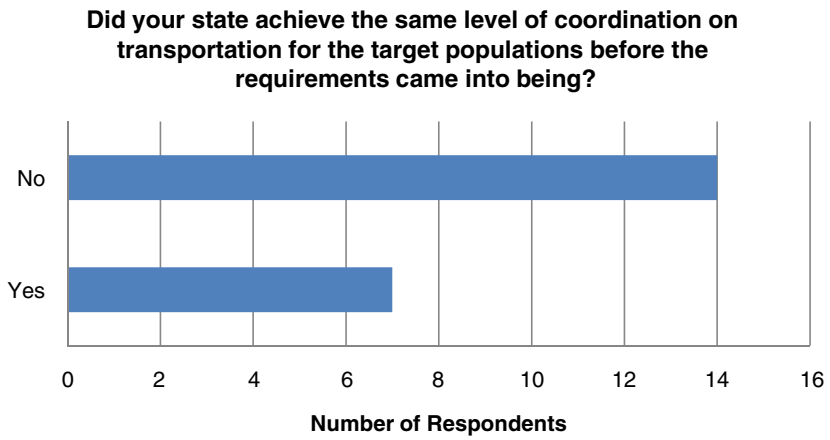

Figure 10 Reported change in level of coordination achieved.

that they did not have a similar state planning requirement; and one stated that coordination requires mandates.

Cost of Public Transit/Human Services Coordination Plan Development

This section of the Internet survey focused on the cost of developing the Coordination Plans, specifically in terms of a dollar amount and/or time spent on the initial plan development and maintaining the plans. The survey attempted to identify where the money and time for the Coordination Plan development is coming from, whether other projects have been curtailed or eliminated to fund the plans, and whether any additional costs have been incurred, including hiring new employees or consultants. All 21 survey respondents completed this section of the survey. A few questions were skipped, but there were no fewer than 19 responses to any question in this section of the survey.

Cost of the Coordination Plans. While the cost may vary by region/locality, the questions in this portion of the survey were focused on the total cost for the development of all Coordination Plans throughout the state. The intent of the questions was to arrive at a total dollar amount (including both state and local money); however, many respondents could only report how much the state spent on the plans (excluding local expenses) because they did not know how much the MPOs and regions spent. As a result, the cost of the plans of responding states was largely less than $250,000 (57 percent) as shown in Figure 12. For those states spending more money on the initial plan development, many indicated that the state was providing a significant portion of the money for the Coordination Plan development.

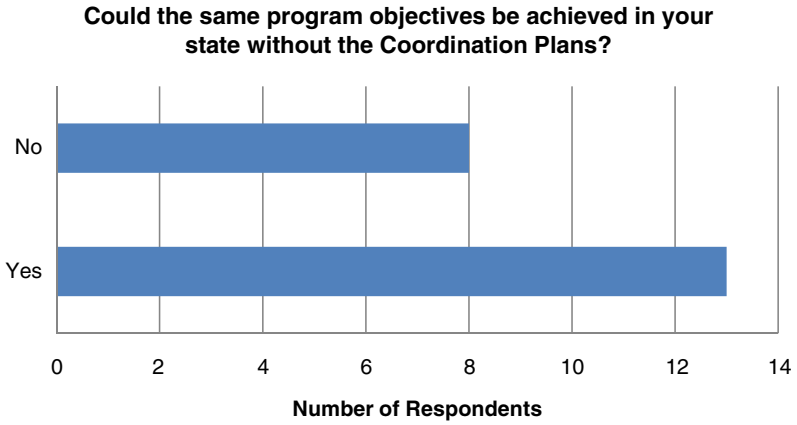

Figure 11 Estimated achievement of program objectives without the Coordination Plans.

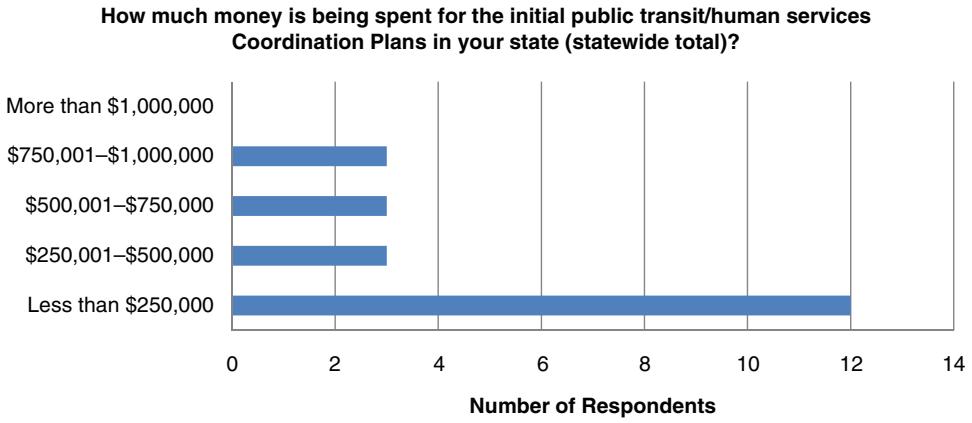

Figure 12 Cost of initial Coordination Plans (statewide total).

Similarly, Figure 13 demonstrates that most of the projected annual state costs for maintaining the Coordination Plans are expected to be less than $250,000 (86 percent). As mentioned previously, many respondents could only indicate how much the state is expected to spend on the maintenance of the Coordination Plans because they were not aware of how much the MPOs and regions expect to spend.

Many respondents indicated that the Coordination Plans have a "shelf life" of 4 years for nonattainment areas and 5 years for attainment areas, and they do not anticipate that the costs will be in excess of $250,000 (at least for the state). Additionally, while some states paid for the cost of initial Coordination Plan development, no state responded that the state would pay for the maintenance of the plans, which likely contributed to the lower projected costs for plan maintenance.

Source of Funding for Coordination Plans. The primary sources of funds for the development of the Coordination Plans for the responding states were federal planning/administrative funds (48 percent) and state funds (30 percent). Figure 14 summarizes the funding sources mentioned by survey respondents.

In addition, five of seven survey respondents indicated that these revenue sources are not sustainable for Coordination Plan development. The respondents concerned with sustainability of the revenue source(s) primarily depended on state grants. Respondents indicated that many of the state funds came from a one-time source (such as an Executive Order) or were taken from funds (both state and federal) that would have gone toward providing services. These responses indicate that funding for the plans may become increasingly a local responsibility.

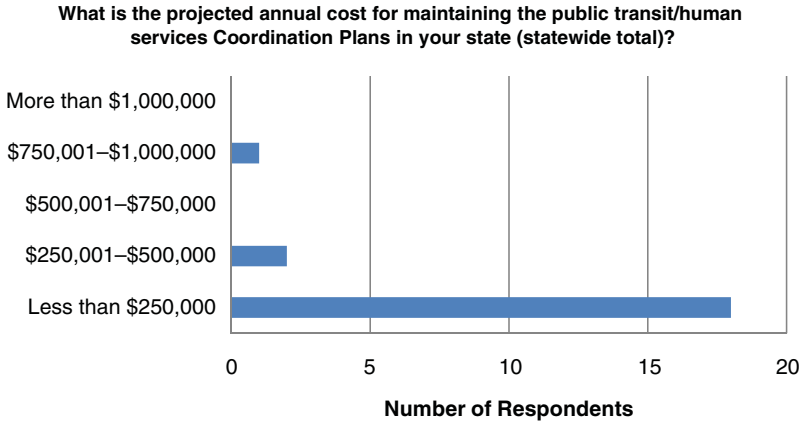

Figure 13 Cost of maintaining Coordination Plans (statewide total).

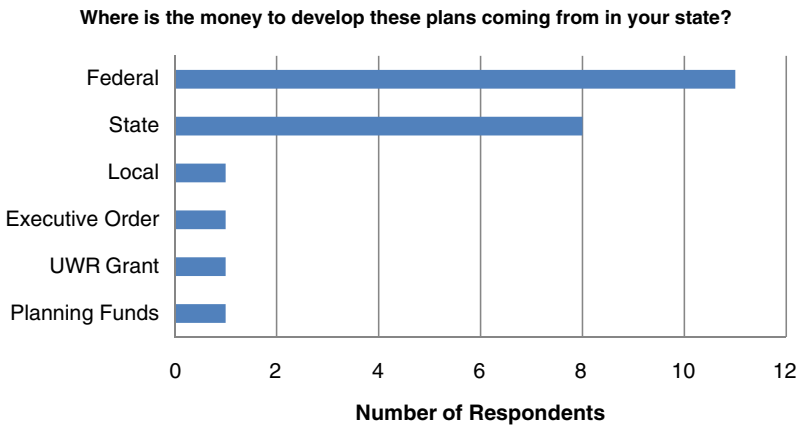

Figure 14 Sources of funds for Coordination Plan development.

While some respondents were concerned about sustainability of funding sources for the Coordination Plans, only two respondents (10 percent) indicated that other projects had been curtailed or eliminated to fund the plans. One respondent stated that services were cut or curtailed to fund the plans; the other respondent did not describe the project(s) that had been reduced or eliminated.

Additional Costs or Issues with Preparation of the Coordination Plans. The majority of survey respondents (68 percent) did not identify additional implementation costs or issues with the preparation of the Coordination Plans. Of the six respondents that identified additional costs or issues, four were cost related (finding consultants, insurance, additional staff time, and workshops for MPOs and regional planning commissions) and two were issues with receiving adequate participation from either planning commissions or service providers.

However, when the Internet survey probed further into the additional implementation costs, nine respondents (43 percent) had hired consultants or additional employees to help meet the Coordination Plan requirements at the state level, and 53 percent had hired consultants or additional employees at the local level. In addition, one respondent indicated that they are not allowed to expand staff, even if the position is 100 percent grant funded. As shown in Figure 15, most of the additional hiring has been for consultants.

In addition to hiring consultants or new employees, the responsibilities for preparing the Coordination Plans have fallen largely on existing staff. Eighteen respondents (86 percent) indicated that the plans have placed an additional burden on the state transit office.

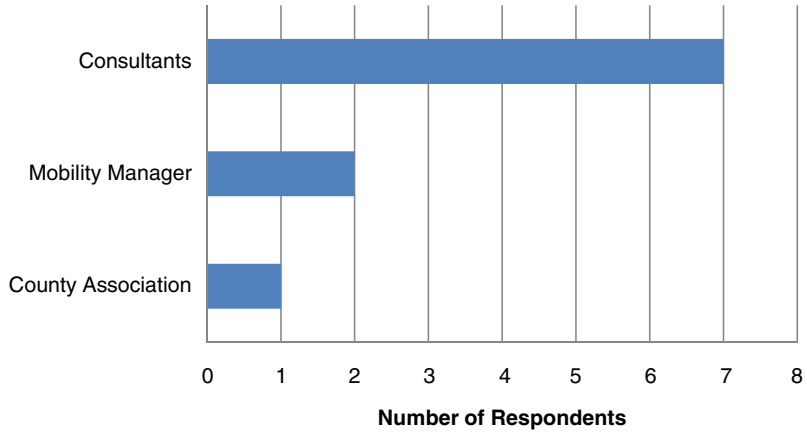

Figure 15 Additional hiring to meet requirement for Coordination Plan.

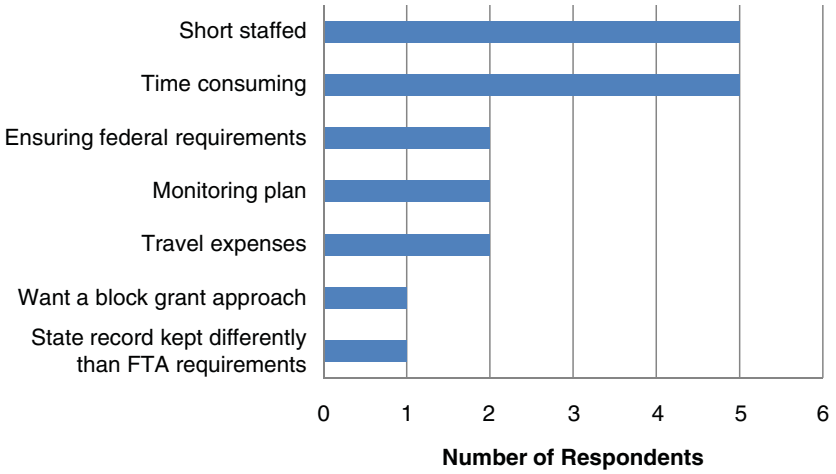

Figure 16 Perceived additional administrative burdens.

The explanations for the additional administrative burden varied, but the common responses were that the agency is already short-staffed (one respondent has a hiring freeze and another has had reductions in staff) and the process is time consuming. Figure 16 summarizes the additional administrative burdens described by the respondents.

Awarding Section 5316 JARC and Section 5317 NF Grants

This section of the Internet survey focused on the success states have had in awarding/obligating the Section 5316 JARC and Section 5317 NF grants. The survey attempted to identify the level of success in awarding the grants, the type of projects receiving the grants, how/if the Coordination Plans have improved grant awards, and concerns associated with the grant programs. All 21 survey respondents completed this section of the survey. A few questions were skipped, but there were no fewer than 20 responses to any question in this section of the survey.

Successes and Challenges in Awarding JARC and NF Grants. In general, the survey respondents indicated that they have had success in awarding both the JARC and NF funds. Ninety percent of all respondents felt they had at least average success in awarding JARC funds, while only 75 percent of respondents felt they had at least average success in awarding NF funds. Based on the responses, the greatest problems in awarding the grants have been the lack of funds available in the program and finding a local match. Respondents indicated that there is not enough money in these programs (particularly JARC) because the need is significantly larger than the funds. As a result, they report that the funds frequently are used for existing/on-going services (preservation) rather than new projects. Several respondents also indicated that awarding of NF grants has been hindered by the restrictions on eligible projects and lack of understanding of the beyond ADA requirement by potential recipients. There is some hope by respondents that the recent clarification on NF projects will make awarding the grants easier. Figure 17 and Figure 18 summarize the challenges faced by the survey respondents in awarding JARC and NF grants, respectively.

The recipients of JARC and NF grants were quite varied for the survey respondents. The most common JARC grant recipients were transit agencies (27 percent), non-profit agencies (15 percent), and rural agencies (12 percent), while NF grants were received primarily by transit agencies and non-profit agencies (27 percent each). Figure 19 and Figure 20 summarize the types of JARC and NF grant recipients, respectively.

Additionally, survey respondents provided a diverse list of projects that have been funded by JARC and NF grants. JARC grants largely help pay for expanded services, operating costs, work-related, and capital purchases, while NF grants primarily funded mobility management, capital purchases, operating costs, and ADA services. Figure 21 and Figure 22 summarize the type of projects funded by JARC and NF grants, respectively.

Obligating JARC and NF Grants. A review of the FTA data for FY 2006–2008 revealed that nationwide, there was general difficulty in obligating all

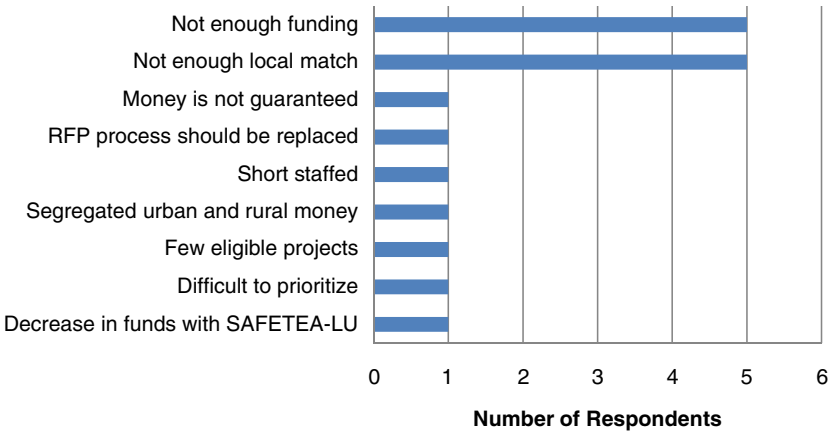

Figure 17 Reported challenges in awarding Section 5316 JARC Grants.

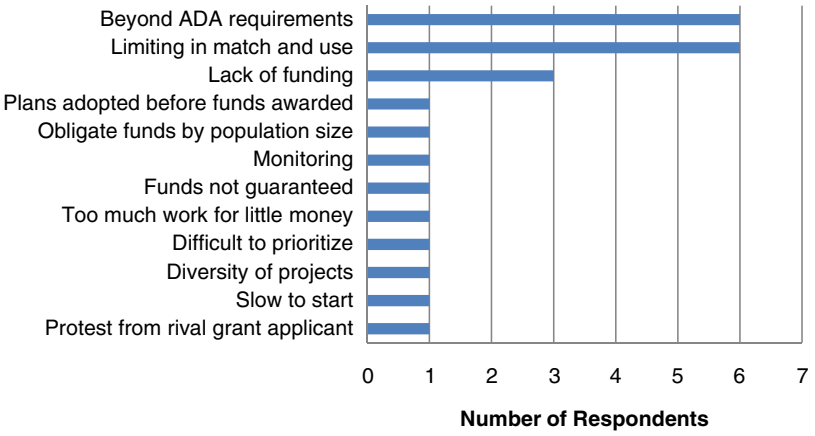

Figure 18 Reported challenges in awarding Section 5317 NF Grants.

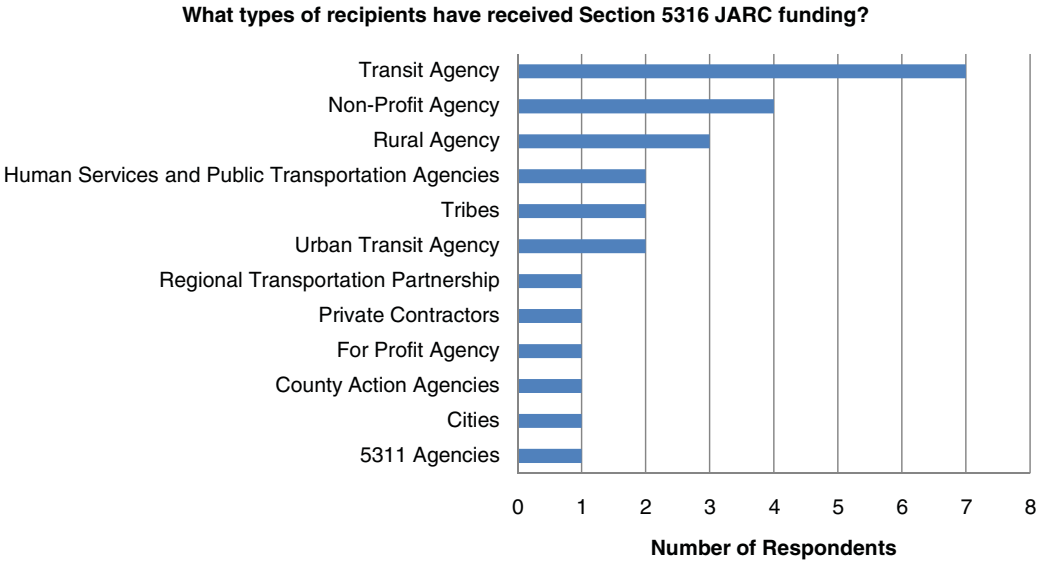

Figure 19 JARC grant recipients.

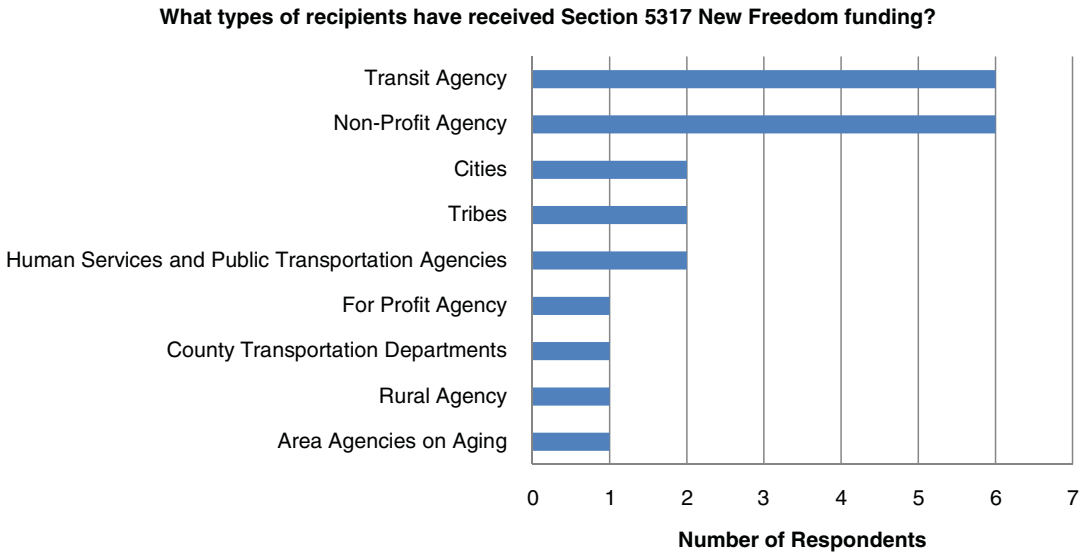

Figure 20 NF grant recipients.

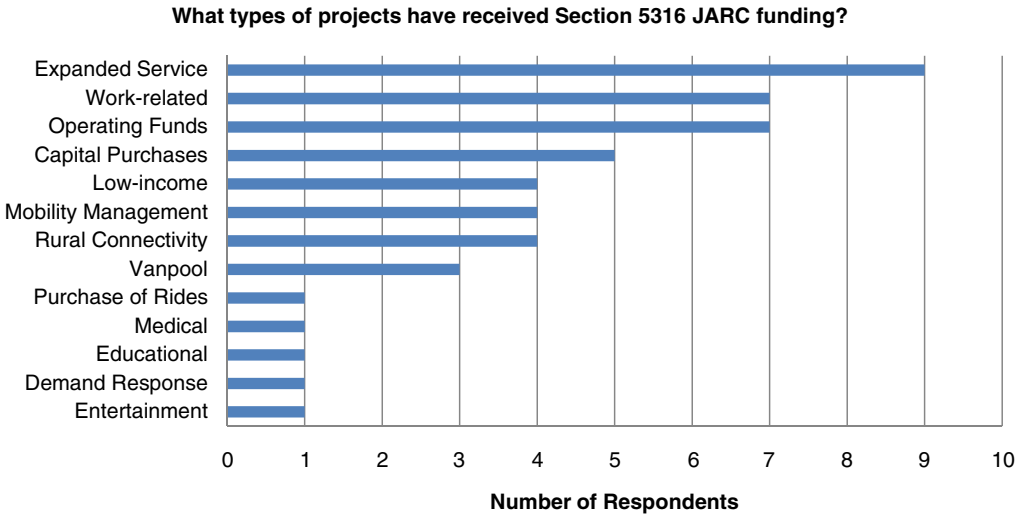

Figure 21 JARC projects.

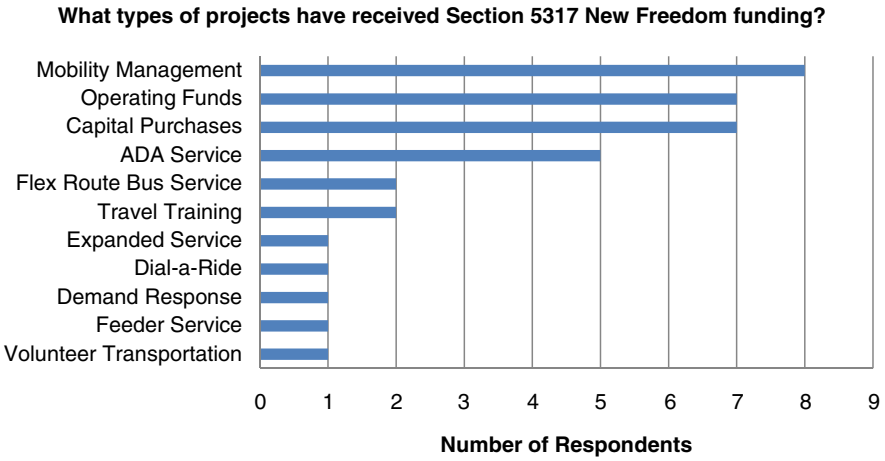

Figure 22 NF projects.

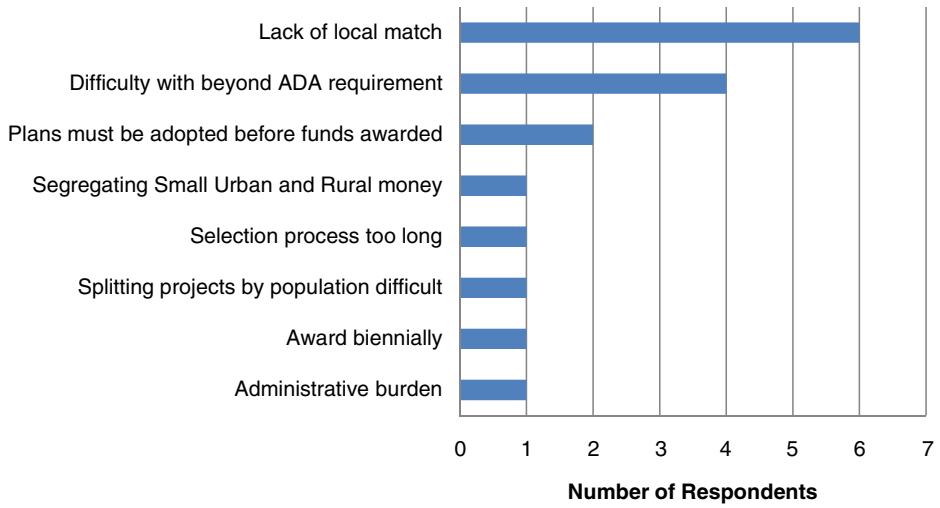

Figure 23 Reported challenges in obligating JARC and NF grants.

appropriated JARC and NF funds. Of the FY 2006 appropriations, between 84 and 88 percent of the JARC and NF funds were obligated by FY 2008 (expiration date of the funding). Similarly, for FY 2007 appropriations, between 38 and 40 percent of the funding had been obligated by FY 2008 (only 1 year remaining before expiration in FY 2009); and of the FY 2008 appropriations, only 12 to 14 percent had been obligated by the end of FY 2008. The majority of survey respondents (71 percent) indicated that this delay in obligations is typical in their state. Figure 23 describes some of the reasons for the difficulty in obligating these funds, the most common of which are the lack of local match and difficulty with the beyond ADA requirement for NF projects. Due to these difficulties, states often end up selecting many smaller projects, which is hard for states to administer.

While many responding states indicated that they have had difficulty in obligating JARC and NF grants, only five respondents (24 percent) have actually had JARC or NF grants expire before they could be obligated. Some recipients provided multiple explanations for the expiration, but the most common reasons for the lapses were limited project requests, lack of eligible projects, and lack of matching funds, as shown in Figure 24.

Lastly, survey respondents were asked whether the percentage of JARC funds obligated had improved with the Coordination Plan requirement. Of the 21 respondents, only two stated that the obligation of JARC funds had improved with the federal requirement.

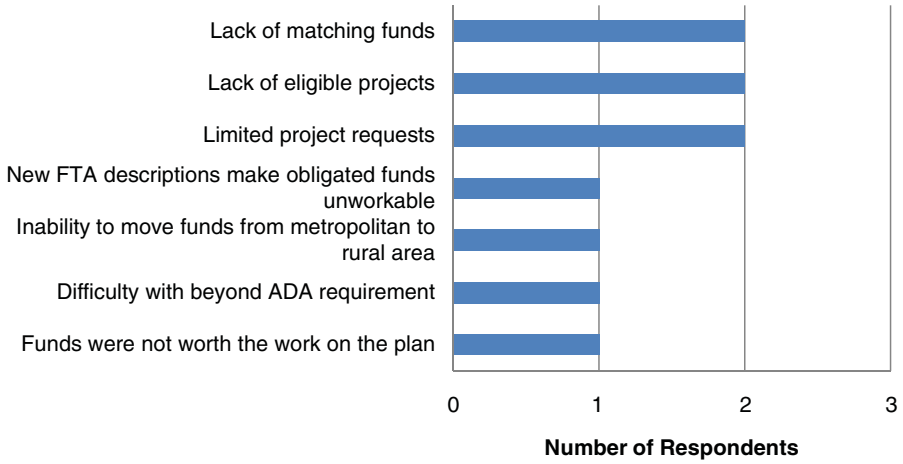

Figure 24 Reported reasons for expiring JARC and NF grants.

For those respondents that did not think the obligation of JARC funds had improved with the Coordination Plan requirement, several felt the obligation process actually has become more difficult, while others stated that the JARC funding was larger when the program was provided through competitive application designations rather than a formula. Only one respondent felt that the obligations and types of projects had not changed, but rather the plan allowed the services to be implemented for a broader range of individuals. Figure 25 summarizes the respondents' explanations for why the percentage of JARC funding obligated has not improved with the Coordination Plans.

Expressed Concerns/Issues with JARC and NF Grants. Research indicated that there are some general concerns with the JARC and NF grant programs that are perceived to make it more difficult to obligate these funds, including:

- Lack of understating what types of projects are eligible for these grants
- Difficulty in designating entities to administer the grants
- Competitive selection process requirement
- Local matching requirements
- Limited size of the programs
- Reluctance to start new services with these funds

The survey results, however, revealed that in general there is an understanding of the types of projects that are eligible for these grants and that the states have not had great difficulty in designating entities to administer the grants. Of the 21 respondents, 86 percent felt that there is an understanding of the types of projects eligible for JARC funding and 71 percent felt that there is a similar understanding for NF projects. The 2009 clarification of NF projects published in the *Federal Register* (74 FR 19624, April 29, 2009) may have helped to improve this response rate. Additionally, only two respondents (10 percent) indicated that there have been difficulties in designating entities to administer the grants, one of which indicated that there has been a lack of participation by the MPOs because not all feel that they should have to participate.

The survey respondents also did not indicate that there is a widespread concern about the competitive selection process requirement for the JARC and NF grant programs. Only five respondents (24 percent) stated that the competitive selection process impacts their state's ability to obligate JARC and NF funds. The primary concerns with the competitive selection process expressed by the respondents were that there is a lack of eligible applicants (two respondents), it is difficult to run an open, helpful *and* non-biased program (one respondent), and that the process is time consuming (one respondent).

The survey respondents' greatest concern with the grant programs was the matching requirements (20 percent for capital and 50 percent for operating). Of those who responded, 76 percent indicated that these matching requirements impact their project selections because many projects do not have the required local match, or there is concern that these matching funds may not be available after the first year.

When asked about their state's greatest concern with the JARC and NF matching requirements, 18

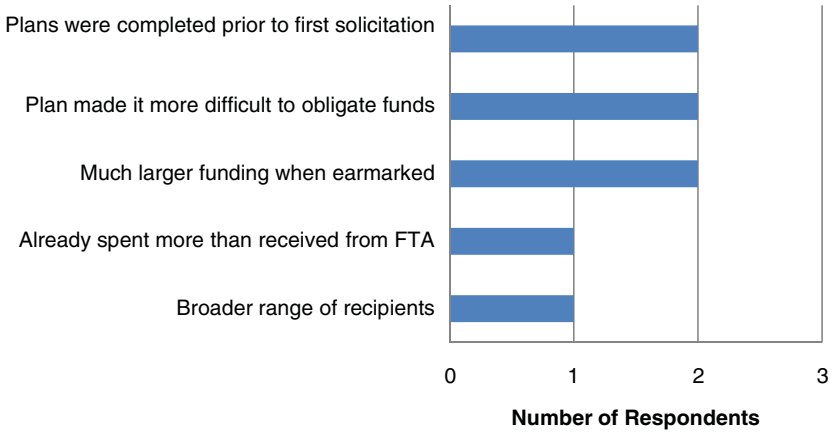

Figure 25 Perceived reasons JARC obligations have not improved with Coordination Plans.

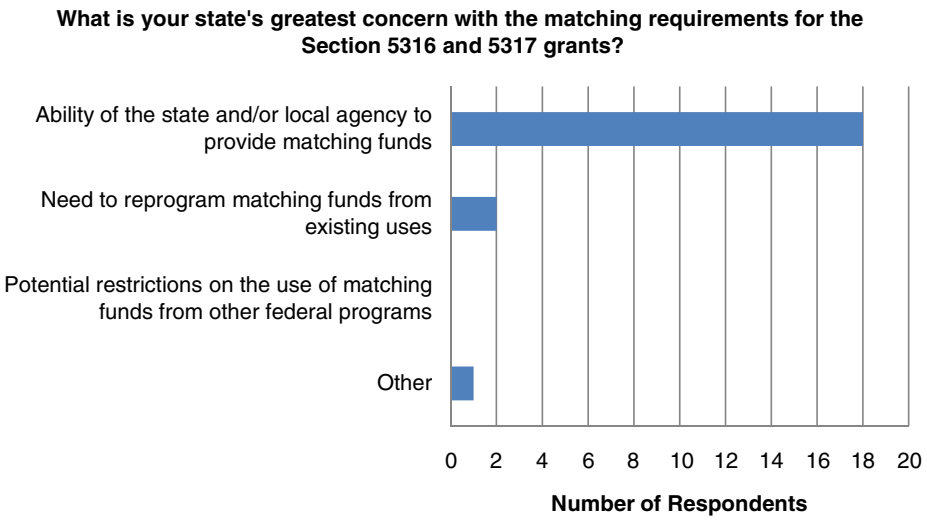

Figure 26 Greatest concern with JARC and NF matching requirements.

of 21 respondents (86 percent) stated it was the ability of the state and/or local regions to provide matching funds. One respondent selected "other," but explained that the ability to find state/local matching funds and the need to reprogram matching funds from existing uses were equally important. According to respondents, many local agencies have run out of local funds for matching, and non-DOT agencies do not always believe that their federal funds may match the JARC and NF grants. Figure 26 depicts the responding state agencies' greatest concern with the matching requirements for JARC and NF.

An additional concern expressed by the respondents is the limited size of the Section 5317 NF program. Just over one-half of the respondents (57 percent) indicated that the limited size of the NF program does hinder the ability of their state (or the localities in their state) from undertaking large projects. Of the reasons for the impact, the most common response was that the NF funding levels are too small for regional or statewide projects. Additionally the small size combined with the segregated funds for rural and small urban areas results in smaller projects. The concerns with the NF program are summarized in Figure 27.

In addition to the limited size of the programs, the majority of survey respondents (70 percent) stated that there is reluctance in their states to start new services with the JARC and NF funds. The primary reason provided by the respondents (79 percent) was the concern that these funds are not sustainable. Agencies stated that they do not want to start new services with JARC or NF funds when there is no guarantee that these projects will receive awards in future years or that any of their matching funds for the project are sustainable. As a result, agencies have indicated that

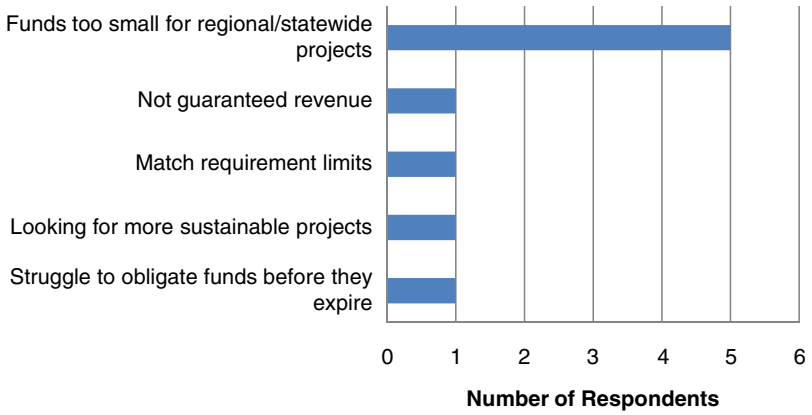

Figure 27 Additional concerns with the NF program.

they do not want to start new services unless they are sure that they can continue the services. The two other reasons provided by respondents were lack of available matching funds (two respondents) and the complexity of the programs and FTA compliance (one respondent).

Conclusions

The "Human Services Transportation Plans and Grant Program" Internet survey completed by 21 state DOTs highlights several areas where the Coordination Plans have been relatively successful, such as in enhancing transportation access for target populations, increasing commitment/participation in the plan development at both the state and local levels, improving coordination, and creating a general understanding of eligible JARC and NF grants. However, the respondents stated that the federal requirement for the Coordination Plans has placed a significant administrative burden on already short-staffed state and local agencies. Respondents felt that the coordination planning process is time consuming and many agencies stated they are not able to hire new staff or consultants to assist with the process. As a result, agencies feel that the responsibilities often fall on existing staff, many of whom have already been asked to take on additional responsibilities.

In addition to the administrative requirements placed on state and local agencies, the survey respondents highlighted several areas of concern in regards to obligating the JARC and NF grants. The responses indicated that the obligation of these funds generally has not improved with the Coordination Plan requirement. There frequently is a lag in funding JARC and NF projects, and several respondents have had problems obligating these funds before they expire. In fact, 24 percent of responding agencies reported that they have had JARC or NF funds expire before they could be obligated. The agencies stated that one of the primary reasons that obligating these funds is such a problem is the difficulty in identifying local matching funds for projects. Local funds are limited and the higher matching requirements of the JARC and NF grant programs (particularly the 50 percent match for operations) and the uncertainty that these funds will be there in the future make it more difficult to identify local funds for these projects. The majority of survey respondents (70 percent) stated that there is reluctance in their states to start new services with JARC and NF funds. The primary reason provided by the respondents (79 percent) was the concern that these funds are not sustainable. They stated that they do not want to introduce new services and then have to take them away when/if these grant programs or the apportionments received are reduced.

Given these concerns, the agencies were asked if they had any suggestions to improve the use and management of the JARC and NF grant programs so that the coordination goals of the FTA, state, and localities continue to be met, while the administrative burden these grant programs place on the state and local agencies is reduced. Nineteen of the 21 survey respondents offered suggestions for improving these grant programs. All of the survey respondent suggestions attempted to improve the management of the grant programs and to find means to fund more projects, whether through proposed consolidation with other grant programs, increasing funding, reducing restrictions, lowering operating matching requirements, or increasing flexibility. The suggestions from the survey respondents are summarized in Figure 28.

The most frequently suggested improvement for the JARC and NF grant programs by the survey respondents was the consolidation of the Section 5316 JARC and Section 5317 New Freedom grant programs with other federal grant programs such as Section 5310, 5311, and 5307. The respondents indicated that with consolidation, the individual grant program goals could still be reflected in program and planning requirements, including dedicating percentages of funding to each program goal. Section 5310 Transportation for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities was the most frequently mentioned program for consolidating the JARC and NF grants, and several respondents indicated that these grant programs also could be consolidated with the Section 5311 Rural and Small Urban Areas grant program. Respondents felt that by consolidating the JARC and NF grants with Section 5310 and/or 5311, the states could manage the program more efficiently, while still developing a Coordination Plan (as required for Section 5310) and serving similar target populations.

Several respondents also felt that consolidating Section 5316 and 5317 into one grant program would allow more flexibility in transferring funds and meeting the greatest transit needs. They believed that this would allow the funds to be used to serve any one of the target populations and fund projects that best meet the transit needs of the state. Additionally, it was suggested by some that the obligation by population size requirement be eliminated for the new

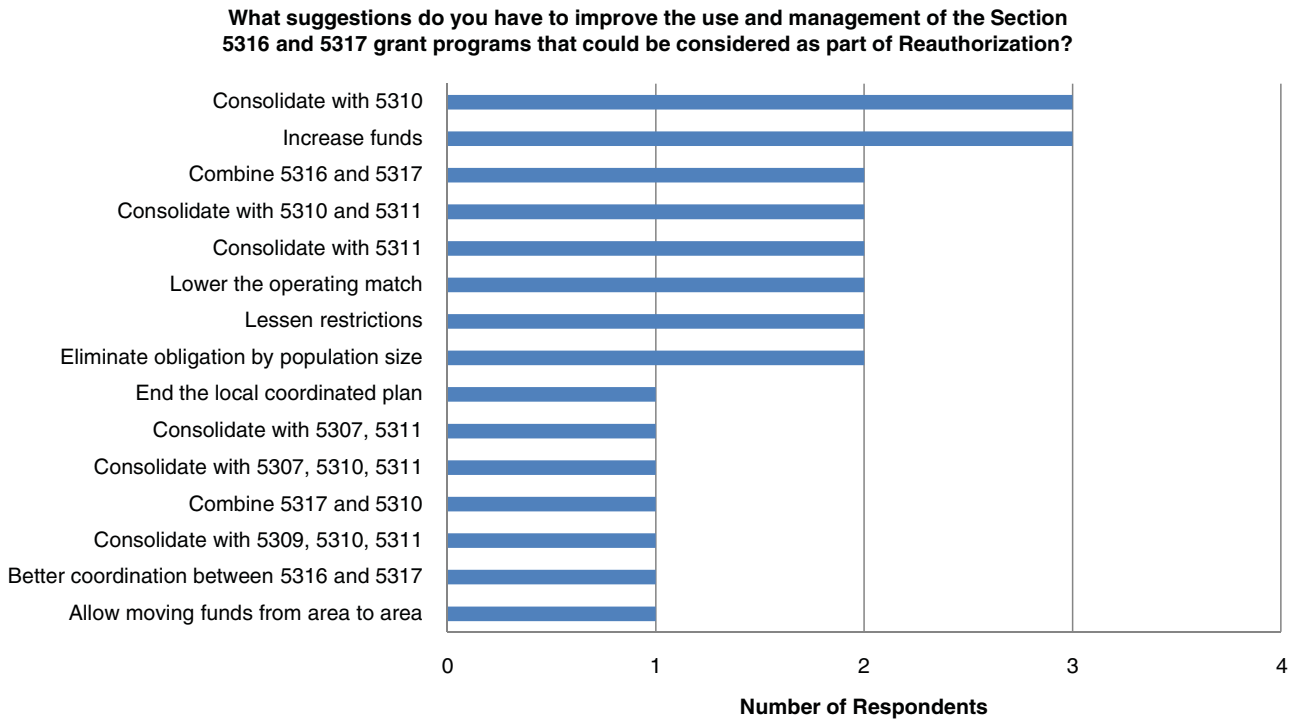

Figure 28 Responses on improving the use and management of JARC and NF grant programs.

consolidated grant program. The survey respondents indicated that combining the JARC and NF grant programs would allow greater flexibility in awarding projects and moving funds from one area to another, and would be more efficient for states to manage.

CHAPTER 3 TELEPHONE SURVEY OF STATE DOTs AND REPRESENTATIVE AGENCIES

Based on the results of the Internet survey conducted in late 2009, six states were selected to participate in follow-up discussions via telephone interviews. Only state DOT representatives who indicated a willingness to discuss their responses further were contacted, and the six states were selected with the goal of having a mix of geographic locations, urbanized versus rural states, and states indicating varying levels of satisfaction with the Human Services Coordination Plan process and results. The states selected for further discussion were: Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, and Washington.

Selection of States

The Internet survey sent to AASHTO Standing Committee on Public Transportation Members in October 2009 resulted in the completion of 21 surveys. After a review of the 21 survey responses, a draft list of six states to contact for further interviews was developed for the panel's review based on the following:

- Willingness to participate
- Mix of rural and urban areas
- Level of success of Coordination Plans
- Whether the state already had state/local requirements for Coordination Plans
- Level of participation in the planning process
- Ability to achieve the same level of coordination without the federal requirement
- Ability to achieve the same program objectives without the requirement
- Amount of money being spent on the plans
- Issues in awarding JARC funds
- Issues in awarding NF funds
- Expiration of any JARC or NF funds
- Reluctance to start new services with JARC and NF funds

Every attempt was made to include a mix of states that represented a diversity of geographic locations, urban and rural areas, varying levels of success in developing Coordination Plans, states where state/local requirements were already in place, states where

state/local requirements were not in place, diversity in the amount of money spent on the initial plans, and varying levels of success in awarding JARC and NF funds.

Table 4 highlights the recommended states and their general survey responses, as well as those states that were considered but not selected. *Please note that only the states responding to the survey were considered for additional interviews.*

Some additional areas of interest for the selected states are summarized as follows.

- **Missouri.** Missouri experienced success in developing Coordination Plans, but it occurred slowly. Missouri did not have any state/local Coordination Plan requirements in place before SAFETEA-LU; as a result, the state developed and conducted workshops to help develop the plans. In addition, the state received more discretionary JARC funding during TEA-21 than under SAFETEA-LU's formula; therefore, there are more JARC projects than funds. Missouri has struggled with awarding NF funds.
- **Ohio.** Ohio did not have any state/local Coordination Plan requirements in place before SAFETEA-LU. As part of the development of the Coordination Plans, the state provided funding for local communities to begin the process, technical support, and assistance with multijurisdictional planning. Ohio has had average success in awarding JARC and NF funds; matching funds is an issue.
- **Pennsylvania.** Pennsylvania provides a match for the non-federal share for large urban, small urban, and non-urban areas. The Coordination Plans have not been entirely successful because they have focused on identifying projects for JARC and NF rather than minimizing duplication of services or most appropriate/cost-effective services. As a result Pennsylvania has had difficulty prioritizing local rankings at the state level. In addition, some FY 2007 NF funds did expire. The state is concerned about the sustainability of JARC and NF.
- **South Carolina.** South Carolina indicated that it had a late start on the process, but the state planning efforts have been successful and participation levels strong. However, this planning success hasn't transferred to the awarding of JARC and NF funds. The state's biggest challenge with JARC funds is the required 50-50 match for operations. In addition, NF funds have been challenging for the state given the restrictive nature of the program beyond the ADA requirements.
- **Virginia.** Virginia provides the local match for NF program, but not JARC. As a result, the NF grant program has been quite successful, while the JARC program has had more difficulty in finding projects with a local match identified. In addition, unlike many states, Virginia has hired a part-time person at the state level to help with coordinated planning requirements and local areas have hired Mobility Managers.
- **Washington.** Washington had coordinated planning requirements in place at the state level before the federal requirement in SAFETEA-LU. As a result, the state has rural or regional versions of MPOs in place to develop the plans. In addition, the state provides funding to each county (and additional funding if there is a small urban MPO) to help with the development of the plans. Washington has had success with JARC funds but only moderate success with NF. The state's concerns with the NF program are not the planning requirements but the tight restrictions on what projects are eligible as well as dividing the funds available for small urban and rural areas.

Of the states considered but not recommended, three of the states (Alaska, Connecticut, and Oregon) were not selected for recommendation because they were case studies in NCHRP Project 20-65, Task 14 "Current Practice and Future Guidance on the Development of SAFETEA-LU-Required Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans." In an attempt to obtain a broader perspective, the research team did not think it prudent to select states that had already been the subject of case studies for human services transportation planning. In addition, New Hampshire and Minnesota's concerns were similar to other states selected and were not recommended in order to include states that had a better mix of urban and rural areas and/or that had spent more money developing the Coordination Plans (two states recommended also spent less than $250,000).

Interview Process

Each state DOT representative was contacted for the purpose of further discussion of their responses to the Internet survey, clarification of their responses (if needed), and identification of agencies and contact

Table 4 States considered for telephone interviews.

	States	Mix of rural and urban areas	Think Plans are at least moderately successful in meeting FTA goals	Already had state/local requirements	Perceive at least a moderate level of participation	Believe the same level of coordination achieved without the federal requirement	Believe they achieve the same program objectives without the plans	Amount of money being spent on initial plans	Perceive additional administrative burden	Issues in awarding JARC funds	Issues in awarding NF funds	Have had JARC or NF Funds Expire	Reluctance to start new service with JARC and NF funds	Case study in previous NCHRP Coordinated Plans Study	Willingness to participate
Recommended	Missouri	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	$500,001-$750,000	Yes	Reduced grants with SAFETEA-LU	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Ohio	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	$500,001-$1,000,000	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
	Pennsylvania	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Less than $250,000	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	South Carolina	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Less than $250,000	Yes	Yes	Yes	No, but close	No	No	Yes
	Virginia	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	$500,001-$1,000,000	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
	Washington	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	$500,001-$750,000	No	No	A few	No	No	No	Yes
Others Considered	Alaska	More rural	No	Yes	No	No	No	$250,001-$500,000	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Connecticut	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Less than $250,000	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	New Hampshire	More rural	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Less than $250,000	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Minnesota	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Less than $250,000	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Oregon	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	$500,001-$1,000,000	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

persons within the state for further discussion. The objective was to identify a set of agencies within the state to interview for their perspectives on the Coordination Plans and the associated grant programs. Within each state, the study team attempted to contact a cross-section of agency types, including MPOs, RPOs, transit agencies, human services transportation providers, and NGOs.

The purpose of the interviews was two-fold:

1. Determining the extent to which the respondents believe coordinated public transit/human services transportation plans have met FTA goals of enhancing transportation access, minimizing duplication of services, and facilitating the most appropriate and cost-effective transportation possible with available resources; and
2. Ascertaining the cost of developing and maintaining these Coordination Plans (in terms of time and money) to ensure that resources are being used wisely and effectively, resulting in the better, more cost-effective and coordinated programs that the plans are expected to foster.

The state DOTs, and subsequently the recommended agencies, were contacted between December 2009 and March 2010. Each agency was contacted to set up a time for a telephone interview, with the aim of conducting the discussion within 45 minutes to 1 hour. An interview questionnaire was developed to aid the discussion with each agency; it was expected that some of the questions would get answered in the course of answering a previous question, and some may not be applicable to the organization at hand. The interview questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

Summary of Survey Responses

Interviews Held

The questions in the survey were divided into five sections:

1. Planning Process
2. Program Management
3. Perceived Success and Benefits of the Plans and Funds
4. Coordination
5. Supplementary Questions (e.g., discussion of successful/unsuccessful projects)

Two slightly different versions of the questionnaire were developed to ensure that applicable questions were asked of each agency type, given that the interviews were conducted with agencies ranging from small human services agencies to large urban transit agencies. The two sets of questions were geared toward:

1. State DOTs, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and County and City Governments
2. Local Organizations: Transportation Providers, Human Services Providers, and Public Interest Groups

Table 5 shows the agencies that were interviewed within each of the six states.

State-by-State Interview Results

The next sections provide an overview of the results obtained by state. The interviews covered a range of agency types, including each state's DOT, which had previously been surveyed at a more cursory level as part of the web-based survey for this study. At least three other agencies were interviewed in each state, including transit agencies, human services transportation providers, MPOs, and RPOs. Overall, most agencies felt that the Coordination Plan requirements have helped their agency and region to provide a higher quality and more effective level of service for meeting human services transportation needs. Tables 6–11 show summaries, by state, of the interview responses. The detailed interview summaries for all 25 interviews can be found in Appendix C.

Missouri. Missouri agencies have found the Coordination Plans required for Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 funding effective in improving human services transportation statewide. Creation of the plans has included new participants such as nonprofit and private companies and has brought about improved coordination among agencies. Customer outreach and improved information through service marketing and promotion have enabled the programs to meet customer needs.

However, there is a concern by the Missouri respondents that the ability of agencies to continue to apply for grant money is lacking, both from a need for matching funds and from a lack of administrative and planning capability. There was agreement among the state's respondents that combining or streamlining the programs would minimize the burden. In addition,

Table 5 Organizations interviewed by state.

Missouri	Ohio	Pennsylvania	South Carolina	Virginia	Washington
Missouri DOT *December 15, 2009*	Ohio DOT *December 15, 2009*	Pennsylvania DOT *January 7, 2010*	South Carolina DOT *February 5, 2010*	Virginia DOT *December 15, 2009*	Washington DOT *December 16, 2009*
Meramec Regional Planning Commission, a rural regional planning commission. *January 13, 2010*	Licking County Area Transportation Study, a small urban MPO. *February 2, 2010*	Lycoming County Planning Commission, a Metropolitan Planning Organization. *February 12, 2010*	Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments, an RPO. *February 17, 2010*	*RADAR*[1]– a rural NGO Human Services Transportation provider. *December 29, 2009*	*People For People* – a rural non-profit Human Services Transportation provider. *January 7, 2010*
Mr. Goodcents Foundation, a Public Interest Group/Mid-America Regional Council of Governments (Kansas City), a nonprofit MPO.[2] *January 15, 2010*	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission, a small urban MPO. *February 8, 2010*	Lycoming-Clinton Counties Commission for Community Action[3], a private, non-profit community action agency. *February 1, 2010*	Lower Savannah Council of Governments, a Rural Planning Organization. *February 24, 2010*	Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission – a rural planning district commission. *January 7, 2010*	Puget Sound Regional Council – an urban MPO. *January 13, 2010*
Southeast Missouri Transportation Services Inc., a non-profit general public transportation service. *February 3, 2010*	Delaware Area Transit Agency, a rural transit agency. *February 22, 2010*	Town & Country Transit, a transit agency in Armstrong County. *January 26, 2010*	Central Midlands Council of Governments, a regional planning organization and urban MPO. *March 9, 2010*	Hampton Roads Transit – an urban transit agency. *January 29, 2010*	Thurston Regional Planning Council – a small urban MPO. *February 16, 2010*
–	–	Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), a large urban transit system. *March 4, 2010*	–	–	–

[1]Not an acronym.
[2]Interviewee was affiliated with both organizations.
[3]Known as STEP (Success Through Engagement and Partnership).

Table 6 Missouri interview summaries.

Interview Topic Area	Meramec Regional Planning Commission *A rural regional planning commission*	Mr. Goodcents Foundation[1] *A public interest group*	Mid-America Regional Council of Governments[1] *A nonprofit urban MPO*	Southeast Missouri Transportation Services *A non-profit general public transportation service*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Effective; coordination did not exist prior to the plan.	Effective	Effective	Effective; aided in the marketing of services.
Role in Coordination Plan Development	Lead; supported by local transit providers; funding for planning process provided by state DOT.	Supporting; collected and analyzed data for local MPO, provided other research assistance.	Lead; supported by local universities, non-profits; plan developed as a part of Outlook 2040: Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan.	Supporting; reviewed plans provided by five regional planning commissions and participated in stakeholder outreach events.
Plan Development	In-house	In-house	In-house	N/A
Perceived Coordination Plan Results	Created a greater awareness of the need for transit services and transit funding.	Contributed to the understanding of all of the components of the local human services transportation system.	Developed a constructive dialogue between the public and private nonprofit and for-profit stakeholders.	Coordination process has enabled the organization to promote their activities.
Grant Programs Utilized	5316, 5317	5316, 5317	5316, 5317	5310, formerly had 5316
Project Identification, Prioritization, and Selection	Prioritization and selection is done at the state level, but locally the main priority is on the continuation of existing services.	All project applicants required to demonstrate how their project fits into the Coordination Plan.	All project applicants required to demonstrate how their project fits into the Coordination Plan.	N/A
Perceived Project Continuation Needs	Once the grants are expended, there is no way to continue services.	Finding a local match has never been an issue for local organizations.	Need sustainable funding sources to meet growing service demands.	When a local JARC match was lost in 2006, services funded by JARC ended.
Major Concerns Expressed	▪ The funding is very limited, so the projects do not reach many new populations. ▪ Difficulties in meeting strict grant requirements.		Older existing agencies have had difficulty in meeting the requirements for NF.	The organization lacks the capacity and resources to meet current demand.
Desired Changes Expressed	Would like to stay involved in the prioritization and outcomes of funded projects.	Use the same process and criteria for both JARC and NF.	Plan can be improved by educating stakeholders about its relation to other plans.	The plan needs to apply to non-FTA human services transportation grants.

[1]The interviews of Mr. Goodcents Foundation and the Mid-America Regional Council of Governments were conducted by interviewing one person who is affiliated with both organizations.

Table 7 Ohio interview summaries.

Interview Topic Area	Licking County Area Transportation Study *A small urban MPO east of the Columbus metropolitan region*	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Council *A small urban MPO in Northwestern Ohio*	Delaware Area Transit Agency (DATA) *A rural transit agency north of the Columbus metropolitan region*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Ineffective; redundant with coordination mechanisms already in place and no JARC or NF grant projects have been realized.	Effective; identified existing local coordination that most were unaware of, and illustrated possibilities for more coordination.	Effective; there were no prior attempts at coordination and the need for transportation coordination to manage high growth in demand was crucial.
Role in Coordination Plan Development	Lead; local transit board coordination sub-committee assisted.	Lead	Lead; developed in conjunction with a group of 10 key stakeholders.
Plan Development	In-house; consultant assistance was offered by the state, but not used.	In-house	Consultant led; consultant services paid for by the state DOT.
Perceived Coordination Plan Results	The region already had a strong coordination process in place prior to the plan, but relationships were strengthened.	Helped non-profit and government agencies better understand each organization's funding sources.	A new group of coordination stakeholders, the Transportation Collaborative, was created to oversee coordination efforts.
Grant Programs Utilized	5310	5316, 5317	5316, 5317
Project Identification, Prioritization, and Selection	Through their stakeholder involvement process and surveys of the general public and relevant agencies, they developed a set of prioritized project types.	Priority projects identified through extensive qualitative and quantitative analysis of current services and gaps in the Coordination Plan.	The Transportation Collaborative prioritizes projects based on the needs identified in the Coordination Plan.
Perceived Project Continuation Needs	N/A	Local match funding difficult to find.	County will continue to fund plan updates and provide matching funds.
Major Concerns Expressed	▪ There is no local matching funding available. The region did have a single NF application that they would like to submit, but they cannot find the required matching funds. ▪ Nothing new was learned in developing the Coordination Plan. ▪ 5310 vehicle inventory in the plan has made it appear that there are excess vehicles; however, that is not true and it has made it impossible to get new 5310 vehicles.	▪ Local matching requirements are difficult to meet. ▪ Time and funds were wasted translating materials into Spanish; in Allen County there isn't a community needing the translated materials.	There needs to be a special focus within NF, or in another grant program, on meeting the needs of seniors that are not disabled, but prefer not to drive. This population is a rapidly growing portion of the users of DATA's system.
Desired Changes Expressed	Increase the federal match to 80-90%.		None. The agency hopes that the program is continued.

Table 8 Pennsylvania interview summaries.

	Town & Country Transit *A rural transit agency in Armstrong County*	STEP, Inc. *A rural non-profit in Lycoming and Clinton Counties*	Lycoming County Planning Commission *An MPO*	SEPTA *A large urban transit agency serving the Philadelphia region*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Effective; plan process illuminated service gaps and brought together stakeholders.	Effective; provides a place for comprehensive discussion of needs and program planning.	Effective; the plan enhanced their ability to expand services in a strategic way.	Ineffective; coordination already existed, and SAFETEA-LU reduced their JARC funding.
Role in Coordination Plan Development	Lead	Supporting; the local MPO leads the process.	Lead; local transit stakeholder advisory board reviews.	Supporting; local MPO is the lead.
Plan Development	In-house	N/A	In-house	In-house
Perceived Coordination Plan Results	Deepened relationships with other government agencies and community non-profits, improving coordination.	Improved relationship between non-profits and the government sector.	Eliminated the duplication of services.	Redundant with existing coordination process and plan, no new coordination achieved.
Grant Programs Utilized	5310, 5316	5316	5310, 5316	5316, 5317
Project Identification, Prioritization, and Selection	▪ The Coordination Plan identified a gap in late-night service to the local hospital. A JARC grant was used to add this service to the hospital, leading to a consistent ridership increase on this route. ▪ The plan identified a need for a targeted effort to involve disabled users of transit and paratransit services in the decision-making process through a standing advisory council.	The organization prioritizes projects based on where they anticipate employment growth.	▪ The transit advisory board aids the agency in project prioritization. ▪ Preference is given to applications from agencies already in the coordination system; applications for non-coordinated system agencies must prove why their services are not redundant with the coordinated system.	▪ The agency submits their list of needs to the MPO's Human Services Committee that scores and ranks all applications. ▪ Applications recommended by the MPO's Human Services Committee are then considered by the MPO's Board of Directors for final selection. The final list is returned to the agency for submission to FTA.
Perceived Project Continuation Needs	Persons with Disabilities program has ongoing funding; the state provides 85 percent of the funding, and the agency the remaining 15 percent.	All of the projects have become self-sustaining after the grant money was expended.	State provides grant matches, so no local funding is needed.	JARC projects selected are sustainable, and matched by state funding. NF used only for capital projects.
Major Concerns Expressed	Lack of local matching funds.	Need to consolidate public meetings.	Success of the programs is difficult to quantify.	Agency's role as a direct recipient is burdensome.
Desired Changes Expressed	Eliminate local match requirements.	Would like advanced notice of when the grants are due, and greater financial support for the grant application administrative work.	Desires standardized performance measures to reduce time spent on performance evaluation but ensures that performance is well tracked.	Agency wants the MPO to become the direct recipient or to eliminate all sub-recipients and have all applicants apply directly to FTA or PennDOT.

Table 9 South Carolina interview summaries.

Interview Topic Area	Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments (SLRCOG) *An RPO*	Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG) *An RPO*	Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) *A small urban MPO and regional planning organization*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Modest; planning is secondary to availability of funds. Providers do not see benefit of planning.	Good; funds and the planning process have brought new credibility to planning efforts.	Modest; planning has brought improved coordination, but providers are skeptical of mandated requirements.
Role in Coordination Plan Development	Lead	Lead	Lead as both a regional planning organization and MPO, in cooperation with transit agency.
Plan Development	One of the first plans developed in the state. All planning now done in-house.	One of the first plans developed in the state. All planning now done in-house.	Working to upgrade with more information; scoping study to identify needs and resources.
Perceived Coordination Plan Results	Effective in bringing together stakeholders and ensuring coordination.	Already had established stakeholders; only minor process changes to meet federal requirements.	Improved, on-going coordination is seen as a real benefit of the coordinated planning process.
Grant Programs Utilized	5310 only to date. Section 5316 applications have been rejected.	5310, 5316, and 5317	5310, 5316, and 5317. Section 5316 and 5317 received both through state and as a direct recipient.
Project Identification, Prioritization, and Selection	▪ Priority is funding contracted service operations. ▪ Local prioritization often overruled at state and federal level. Would like to see greater weight given to local priorities.	▪ Priority is funding contracted service operations. ▪ Providers must coordinate services and provide transportation to any customers, or receive only the lowest priority from LSCOG.	CMCOG focuses on short-term capital projects, largely vehicle procurement.
Perceived Project Continuation Needs	Affected by local cutbacks. Would like to see a funding process that takes into account existing conditions and factors in allocating funds, i.e., allowing greater costs per passenger mile in rural areas.	Local match difficult to identify and services are being cut back. One urban connection just had Saturday service eliminated, leading to the loss of jobs by some customers.	Providers are responsible for local match, limiting them to small, short-term projects.
Major Concerns Expressed	Inability to use federal funds from different sources (e.g., Health and Human Services, Veteran's Affairs) along with FTA grants due to different timelines and processes.	Lack of timeliness and flexibility in federal funding process is tying up needed funds. Feel state process does not take into account local conditions.	Little information collected to date on performance and outcomes of projects. CMCOG plans to improve this, but would like federal guidelines.
Desired Changes Expressed	▪ Combine separate program requests into a larger whole, i.e., disabled to work. ▪ Performance measures that focus on outcomes and results, along with an application and program monitoring process tied to those measures.	▪ Would like coordination and cooperation at the local level to be rewarded. ▪ State needs more guidance from FTA in making funds flexible and further enabling coordination.	A partial programmatic distribution of funds, i.e., by needs population, would provide continuity of funding and sustain longer/larger projects, as well as giving more authority to local planners.

Table 10 Virginia interview summaries.

Interview Topic Area	Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) *An urban transit agency*	Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission *A rural planning district commission*	RADAR *A rural non-profit Human Services Transportation provider*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	"Very positive" outcomes for interagency collaboration and service provision.	"Big benefit" to the regional commission, plan requirements and the NF funding critical to improving human services transportation.	Difficult to assess at this time, as the plan has only been in place for 18 months.
Role in Coordination Plan Development	Lead; the local MPO and a smaller transit agency assisted.	Lead; a multi-organization working group created to guide plan development assisted.	Supporting lead; worked closely with public agencies and Virginia Tech Transportation Institute.
Plan Development	In-house	Mostly in-house; some consultant assistance provided by state.	Mostly in-house; some consultant assistance provided by state.
Perceived Coordination Plan Results	Coordination and knowledge sharing between HRT and the other agencies greatly improved.	Coordination among the partner organizations has improved.	Useful in raising awareness of the availability of grant funding (JARC, NF, and 5310).
Grant Programs Utilized	5310, 5316, 5317	5317	5310, 5316, 5317
Project Identification, Prioritization, and Selection	Projects selected based on their conformity with the goals, strategies, and project types in the Coordination Plan.	Plan goals used to prioritize strategies and guide program selection.	Projects selected based on Coordination Plan requirements.
Perceived Project Continuation Needs	▪ Most projects accepted (with one exception) do not involve starting operating services, due to the concern of a lack of ongoing funding. ▪ Exploring other funding sources for JARC/NF-supported programs.	▪ State provides the local match, but may not be able to continue to do so. ▪ Outside of state funding, there is no other source of local match funding available.	▪ Considering curtailing some 5310 funded services due to lack of local funding. ▪ It would be challenging to continue JARC and NF funded services without the grants.
Major Concerns Expressed	▪ Sustainability of funding. ▪ Difficulty of allocating NF funding.	Cannot continue current coordination program without NF funding.	Inability to meet JARC/NF matching requirements in future years.
Desired Changes Expressed	Combine JARC and NF, but dedicate a percentage of the funding for NF projects.	Eliminate publication requirement and the documentation of need for the plan.	Decrease the local matching requirement for JARC and NF.

Table 11 Washington interview summaries.

Interview Topic Area	*People For People* *A rural non-profit Human Services Transportation provider*	Puget Sound Regional Council *A large urban MPO*	Thurston Regional Planning Commission *A small urban and regional MPO*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Effective; increased coordination; JARC and NF funded programs successful.	Effective; plans increased coordination and programs funded by JARC and NF have been successful.	Effective; built upon previous local efforts, but federal requirements and funding created incentives for greater participation and coordination.
Role in Coordination Plan Development	Supporting; planning process lead by local MPO and regional transportation planning organization.	Lead; responsible for the plan, its updates, and the competitive process; not a grant administrator.	Lead; responsible for regional planning efforts and works closely with the state DOT.
Plan Development	Coordinates plan with two regional planning organizations, and also acts as a consultant to Indian tribes applying for other FTA funds.	Developed collaboratively with consultant assistance.	In-house with state assistance; also cooperatively with local transit agency.
Perceived Coordination Plan Results	Brought in new participants and created a new and more inclusive dialogue, leading to improved identification of needs and resources.	Increased integration of human services needs into transportation plans and programs, though the exact amount is hard to quantify.	Brought together wide range of groups: senior services, Indian tribes, food banks, community services organizations, and the United Way.
Grant Programs Utilized	5310, 5316	5316, 5317	5310
Project Identification, Prioritization, and Selection	▪ Local planning organizations rank projects and submit to the state, which does its own prioritization. ▪ State process and decisions are not always transparent and the outcomes sometimes appear inconsistent.	▪ Selection process prioritizes the continuation of existing projects over new programs or services. ▪ Concentration on information services and volunteer assistance programs.	▪ Process to date has concentrated on funding basic transportation services. ▪ Would like more programs for information and mobility management funded; requests to date have been denied.
Perceived Project Continuation Needs	Continuation of federal funds is critical. Matching funds come from state; local sources are not available.	Matching funds come from state, but local support is so great that funds could be raised locally.	Matching funds from state used. Would like to see use of in-kind benefits process simplified.
Major Concerns Expressed	▪ Public forums were unproductive vis-à-vis individual group meetings. ▪ Requirement that NF projects be new services is an impediment to NF use.	Change requirements and goals for NF have caused confusion.	▪ Need plans that coordinate rural-urban access for customers who need long-distance transportation to major cities (e.g., medical centers, other special services). ▪ Lack of integration of other federal programs with transportation, including human services, veterans' affairs, and Medicaid.
Desired Changes Expressed	Separate the selection and funding process for existing vs. new projects, with a 4-year re-competition for existing projects.	Simplify the reporting requirements for the administrative funds.	Require other federal programs to consider transportation and allow for transportation expenses in support of human services.

the respondents indicated that other federal funding for human services should be integrated into planning for human services transportation.

In Missouri, project prioritization is done at the state level, but locally applicants must show how their project fits into the Coordination Plan. In general, Missouri Section 5310 funding is strictly for vehicle procurement, while Section 5316 is directed to continuation of existing service over the provision of new service. The Section 5317 NF program opportunities have been challenging for Missouri to develop, but recent changes in eligibility (74 FR 19624, April 29, 2009) increase the likelihood that they will be able to make full use of federal funds available in the future. However, all agencies interviewed expressed concern about continuation of grant-funded service once the grants have been expended and also about finding local matches for the grants.

Ohio. Agencies in Ohio reported mixed opinions on whether they felt the Coordination Plans were effective. In some parts of the state, coordination mechanisms were already in place, so the federal plan requirements duplicated existing efforts. In other areas, the creation of the plan resulted in a better understanding between government and non-profit agencies or represented a first attempt at coordination.

Ohio agencies utilize all types of funding: Section 5310, 5316, and 5317, although some parts of the state have not been able to secure any JARC or NF funds and rely solely on the 5310 funding. Throughout the state, 5310 funds are used only to purchase vehicles for human services non-profits. The biggest concern of Ohio agencies, and one of the reasons for their lack of use of the JARC and NF grant programs, is that local funds for the match have been unavailable. In only one community interviewed were matching funds available at the local level. In addition, the respondents expressed concern that the Coordination Plan, when taken at face value, has decreased the availability of 5310 funds in Ohio due to a misunderstanding about the existing human services transportation fleets.

Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania has had a statewide human services transportation program for over 30 years, providing medical assistance transportation and reduced fares to elderly and disabled patrons. However, agencies in Pennsylvania agreed that the coordinated planning required for FTA programs has been an effective tool in expanding human services transportation. In particular, the process of developing the Coordination Plan has improved relationships between all agencies involved, particularly between non-profits and the government sector.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is in its third year of JARC and NF applications, and has improved its capacity in coordinating submissions with regional planning commissions. Only in the first year of the NF program were allocated federal funds not fully expended, and PennDOT intends to ensure that all future FTA funds are applied for and used.

Within Pennsylvania, the DOT is the lead for project selection and prioritization, though applicants conduct local prioritization when submitting proposals. All local matching is also provided at the state level, though applicants are requested to demonstrate future self-sustainability. PennDOT focuses primarily on capital needs; projects that can become self-supporting and information technology (IT) projects are also strong candidates. Operating projects do not rank highly in Pennsylvania, and it appears likely that some current projects will face reduced funding in the future. Grantees' concern over the continuity of funding for operating projects also reduces applications in the state.

South Carolina. Development of human services transportation has only taken place in South Carolina over the last decade, stemming from a state legislature initiative in 1998. Coordination Plans were developed by the 10 Regional Councils of Government (COGs) in the state with consulting assistance provided by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT). SCDOT continues to play a central role in human services transportation, completing and filing the FTA grant requests on behalf of the regional COGs once the latter have provided their Coordination Plans and prioritized requests for funding.

The Coordination Plan development is acknowledged as having significantly improved the coordination of human services transportation within each region of the state; however, the availability of funds is clearly the driving force for this planning. Regional COGs play a dominant role in human services transportation, with most FTA funding being used to contract transportation services. In rural areas respondents felt that there is little scope for involvement in the planning process by transportation providers; human services agencies participate in the planning primarily to demonstrate their need for services. In urban areas the human services providers have more capabilities, but respondents indicated these providers are also wary of federal requirements and protective of their current roles and processes. Accordingly, the local and regional human services agencies interviewed perceive that only minor benefits come from the required federal planning process.

Virginia. The Virginia organizations interviewed view the required Coordination Plans as highly effective, bringing together new participants and providing new services to customers. Development of the plans has required assistance, which has been obtained from academia as well as from the state.

In Virginia, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has supplied some local match, but continuing projects must find local match on their own. Respondents expressed concern over the sustainability of local funds for many projects, leading to a bias toward capital projects rather than operating assistance in grant proposals for Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 funding in the state. The agencies interviewed believe that the requirements for NF and JARC projects, and the dim forecast for local match, is leading to many projects being scaled back and proposals not being submitted. Accordingly, Virginia is facing challenges in being able to apply for allocated Section 5316 and 5317 funding.

Washington. Washington is another state in which there was strong pre-existing human services transportation planning across the state. Agencies in Washington have been swift to adopt federal planning requirements, and the state in turn now requires that similar plans be developed and submitted in applying for state grants. Respondents felt that the new Coordination Plans have been effective in improving inter-agency coordination and in helping the state to make full use of available JARC and NF funds.

Washington State has a formal prioritization process, with both local rankings and independent state rankings. As in other states, continuation of existing projects generally takes precedence over funding new projects. This factor limits the applicability

of NF funds in Washington given the federal requirements that these grants must be used for new services. Though the state provides all local match funding, respondents are concerned about continued funding for projects when annual re-competition for the funds takes place.

Cross-State Comparison of Interview Results

While Tables 6–11 provide a good overview of the responses within each state, Table 12 shows a cross-state comparison highlighting some of the key differences between the states. It is important to note that the information shown in Table 12 and described in the following sections is based on generalizations made about each state that were derived from the four or five interviews conducted in each state.

Perceived Effectiveness of Plans. One key finding that was fairly consistent across all six states interviewed is that, on the whole, all found the Coordination Plans to be effective. While some states had

Table 12 Cross-state comparison.

Interview Topic Area	Missouri	Ohio	Pennsylvania	South Carolina	Virginia	Washington
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Effective; high-level coordination did not exist prior to the plans.	Mixed; an MPO with just three staff members reported the plan was redundant with local efforts and burdensome; a slightly larger MPO reported the plans effective and a good exercise, as did a rural transit agency.	Effective plan process illuminated service gaps and brought together stakeholders from rural areas that lacked prior attempts at coordination. However, in one urban area studied, the new Coordination Plans were redundant with existing Coordination Plans.	Largely effective at bringing in all stakeholders and encouraging participation. However, benefits of planning viewed as secondary to need for funds; local providers do not see any results or significant value added from planning process.	Effective; planning process allowed regions to build strategically off of previous local coordination studies.	Effective; increased coordination; JARC and NF funded programs successful.
Plan Development	▪ In-house ▪ Rural: State DOT provided funding. ▪ Urban: General planning funds used.	State DOT offered consultant help to rural areas, and while some planning lead organizations took advantage of this, not all did.	In-house	• In-house • In the initial phase, consultants were hired by the state and assigned to each region. Consultants seen as invaluable in providing expertise and federal experience.	▪ Rural: State provided funds, consultant assistance, but some in-house work was also done. ▪ Urban: In-house	▪ Rural: Developed with state assistance. ▪ Urban: Developed collaboratively with consultant assistance.
Perceived Coordination Plan Results	▪ Enhanced relationships between human services transportation providers in the public and private for-profit and non-profit sectors. ▪ Due to the limited amount of funding available, the focus is on continuation of services, so new populations or service areas are not reached.	▪ Relationships between public and private organizations strengthened. ▪ However, in at least one case, services did not improve.	▪ Deepened relationships with other government agencies and community non-profits, improving coordination. ▪ Improved relationship between non-profits and the government sector. ▪ An urban transit agency reported that the Coordination Plan was redundant with existing coordination framework.	▪ Have increased visibility of human services transportation needs with county and state officials. ▪ Coordination has led to better information on and use of transportation resources by all providers and customers.	▪ Rural: Built on coordination efforts began prior to plan. ▪ Urban: Increased inter-agency understanding.	▪ Increased integration of human services needs into transportation plans and programs, though the exact amount is hard to quantify. ▪ Brought in new participants and created a more inclusive dialogue, leading to improved identification of needs and resources.
Indication of Redundant or Burdensome Elements of Plan Development	It is difficult but necessary to get all of the stakeholders involved in the planning process.	▪ Data collection for plan. ▪ Required public meetings. ▪ Spanish translation.	▪ Need to consolidate public meetings. ▪ For the urban transit agency interviewed, serving as the direct recipient was problematic; the agency expends too much effort and time aiding sub-recipients and doesn't like serving as a "mini state DOT."	▪ Planning administration not seen as burdensome, though needs improvement. ▪ Most significant issue has been state and federal overruling of priorities developed by local officials in cooperation with their state legislators. Adversely affects political support for planning process.	Prioritized project types identified in the plan by group consensus.	▪ Changes in requirements and goals for NF have caused confusion. ▪ Public forums were unproductive vis-à-vis individual group meetings. ▪ Requirement that NF projects be new services an impediment to NF use.

Table 12 (Continued)

Interview Topic Area	Missouri	Ohio	Pennsylvania	South Carolina	Virginia	Washington
Project Identification, Prioritization, and Selection	▪ Rural: Prioritization and selection is done at the state level. ▪ Urban: Applicants required to demonstrate how their project fits into the Coordination Plan.	Prioritized project types identified in the plan by group consensus and data collection efforts.	Projects prioritized on where they expect a growth in demand or where a gap in service has been identified.	▪ Almost all funding in rural areas used to contract transportation services through RFP process. ▪ Regional Coordination Plans submitted to state DOT, which completes federal grant applications. ▪ Urban plans have funded capital projects, but limited to small/short projects due to sustainability concerns.	▪ Some projects will end without further grant funding. ▪ Rural: State may not continue to provide matching funds, locals have no way to replace.	▪ Selection process prioritizes the continuation of existing projects over new programs or services. ▪ Local planning organizations rank projects and submit to the state, which does its own prioritization. ▪ State process and decisions are not always transparent, and the outcomes sometimes appear inconsistent.
Perceived Project Continuation Needs	Grant funding sustainability is crucial to project continuation.	Without grant funding, projects cannot continue in two of the three localities studied and a third had the local capacity to continue to fund projects without federal support.	State provides a stable source for matching grant funding for capital projects, but there is a lack of local grant matching funds for operating projects.	Local match required, and recipients are considering cutbacks in service.	▪ Concern about continuing programs without grant funding. ▪ Loss of match funds could cause a problem for continuation of services.	▪ Continuation of federal funds is critical. Matching funds come from state; local sources are not available.
Perceived Impediments to Utilizing the Grant Programs	Lack of local matching funds.	Small urban/rural areas cannot meet the matching requirements.	A lack of awareness about what NF could be used for slowed its initial adoption, but that issue is now resolved.	Inability to apply for or use funds from multiple sources, both FTA and across federal government, i.e., Health and Human Services.	▪ Lack of understanding about what types of programs qualify for NF. ▪ Lack of local matching funds.	▪ Confusion around the changing NF requirements. ▪ Requirement that NF projects be new services.
Source(s) of Matching Funds	▪ Local governments ▪ Local organizations	▪ No source for matching funds for one region studied. ▪ Dept. of Education and Dept. of Energy funds ▪ Transit agency funding provided locally by the jurisdiction.	State	▪ Provided by local governments in rural areas. ▪ Still some political resistance to using government funds for transportation services. ▪ Urban providers must come up with local match on their own.	DOT provides matching funds for small urban and rural areas. Large urban areas must use local matching funds.	State
Performance Measures	▪ Number of people and communities served ▪ Ridership ▪ Jobs actually accessed compared with projections	▪ Levels of service measures for a number of operational variables ▪ Ridership	▪ Ridership ▪ Customer satisfaction surveys	▪ Collect standard service indicators. ▪ Primary budget measure is cost per passenger mile, which is challenging to manage over the year due to changing customer base and needs.	Data collected on grant funded project performance, but no overarching performance review.	Performance data (including some previously external) now consolidated.

Table 12 (Continued)

Interview Topic Area	Missouri	Ohio	Pennsylvania	South Carolina	Virginia	Washington
Major Concerns Expressed	▪ Changing NF requirements caused confusion. ▪ Funding is very limited, projects don't reach new populations or meet demand for services. ▪ Different application processes and funding at the federal level for human services transportation funds and FTA funds create extra work, even though these funds will all benefit the same projects.	▪ 5310 vehicle inventory in the plan has made it appear that there are excess vehicles. However, that isn't true and it has made it impossible to get new 5310 vehicles. ▪ Time and funds were wasted translating materials into Spanish when not all communities need the translated materials.	▪ Eliminate local match requirements. ▪ Would like advanced notice of when the grants are due, and greater financial support for the grant application administrative work.	▪ Lack of funding flexibility; need ability at both state and local level to re-direct as needs change. ▪ Lack of transparency in project prioritization and selection for funding process at state and federal level. More visibility needed to improve political commitment to process. ▪ Faster process from application to grant approval. Currently takes up to a year.	Increase the federal share for the JARC and NF matching requirements.	▪ Simplify the reporting requirements for the administrative funds. ▪ Provide funds for technical and mobility management projects.
Desired Changes Expressed	▪ Would like to stay involved in the prioritization and outcomes of funded projects. ▪ Use the same process and criteria for both JARC and NF. ▪ Plan can be improved by educating stakeholders about its relations to other plans. ▪ The plan needs to apply to non-FTA human services transportation grants.	▪ Increase the federal share for the JARC and NF matching requirements. ▪ Modify the NF program to have a more explicit focus on the needs of seniors that do not have physical disabilities but do not feel comfortable driving.	▪ In urban areas, make the MPO the direct recipient or eliminate all sub-recipients and have all applicants apply directly to FTA or the state DOT. ▪ Standardized performance measures would reduce time spent on performance evaluation but ensure that performance is well tracked. ▪ Eliminate local match requirements.	▪ Improve administrative coordination among federal funds for human services and for transportation to enable combined grants that reward collaboration and innovation. ▪ Benchmarks that look at both existing conditions (and allow for greater challenges of rural areas) and that are outcome-based. Reward good performance. ▪ Partial programmatic distribution of funds to provide sustainability for longer/larger projects and to enable greater local authority.		▪ Separate the selection and funding process for existing versus new projects, with a 4-year re-competition for existing projects. ▪ Integrate other customers, including veterans, domestic violence victims, and other customer groups in need.

individual agencies that reported mixed or negative feelings about the plan requirement, the overall assessment by all states interviewed was positive. This support for the plans was a bit surprising given that three of the six states interviewed did not consider the plans to be effective, based on their responses to the online survey.

Plan Development and Costs. The process used to develop the Coordination Plans varied across the states. Except for Washington State, all agencies did some combination of in-house plan development along with the use of consultants, and in some cases the level of assistance used by the agencies varied by whether the agency was in an urban or rural area. In addition, many local agencies had a difficult time quantifying the Coordination Plan development costs, particularly if the plan was developed in-house and the main expense was staff time. Often the best cost estimate available was an estimate of the number of staff people or the percentage of a person or team's time devoted to the Coordination Plans. As a result, the overall costs associated with the development of the Coordination Plans at the local level vary significantly in level of detail, ranging from $10,000 to $85,000 or one to six staff members working on all aspects of the human services transportation grants, including Coordination Plans, sub-recipient agreements, contracts, legal, and engineering.

Perceived Coordination Plan Results. Most of the states interviewed emphasized improved relationships between public and private agencies as a result of the Coordination Plan, particularly Missouri, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington indicated that the plans built upon existing co-

ordination that they were already doing regarding human services transportation. Finally, many of the states noted either that they believe human services transportation did not necessarily improve because of the plan, or it was difficult to tell if it had. One reason for this was the respondents' concern for the lack of associated funding and the lack of desire by most states to use available funds to establish new services, for fear of not being able to continue funding them when the grant money ran out. The Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Virginia DOTs all indicated that their preferred projects do not include new operating services.

Indication of Redundant or Burdensome Elements of Plan Development. There were a wide variety of issues raised regarding parts of the Coordination Plan or planning process that the states find redundant or burdensome. The challenges discussed by the respondents ranged from how projects are prioritized at the local versus state level to concerns about the public meeting and Spanish translation requirements. Some states felt that the administration of the plan is burdensome, and some did not; there was no real consensus between the states on this issue.

Project Identification, Prioritization, and Selection. A few states noted that while prioritization is done at the local level, the state makes the final decision on what to fund, taking away some of the control from the locals. Respondents indicated that this is done more often in rural areas for which the state DOT is the designated recipient for grant funds, whereas in the urban areas the designated recipient is more likely a local agency or government. Most states noted that the prioritization of projects is based on gaps in service and where the proposed grant fits into the goals and objectives of the Coordination Plan.

Perceived Project Continuation Needs/Impediments to Using the Grant Programs. A common theme across all states interviewed was the lack of money available for local matches becoming a burden to the continuation of projects funded through the grant programs, as well as an impediment to using the grant programs in the first place. The lack of money for the local match seemed to be more of an issue in rural areas than it was in urban areas. Finally, the NF regulation that it be used for new service was also an impediment to using the Section 5317 grant program for many respondents, as these agencies did not feel that they would be able to continue to sustain new service when the grant money ran out.

Sources of Matching Funds. Sources of the local match requirement for the grant programs varied by the state interviewed and by area within these states, with some states providing the local match and some agencies relying on local governments or even local organizations. Often urban areas were required to find a local match, while the state provided the match in rural areas. Pennsylvania and Washington, however, were two states that provided the local match to recipients regardless of their location in the state. In a few creative cases, such as in Ohio, agencies used other federal grants to match the Section 5316 and 5317 FTA grant programs. Other states found it was not possible to coordinate between the human services transportation grant programs and other federal grant programs.

Performance Measures. Some states interviewed were more diligent than others in utilizing performance measures for determining grant funding allocations. Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina seemed to have the most consistent processes for utilizing performance measures. These states primarily use standard service indicators to gauge performance of the programs funded by the grants.

Major Concerns/Desired Changes Expressed. A consistent area of concern expressed by the states interviewed was the desire to remove the local match requirement due to the difficulty in identifying and sustaining local matching funds. Another common concern expressed was the lack of understanding regarding the requirements for NF grants. A few states also indicated that they are unhappy with the administrative process, including the length of time it takes to apply for and receive the grant money. In addition, some respondents indicated that they are uncomfortable about reviewing new projects and the continuation of old projects simultaneously, and that the grant awards do not necessarily account for project sustainability beyond the initial grant funding.

Numerous states interviewed expressed a desire to have the same criteria and rules for both JARC and NF, with some respondents suggesting that the programs be combined. However, one state, namely Ohio, suggested that rather than combine the two very similar programs, the NF program could be differentiated further to make it more applicable to seniors who do not have physical limitations that keep them from driving but simply do not feel comfortable doing so. Finally, several states expressed a

desire for more standardized, outcome-based performance measures to review the programs.

Responses by Agency Type

Overall Responses. Table 13 provides an overview of the survey results at a qualitative level for the different types of agencies interviewed. Following Table 13 is a more detailed review of the interview results by agency type.

State DOTs. While the state DOTs were not interviewed at the same level of detail as the other agencies within the state because their thoughts had been gathered via the Internet survey, some key points were gathered during the course of discussions with the state DOT representatives. The level of detail collected via telephone with the DOT varied depending on their availability and on whether they had information that they wanted to add above what they had already provided in the Internet survey. Detailed summaries of the telephone interviews held with the DOT representatives are located in Appendix C, and information on the DOTs that provided sufficient additional information is shown in Table 14.

In the allocation of Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grants, state DOTs primarily serve as intermediaries between regional or local planning organizations and transportation providers and the FTA. However, large urban MPOs and transit agencies develop their own plans and work directly with the FTA.

Among the states interviewed, most DOTs have gone beyond simply supervising the application and allocation process by also supplying technical assistance to regional planning organizations, particularly those in rural areas. In general, this assistance has been carried out with only limited use of consultants: Missouri DOT observed that initially consultants did not have more capability or information than the state, so DOT staff coordinated and facilitated workshops across the state. Once a state DOT has developed these capabilities, with or without using consultants, the tendency is to keep providing these advisory services. State DOTs also publicize the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs, contacting both transportation providers and human services organizations to inform them of the programs. In addition, the United We Ride (UWR) program was indicated as useful by several state DOTs, for both technical advice and occasional grants.

A critical aspect of the state DOT role is whether the agency also provides matching funds for the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grants. In Pennsylvania and Washington, the state DOT provides local matching funds, enabling the grant recipients to focus on the public outreach requirements for planning. In South Carolina, where the state DOT does not provide funding, the regional organizations spend a considerable part of their effort in raising matching funds, not always successfully. Pennsylvania notes that without the state matching funds, many local organizations would not even apply for Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grants.

The improvements made in human services transportation services have to be considered in the context of previously existing services operated in each state. Pennsylvania's programs date back some 30 years; accordingly, the DOT primarily views the purpose of Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 funding as providing better service to existing customers. In their oversight role, state DOTs have to carry out significant review of planning results, documentation, verification of capital and operating performance, and many other concerns. Standardization for federal projects helps the state DOTs to

Table 13 Overall comparison by agency/organization type.

Topic	State DOTs	Transit Agencies	MPOs	Local Non-Profit Transportation Providers
Believe the Coordination Plans are effective	●	●	>	●
Feel the cost involved is warranted	>	●	>	●
Feel plans result in wide range of funded programs	>	●	>	●
Find it easy to utilize the grant programs	●	>	>	>
Feel that the grant funding is sustainable	N/A	❍	❍	❍
Are able to reliably obtain matching funds	>	❍	❍	❍
Feel they have the capacity to conduct the Coordination Plans	>	●	●	N/A
Desire changes to requirements	●	●	●	●

● Strongly Agree > Partially Agree (Mixed Responses) ❍ Disagree

Table 14 Agency comparison table (state DOTs).[1]

Interview Topic Area	Missouri	Ohio	Pennsylvania	South Carolina	Virginia	Washington
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Effective; coordination did not exist prior to the plan.	Effective; prior to the Coordination Plans there was an "Ohio Coordination Program" that would have been discontinued had the federal requirements not been implemented.	Effective; expanded the work of local planning organizations that previously focused on highways.	Effective; gave state more leverage to work with human services transportation organizations.	Effective	Effective; improved coordination and the provision of human services transportation.
Plan Development	Used funds from a UWR grant to aid local organizations by conducting six workshops on plan development and providing $21,000 to each lead agency for plan development.	The DOT offered consultant assistance to small urban and rural areas.	The DOT provided funds for plan development from FTA and Federal Highway planning grants.	The DOT provides both technical assistance and planning funds.	For rural and small urban areas, the DOT provided consultant assistance.	Provides both planning funds and technical assistance on the grant applications, as well as all matching funds for accepted applications.
Types of Programs Funded by Grants	Preferred projects do not include new operating services.		Preferred projects do not include new operating services.	Many JARC programs, but few NF programs by comparison.	Preferred projects do not include new operating services.	
Perceived Impediments to Utilizing the Grant Programs	The "Beyond ADA" requirements of NF were an issue when they were first enacted, but are now well understood.		Grant sustainability doubts discourage applications; agencies reluctant to start services without reliable funding.	It is difficult for applicants to use NF and define new needs when many existing programs are underfunded.		
Source(s) of Matching Funds	Local	Local, the state does not provide any matching funds.	The DOT provides matching funds, but it is more willing to accept applications that procure local matching funds and are locally sustainable.	Local; the state purposely does not provide matching funds to ensure that all projects are sustainable on the local level.	DOT provides matching funds for small urban and rural areas. Large urban areas must use local matching funds.	
Reported Organizational Capacity Needs	The DOT was involved in the federal rule-making process for the plans, so they had enough in-house knowledge to provide direct assistance to the MPOs and RPCs.	5310, JARC, and NF each have an individual employee at the DOT that manages the grant process and aids local organizations with grant applications.	Reviewing plans is time consuming; some are hundreds of pages and there is no uniform plan template.	Used consultants during initial year, with one per region. Now performed in-house.		
Performance Measures			Federal performance reporting standards.		Developed at the local level.	
Major Concerns Expressed	Unsure if/how the plan requirements may change after reauthorization.	Anything that can be done to streamline the grant application process would be helpful.	It is hard for the MPOs and RPOs to "buy-in" to the process and its multimodal nature.	Identifying projects for NF that are new in approach is a challenge.		
Desired Changes Expressed	Combine 5316 and 5317 into 5307 and 5311 as eligible activities in those programs.	A consolidation of 5310, JARC, and NF would be helpful from an administrative standpoint.	FTA should introduce uniform performance measures for JARC and NF.	Combine several of the existing grant programs into a single program.		

[1]The level of detail collected via telephone with the DOT varied depending on their availability and on whether or not they had information that they wanted to add above what they had already provided in the Internet survey.

focus on the key requirements that the FTA is seeking to meet.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs). Given the relative newness of the Section 5316 and 5317 programs, several organizations interviewed noted that in the initial stage there were many proposals; therefore, the initial identification, prioritization, and submittal preparation of project proposals was less than simple. Now in the subsequent phases, the preparation process has been smoothed out and the success of the programs can be better evaluated based on empirical information. Many planning organizations have developed formal processes by which to select and prioritize grant requests.

Most metropolitan and regional organizations interviewed were involved in human services trans-

portation planning prior to the new federal requirements; however, there is general, though not unanimous, agreement among those interviewed that the new rules on coordinated planning and the availability of the federal funds have been a significant boost to providing new human services transportation. In Virginia, the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission had documented the need for such services with approximately 100 NGOs, but only with the coordinated planning process and FTA funds was the service implemented.

Respondents indicated that initial development of Coordination Plans at the urban and regional level often required additional planning resources, whether state, academic, or private consultant. However, once the initial plans were developed, these planning organizations have been able to continue the management of the coordinated planning process using in-house resources, with occasional technical assistance from state or other government offices.

In contacting private and non-profit human services and transportation providers, urban and regional planning organizations often work with either an umbrella consortium or a local advisory council to conduct outreach. Several respondents believe that the participation of such groups makes some of the requirements for public meetings and publication of material redundant at the regional level, as the public's views have already been incorporated at the local level by the participating human services transportation organizations.

The requirement for formal documentation of need and the collection of data is a concern expressed by many urban and regional planning organizations interviewed. In Washington State, Puget Sound Regional Council has recently developed a new data warehouse to collect this information, and plans to make use of it in evaluating current services and planning new services. In contrast, in Virginia the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission does not have the capacity to collect such data, with most information during initial development and in projects to date collected anecdotally.

Tables 15, 16, and 17 highlight specific responses for each large urban MPO, small urban MPO, and RPO interviewed, respectively.

Table 15 Agency comparison table (large urban MPOs).

Interview Topic Area	Mid-America Regional Council of Governments *An urban MPO* *Kansas City, KS, and Kansas City, MO*	Puget Sound Regional Council *An urban MPO* *Seattle/Tacoma, WA*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Effective; brought about new public-private partnerships and forced some communities to give more consideration to public transportation in their plans.	Effective; plans increased coordination and programs funded by JARC and NF have been successful.
Plan Development	In-house	Developed collaboratively with consultant assistance.
Types of Programs Funded by Grants	Transportation program to help connect rural residents to jobs.	▪ A Mobility Management Plan for three counties. ▪ 211 telephone program centralizes all human services calls (not just transportation). ▪ Bus Buddy program to acquaint new users with the public transportation system. ▪ Shuttles for health care services and for JARC recipients.
Perceived Impediments to Utilizing the Grant Programs	Confusion/difficulties meeting NF requirements.	Confusion surrounding the change requirements of NF.
Source(s) of Matching Funds	Local organizations	State
Reported Organizational Capacity Needs	Plan developed as a part of Outlook 2040: Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan.	Plan development, updates, and grant applications plan are cyclical and can be managed with a schedule.
Performance Measures	For each program, the number of people served and the communities served are tracked.	Performance data (including some previously external) now collected.
Major Concerns Expressed	Older existing agencies have had difficulty in meeting the requirements for NF.	Changed requirements and goals for NF have caused confusion.
Desired Changes Expressed	Plan can be improved by educating stakeholders about its relationship to other plans.	Simplify the reporting requirements for the administrative funds.

Table 16 Agency comparison table (small urban MPOs).

Interview Topic Area	Licking County Area Transportation Study *A small urban MPO just north of the Columbus, Ohio, metropolitan region*	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Council *A small urban MPO in Northwestern Ohio*	Thurston Regional Planning Council *A small urban MPO in Western Washington State*	Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) *A small urban MPO in South Carolina*	Lycoming County Planning Commission *A small urban MPO in Pennsylvania*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Ineffective; redundant with coordination mechanisms already in place and no JARC or NF grant projects have been realized.	Effective; identified existing local coordination that most were unaware of and identified possibilities for more.	Effective; built upon previous state efforts, but federal requirements and funding created incentives for greater participation and coordination.	Modest; planning has brought improved coordination, but providers are skeptical of mandated requirements.	Effective; the plan enhanced their ability to expand services in a strategic way.
Plan Development	In-house; consultant assistance was offered by the state, but not used.	In-house; local transit provider and non-profits provided ongoing input.	In-house with state assistance; also cooperatively with local transit agency.	Working to upgrade with more information; scoping study to identify needs and resources.	In-house
Types of Programs Funded by Grants	Replacement 5310 vehicles for non-profits.	Fixed route service between the cities of Lima and Delphus and between a rural town and Lima.	Operating support for a rural community connector is primary program.	Focus on short-term capital projects, largely vehicle procurement.	Used JARC to expand service to shifting employment centers in outlying communities that lack access to fixed-route transit.
Perceived Impediments to Utilizing the Grant Programs	A complete lack of matching funds.	Difficulty in identifying local matching funding.	Lack of flexibility in considering creative proposals.	Concern over unsustainability of funding. Inability of local providers to find local match.	None provided.
Source(s) of Matching Funds	None	Depts. of Energy, Education funds	State, Tribal Governments	Done by providers, CMCOG not involved.	State provides for capital, but not operating projects.
Reported Organizational Capacity Needs	Staff had the expertise to do the plan, but with a staff of only three people the plan development took a significant amount of organizational resources over the course of a year.	Staff had the capacity to do the Coordination Plan without adding an undue burden on the agency. Over $37,000 in federal funding was used to develop the plan.	Staff has capability to develop Coordination Plan and submit grant requests to state. State prioritizes requests and submits combined applications to FTA.	Staff has capability to conduct planning and is conducting several efforts to improve outreach, collect more data, and better identify needs and resources.	Not a concern.
Performance Measures	Not used.	Ridership.	Trips provided, cost per trip.	Not used.	No performance measures are currently in place; the degree of success for each project is difficult, and too time consuming to attempt to quantify.
Major Concerns Expressed	▪ Nothing new was learned in developing the Coordination Plan. ▪ 5310 vehicle inventory in the plan has made it falsely appear that there are excess vehicles, making it impossible to get new 5310 vehicles.	▪ Local matching requirements difficult to meet. ▪ Time and funds were wasted translating materials into Spanish unnecessarily.	▪ Would like more programs for information and mobility management funded. ▪ Lack of integration of other federal programs with transportation, including human services, Veterans' Affairs, and Medicaid.	Little information collected to date on performance and outcomes of projects. CMCOG plans to improve, but would like federal guidelines.	Success of the programs is difficult to quantify.
Desired Changes Expressed	Increase the federal match to 80-90%.	Decrease the proportion of local match required to access grants.	Require other federal programs to consider transportation and allow for transportation expenses in support of human services.	A partial programmatic distribution of funds, i.e., by needs population, would provide continuity of funding and sustain longer/larger projects, as well as giving more authority to local planners.	Desire standardized performance measures to reduce time spent on performance evaluation but ensure that performance is well tracked.

Table 17 Agency comparison table (rural planning organizations [RPOs]).

Interview Topic Area	Meramec Regional Planning Commission *A rural regional planning commission* *St. James, Missouri*	Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission *A rural planning district commission* *Culpeper, Virginia*	Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments (SLRCOG) *A rural planning organization in South Carolina*	Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG) *A rural planning organization in South Carolina*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Effective; coordination did not exist prior to the plan.	"Big benefit" to the regional plan requirements, and the NF funding is critical to improving human services transportation.	Has improved coordination and allowed common needs and resources to be identified, but secondary to simply having funds available.	Funds and planning process have brought new credibility to the work of LSCOG and of the need for human services transportation.
Plan Development	In-house.	Mostly in-house; some consultant assistance provided by state.	State assistance during initial development critical; state-funded consultants brought much expertise.	In-house, following initial development.
Types of Programs Funded by Grants	A taxi-to-work service, which ended when funding ceased. Developed a feasibility study for a shuttle to a military base that resulted in a private operator developing the service.	Mobility Management program funded two part-time positions: Researcher/Grant Administrator and Public Liaison who assists individuals needing transportation services.	Funds to date almost wholly used to contract transportation service. One grant application for a volunteer assistance program is in development.	Funds used primarily to contract transportation services. Mobility Management program funded with 5316. Using some 5316/5317 money to fund new scheduling software and Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL).
Perceived Impediments to Utilizing the Grant Programs	Concerns about the sustainability of the grant programs.	Dependent on the state providing local match, and that may end.	Local match a challenge. Inability to apply for combined grants (i.e., using both Section 5310 and 5317 for one project).	Lack of timeliness and flexibility in process. Time it takes from application to funds is too long. Needs change too quickly.
Source(s) of Matching Funds	None identified.	State	Local	Local
Reported Organizational Capacity Needs	The planning process is not a problem. Plan development costs (approx. $20,000) provided by state DOT.	Could not do the documentation of need because they lacked the data collection and analysis capability.	Not an issue once state assisted in initial development.	Not a concern.
Performance Measures	Number of people served.	The Mobility Management program's Researcher/Grant Administrator now collects and integrates external data.	Basic service indicators collected. Would like to see more outcome-based measures and comparisons against baseline of service and infrastructure.	Collect basic service indicators and hope to use new technology to improve/expand to new indicators, e.g., wait time.
Major Concerns Expressed	▪ The funding is very limited, so the projects don't reach many new populations. ▪ Difficulties in meeting strict grant requirements.	Cannot continue current coordination program without NF funding.	Need better combination of federal programs, both transportation and human services, to enable coordinated funding and services to take place.	Need more transparency at state and federal level in project prioritization and approval decisions. Overruling of local officials' choices adversely impacts political support.
Desired Changes Expressed	Would like to stay involved in the prioritization and outcomes of funded projects.	Eliminate publication requirement and the documentation of need for the plan.	Collaboration and innovation at the local level should be rewarded with demonstration grants that can enable new efforts.	Faster, more flexible award process that is based more heavily on needs of regions and customers.

Transit Agencies and Other Government Providers. Transit agencies and other government providers of transportation services interviewed regard Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 as useful additions to other federal programs, enabling them to extend their services to human services customers specifically. In general, these agencies already had the capacity to apply for federal programs, and the development of the Coordination Plans for the human services transportation grants has been accomplished with few concerns. Similar to planning organizations, transit agencies work with consortiums of human services groups to develop Coordination Plans and conduct the necessary public outreach to stakeholders and customers.

The transit agencies interviewed concentrate on capital projects in applying for funding: vehicles, infrastructure, and technological improvements. In planning, their emphasis is on developing networks, sharing information, and coordinating plans for human services customers. Respondents felt the division between JARC, NF, and other funds adds extra work when many of the customers are similar. As a result, several respondents suggested that the application process for these programs could be combined into one, with a percentage of funding set aside for each specific purpose.

Local government transportation operators are dependent on government funding for operation. Local matching funds must therefore be provided by

the government, which respondents believe casts doubt on the future operation of some human services transportation projects. In today's financial climate, these agencies are concerned over the sustainability of funding, even while acknowledging that the FTA grants are intended for the development of new services rather than as ongoing operating subsidies.

Tables 18 and 19 highlight specific responses for each urban transit agency and rural transit agency interviewed, respectively.

Private and Non-Profit Organizations. Much of human services transportation is performed by non-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Typically these organizations are primarily human services providers, with transportation representing only one area of their broader operations.

Prior to the federal planning requirements for Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 funding, those NGOs providing human services transportation had pre-existing plans and networks of stakeholders involved in the development of services. However, there is general agreement among interviewees that the federal requirements and the funding attached to them have been instrumental in improving and expanding coordination. On the other hand, these NGOs also felt that federal planning coordination and administrative requirements are onerous, requiring much documentation. The Mr. Goodcents Foundation, a non-profit in Missouri, notes that the challenge for human services transportation is not a coordination problem; it's a capacity problem.

The NGOs interviewed have been able to take on the planning coordination task after some initial state or other agency assistance, and generally now have the internal capability to carry out the planning and public outreach required for grant submissions. However, they feel that these specific planning efforts remain challenging. NGOs have indicated that they find general public forums to be unproductive forms of outreach, and that collaboration with other human services' outreach efforts and interaction with specific stakeholders are more effective.

Lack of local matching funds is an issue for NGOs located in states that do not supply the local match. Some respondents indicated that apprehension over the sustainability of local matching funds has led to service reductions and decisions against applying for FTA grants.

Non-profits noted that the administrative costs of preparing grant applications are significant and

Table 18 Agency comparison table (urban transit agencies).

Interview Topic Area	Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) *An urban transit agency* *Hampton/Norfolk, VA*	Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) *An urban transit agency* *Philadelphia, PA*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	"Very positive" outcomes for interagency collaboration and service provision.	Ineffective; coordination already existed, and SAFETEA-LU reduced their JARC funding.
Plan Development	In-house	In-house
Types of Programs Funded by Grants	▪ Infrastructure improvements making bus stops more accessible to disabled persons. ▪ A 24-hour on-demand shuttle service for low-income workers. ▪ A Global Positioning System (GPS) for a senior center van fleet. ▪ Taxicab voucher pilot program. ▪ Travel Training program to acquaint new users with the public transportation system. ▪ Website Improvements.	▪ Travel instruction projects and workshops to acquaint new users with the public transportation system. ▪ Added late-night and weekend service to existing fixed-route service to serve those needing transportation to work.
Perceived Impediments to Utilizing the Grant Programs	There is a lack of understanding about NF among local non-profits.	There was an initial lack of understanding about what NF could be used for, but those issues have been resolved.
Source(s) of Matching Funds	Local organizations.	State provides for capital projects. Most operating projects must find a local matching source.
Reported Organizational Capacity Needs	Plan development led by HRT staff member with ADA expertise.	Agency finds it very difficult to assist and monitor sub-recipients, does not want to be a "mini state DOT."
Performance Measures	Data is collected on ridership or individuals reached by program.	Cost per passenger (all programs), new employment sites reached (JARC).
Major Concerns Expressed	▪ Sustainability of funding. ▪ Difficulty of allocating NF funding.	Agency's role as a direct recipient is burdensome.
Desired Changes Expressed	Combine JARC and NF, but dedicate a percentage of the funding for NF projects.	Agency wants the MPO to become the direct recipient or to eliminate all sub-recipients and have all applicants apply directly to FTA or PennDOT.

Table 19 Agency comparison table (rural transit agencies).

Interview Topic Area	Town & Country Transit *A rural transit agency* *Armstrong County, PA*	Delaware Area Transit Agency *A rural transit agency* *Delaware County, OH*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Effective. Plan process illuminated service gaps and brought together stakeholders.	Effective; there were no prior attempts at coordination and the need for transportation coordination to manage high growth in demand was crucial.
Plan Development	In-house	Consultant led; consultant services paid for by the state DOT.
Types of Programs Funded by Grants	▪ JARC used to fund a late-night bus service to the local hospital. ▪ Created a Persons With Disabilities (PWD) program, which includes a new advisory board for the transit board. The PWD program is now one of the agency's most successful, and its paratransit operations have experienced ridership increases.	▪ JARC used to fund a taxi voucher program to transport low-income individuals to and from work. ▪ NF used to fund a Mobility Management program that includes an integrated call center to connect human services transportation clients with the most appropriate service provider.
Perceived Impediments to Utilizing the Grant Programs	Lack of local matching funds.	None identified.
Source(s) of Matching Funds	State	Agency funds used.
Reported Organizational Capacity Needs	Staff members with planning expertise led the plan development.	Staff had the knowledge to oversee the plan development, but they did not have the required manpower; a consultant was used to do lead plan development.
Performance Measures	Ridership, customer satisfaction surveys.	No formal performance measures; the group of 10 key stakeholder organizations that oversaw the development of the plan will meet to assess programs.
Major Concerns Expressed	Lack of local matching funds.	There needs to be some special focus within NF or in another grant program on meeting the needs of seniors that are not disabled, but prefer not to drive. This population is a rapidly growing portion of the users of DATA's system.
Desired Changes Expressed	Eliminate local match requirements.	None; the agency hopes that the program is continued.

that they believe having a higher percentage of the grant available to offset such costs would be helpful.

In addition, a few human transportation services are now provided by for-profit private companies that have received FTA funds, either for procuring vehicles or in designing services. These private companies act as stakeholders in the coordinated planning process, but do not take the lead. They also perform some of the administrative tasks of grant application, but generally a local or regional government organization provides significant assistance in making the actual FTA grant application.

Table 20 highlights responses for each rural NGO interviewed. The only urban NGO interviewed was the Mr. Goodcents Foundation, whose findings were summarized in Table 15, Large Urban MPOs, because the interviewee for the Mr. Goodcents Foundation also represented the Mid-America Regional Council of Governments.

Summary of Comments Received from Telephone Interviews

Perceived Concerns/Issues with JARC and NF Grants. Few major concerns were expressed by respondents with the Section 5316 JARC program. Most of their comments were constructive, such as wanting to see a formula for distribution that looks at existing conditions, outcomes, and results rather than simply costs. The respondents felt that the key to this would include federal guidance on performance measures that would look beyond basic service indicators to consider the effectiveness of funded projects in promoting job sustainability and measuring the number of customers graduating from the need for JARC transportation. Some organizations interviewed would also like to be able to combine JARC and Section 5310 or 5317 funding, noting that disabled and elderly customers also need jobs.

Respondents believe that the relatively recent introduction of the Section 5317 NF program and the changes in requirements that have taken place (74 FR 19624, April 29, 2009) have caused some confusion among planning organizations and transportation providers. As experience with the program grows, they believe more applications are likely to be submitted. However, the current financial climate does not favor the introduction of new projects when support for existing programs is facing retrenchment, so while longer term growth is likely, growth in Section 5317 requests is unlikely to be significant over the next several years.

Table 20 Agency comparison table (rural non-governmental organizations).

Interview Topic Area	Southeast Missouri Transportation Services *A non-profit general public transportation service* *Fredericktown, MO*	STEP, Inc. *A rural non-profit* *Lycoming and Clinton Counties, PA*	*People For People* *A rural non-profit Human Services Transportation provider* *Yakima, WA*	RADAR *A rural non-profit Human Services Transportation provider* *Roanoke, VA*
Perceived Efficacy of the Coordination Plans	Effective; aided in the marketing of services.	Effective	Effective; increased coordination and JARC and NF funded programs were successful.	Difficult to assess at this time; the plan has only been in place for 18 months.
Plan Development	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Types of Programs Funded by Grants	▪ Operate 5310 vehicles for sheltered workshops. ▪ Formerly had a JARC-funded program. When the program was discontinued due to a lack of local match funding, thousands lost jobs.	Provides transportation to work for low-income workers.	A community connector that links nine jurisdictions and has provided access to health care and benefited low-income and shift workers.	▪ Taxi-cab vouchers. ▪ New fixed-route service to state services center. ▪ Two new demand-response programs, expansion of a third. ▪ Augmented paratransit funding.
Perceived Impediments to Utilizing the Grant Programs	Lack of local match funding.	None identified.	Requirement that NF projects be new services.	Lack of local match funding.
Source(s) of Matching Funds	None	None identified.	State	State
Reported Organizational Capacity Needs	Only reviewed the plans; has a working knowledge of the grants and how to apply.	Knowledgeable about the planning and grant process.	Working relationship with two local planning agencies existed prior to plan.	Contributed significantly to the plan, local university provided technical help.
Performance Measures	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Major Concerns Expressed	The organization lacks the capacity and resources to meet current demand.	Need to consolidate public meetings.	Public forums were unproductive vis-à-vis individual group meetings.	Inability to meet JARC/NF matching requirements in future years.
Desired Changes Expressed	The plan needs to apply to non-FTA human services transportation grants.	Would like advanced notice of when the grants are due and greater financial support for the grant application administrative work.	Separate the selection and funding process for existing vs. new projects, with a 4-year re-competition for existing projects.	Decrease the local matching requirement for JARC and NF.

Respondents indicate that Section 5317 grants appear to be less utilized by rural organizations. Several organizations noted that—given the generally lower level of services and other infrastructure for the NF customer target group in rural areas—they believe the opportunities to meet Section 5317 goals are much more challenging than for more urban and developed areas. In addition, respondents stated that some designated recipients have been unable to obligate all of their NF funding due to lack of awareness about what NF can be used for potential local recipients, or their inability to design programs to meet the NF criteria.

Several respondents noted that the changing NF requirements have inhibited local organizations from applying for the grant. There are other factors as well; one organization noted that NF projects are more difficult to identify in rural locations, where services often struggle to meet ADA requirements in the first place, making identification of useful projects beyond ADA challenging. In urban areas, they felt that this is less of an issue, as more improvements for disabled mobility and accessibility are possible at the boundaries of current services.

MATCH CONCERNS. In general, most local agencies interviewed reported some success in awarding JARC and NF grants, but were limited in how they could use the programs most often due to a lack of local matching funds. They indicated that both the newness of and changes in the programs have been issues in awarding, obligating, and expending JARC and NF funds.

The respondents' major concern for NF and JARC programs is meeting local match requirements in the future, even in states where this funding is provided by the state. Local communities can be constrained by a lack of local matching funds. In one Ohio community a complete lack of any local matching funds led to them being unable to submit any NF or JARC applications.

IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECTS. There is considerable demand among the target populations for JARC and NF, and the identification of new, useful projects continues. Some services by responding agencies have been implemented on a trial basis and found to be less successful than hoped, but they indicated that the cancellation of a few programs allows other worthy projects to be funded. Many organizations

also reported projects that have been more successful than projected.

TYPES OF PROJECTS. The interviewed applicants and recipients for JARC and NF generally have avoided new operating projects and concentrated on existing services, capital, and information projects. Recent projects introduced by the respondents include:

- Mobility Management programs
- Infrastructure improvements or limited information/educational projects, things that do not require ongoing operating funds.
- Travel Training programs to acquaint new users with the public transportation system.
- Taxicab vouchers
- Expanded late-night or 24-hour shuttle service for low-income workers, on-demand and fixed route.
- New shuttle services to medical facilities.

Planning Process. With regard to the planning requirements for Section 5316 and 5317 funding, interviewees generally considered the commitment for human services transportation planning to be time consuming, but comparable to most other political processes.

There was general agreement among respondents that the planning requirements for the three programs are very similar, and they believed that a combination of the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grants would make planning and administration easier for all concerned. It was also noted by respondents that Section 5310 and 5317 target the same customer base, which they believe makes them somewhat redundant. Missouri DOT even proposed that the Section 5316 program be incorporated into the Section 5307 and 5311 programs.

Missouri DOT noted that it distributes planning assistance funds for the development of the Coordination Plans as the plans are being developed, but it requires submission of a completed plan before the recipients receive their final planning grant installments. One organization noted that federal funds for human services (non-FTA) do not have stringent planning requirements attached to them, and they believe FTA human services transportation programs should be coordinated with such federal funding from other agencies. Inclusion of other organizations was also encouraged by those interviewed; in both Missouri and Virginia, Coordination Plans were developed with assistance from universities.

Program Management. Respondents feel that changes in federal requirements for funding, particularly in the Section 5317 program, have caused some uncertainty among applicants. While the less stringent requirements for Section 5317 will enable new projects to be developed for funding, the respondents expressed concern over the sustainability of such programs if federal requirements change once again.

However, it should be noted that those interviewed stated that the relaxation of Section 5317 requirements has led to new projects. Missouri DOT has found that rural areas in particular benefited from the changes, enabling more projects to be put forward. This is due to the differences between urban and rural providers; rural providers more commonly already offer flexible, demand-response service, so that new opportunities are few. In urban areas, new services beyond fixed-route transportation can be identified more easily.

There was general agreement by those interviewed that uncertainty in funding is a significant issue, both uncertainty of the federal funds and local matching funds. In Missouri, the non-profit group Southeast Missouri Transportation Services (SMTS) recounted an example of a successful service being terminated after the local match could no longer be met. In Virginia, the RADAR NGO is considering reductions in services funded by Section 5310 in anticipation of future local funding reductions. Given current finances for state and local governments, the agencies fear similar difficulties for organizations that must develop matching funds at the local or regional level.

Regarding the annual nature of federal program applications, one interviewee noted that project recipients like the 1-year timeframe as it eases the management of their own cash flow and operations. However, other recipients noted that this contributes to uncertainty about sustained funding, with one respondent suggesting a 4-year grant process for existing projects to ensure services will have sustainable funding.

Prioritization and Program Monitoring. The major issue impacting the identification and prioritization of projects for Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grant applications reported by interviewees is the issue of existing versus new services. Washington State providers noted an inherent bias in their selection process, with more points given to continuation of existing projects. Pennsylvania DOT makes a point

of looking at gaps in existing service, and project requests that fill those gaps receive priority.

Missouri DOT notes that it uses Section 5310 funding solely for vehicle procurement. Pennsylvania DOT also concentrates on capital funding projects, because operating projects require sustainable funding, yet Section 5316 and 5317 funds are not regarded as guaranteed by respondents.

The interviews revealed that prioritization is carried out somewhat differently among the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs. In Missouri, all prioritization is done at the state level. Pennsylvania DOT prioritizes all Section 5310 applications at the state level, but Section 5316 and 5317 applications are prioritized regionally and then reviewed by the state. In Washington State, projects are prioritized regionally; the state then conducts an independent prioritization, which may result in a different recommendation or grade for an application.

Quantitatively, relatively few interviewees mentioned performance measures playing a significant role in evaluating the effectiveness of projects. Standard indicators such as number of customers versus cost and service provided were mentioned, but were not used in any rigorous analysis. In part, respondents believe this is because customer-focused measures have been lacking; Pennsylvania DOT proposes that in the future a key measure of the success of JARC projects could be the number of riders reaching and keeping employment.

Coordination. There is widespread agreement among the interviewees that the planning requirements of the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs have been effective in developing new relationships and expanding the provision of human services transportation. Respondents talked of the coordination process bringing in new organizations and improving information among all participants about the resources available and the needs of customers. Several states noted having previous requirements, including Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Washington; however, federal specifications generally required greater outreach and coordination. In addition, Washington State now has state programs that make use of the same planning requirements as the federal programs.

Pennsylvania DOT commented that they believe the new programs have changed some of the focus of metropolitan and regional planning organizations from highway to transit. Respondents feel that mobility and accessibility have become important issues more generally, which encourages participation in human services transportation planning coordination.

Outreach efforts to the public vary by respondent. Many organizations interviewed make use of public forums, but some have been disappointed by the response, especially given the effort necessary to arrange these. For example, People For People in Washington State finds it more effective to participate in other forums that involve target audiences, such as workshops for senior citizens, health services, veterans, and other subjects or groups. Finally, a few interviewees noted that the requirement to translate the Coordination Plan into Spanish placed an unnecessary burden on them, given that they do not serve a significant Spanish-speaking population.

Success and Benefits of the Plans and Funds. Pennsylvania DOT noted that the largest benefit from human services transportation funding has been the ability to purchase new vehicles and expand service, because the state already had a well-developed human services transportation plan. Pennsylvania also noted that they believe most of the benefits are at the margins, including providing service later into the evening and route extensions. More importantly, the availability of the funding has allowed them to meet new needs and providers to test new services, continuing and expanding successful programs. However, it was noted that the emphasis placed on continuity and sustainability by most grant recipients minimizes flexibility to meet emerging needs and test new services.

Based on the interviews conducted, successful projects accomplished under Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 funding include:

- Sponsoring taxis for commuters without other means of transportation (JARC).
- Developing a plan for shuttle service to a military base, which led to a private operator implementing the service (JARC).
- Contracting with taxis for door-to-door demand response service to elderly and disabled (NF).
- Providing a new fixed-route service to a workforce development and state services center (NF).
- Purchasing a new bus for a workforce development board (JARC).
- Purchasing a GPS system to improve the coordination of demand-response service (5310).

- Improving website information on services available (NF).
- Developing a "Bus Buddy" program, to introduce elderly and disabled citizens to public transit (5310).
- Providing a demand-response service for return trips for hospital users, enabling them to arrive via fixed-route services for appointments but have flexibility for return trips given variations in appointment duration (5310).
- Creating Mobility Management programs to connect customers with services, providing information and collecting data (5310).
- Sponsoring volunteer-operated transportation services (5310).
- Providing bus stop accessibility improvements for wheelchair users (NF).
- Improving access to shopping for low-income customers (5310).

Many organizations commented that programs have been more successful than expected. Customer demand has been high; in the words of Town & Country Transit in rural Pennsylvania, ridership "has grown exponentially, far beyond what the state had projected." In addition, respondents indicated that human services transportation has also increased use of general mass transit, as customers can combine services that meet their needs. They also believe that improved information and greater familiarity with the transportation options available has also increased general transit ridership.

Some projects of the respondents have admittedly proved unsuccessful. They indicated that a year-long trial is usually sufficient to identify these, though some have been re-designed or placed under new management in an effort to make them more successful. In general, however, most projects implemented by those interviewed have become relatively permanent, in some cases being incorporated into fixed-route service or taken over by private operators.

Conclusions

Many general conclusions about the perceived success of the Coordination Plans, the level of effort that it takes to create them, the types of programs that are funded with the grant programs, and the concerns held by the interviewees are addressed throughout this document, particularly in the following sections: Cross-State Comparison of Interview Results, Responses by Agency Type, and Summary of Comments Received from Telephone Interviews. This section provides further comparison of the results of the interviews by pointing out some key contrasts between various agency types and reviewing some additional key themes that were found repeatedly during the course of the interviews.

Contrasts and Issues

Rural versus Urban. In general, the rural organizations interviewed appeared to be both more enthusiastic and more critical of the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs. This enthusiasm is due to the human services transportation these organizations can now provide to needy customers; in many cases there were no existing public transportation services prior to federal funds becoming available. At the same time, rural organizations are critical of the distribution of these funds because of their concerns that the higher cost of transportation in such areas—longer distances, dispersed customers and destinations, and little other infrastructure to support human services customers—may make rural human services transportation appear ineffective or inefficient. Rural organizations noted that they would like to see funding arrangements that take background or baseline conditions into consideration in distributing federal funds. Finally, because the state is often the designated recipient for the funds for rural areas, they feel their project prioritization is often undermined when the final decision on funding is made at the state level.

State DOTs versus Recipients. Grant recipients interviewed generally indicated they would like more transparency in the project prioritization and selection process at the state DOT level. Several respondents indicated that they felt the products of state decisions were challenging to understand or to explain to local officials involved in the local prioritization process. These respondents suggested that more guidance from FTA on the grant selection and prioritization process would be appreciated and would improve the understanding of all stakeholders in what federal priorities are and how grants match up with the purpose of the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs.

Finally, while three of the six state DOTs interviewed by the web-based survey indicated that they did not perceive a great benefit from the Coordination Plan requirements, most of the recipients interviewed felt differently. They felt that the plan development process resulted in a much more coordinated approach to the provision of human services trans-

portation and that the process yielded a more open line of communication, particularly between public and private agencies and service providers.

Planning Organizations versus Providers. There was concern expressed by some planning organizations that providers do not always see the benefit of coordinated planning efforts, given the distinction between the planning process and the grant approval and disbursement process. Those interviewed felt that federal guidance that strengthened the link between the planning process and the grants would be appreciated by both the planning organizations and the service providers; this could be accomplished by providing more technical advice, tying grant money to performance measures, and rewarding cooperative efforts.

Key Themes

Program Management. A general suggestion from those interviewed is that a federal grant process that is more transparent, timely, sustainable, and flexible would be beneficial. Planning organizations observed that the multiple levels of prioritization and project selection may interfere with transparency to local officials and stakeholders, which would adversely impact commitment and perceived benefits of the coordinated planning process. Respondents noted that the year it can take between grant application and receipt of funds also impacts the link between planning efforts and the projects. Annual competition for funding of long-term, ongoing projects is viewed by these agencies as redundant and wasteful; respondents indicated that distribution of funds on a longer schedule (such as funding for 4 years) or on a programmatic basis could be more effective for these types of projects. On the other hand, respondents also feel that needs do change, and that more flexibility should be allowed at the state and local levels to redirect at least portions of the grant money to meet emergent needs or redirect funds from projects that no longer need or cannot use the funding in a timely manner.

Performance Measurement. Many respondents felt that, optimally, some funding should be tied to performance measures, preferably those identified at the federal level to help improve the transparency and equity of federal grant distribution. These measures could include both consideration of the existing conditions and the backgrounds of areas, such as unemployment, senior/disabled population, and distribution of customers and destinations. Respondents also indicated that these performance measures could go beyond basic service indicators or cost data to be more results-oriented or outcomes-based. Respondents suggested that data could be collected on the success of projects in getting customers to the services they need and in the effectiveness of the providers in supplying these services against the baseline conditions.

Coordinated Planning. The respondents' support for performance measures and the perceived opportunity for an improved federal grant process come back to the perceived effectiveness of the coordinated planning process. These respondents believe that by using performance measures and data and linking federal funds to the results of this process, coordinated planning could make more use of quantitative information and link plans to results more closely. They believe that stakeholders making use of a performance-driven coordinated planning process would get even more out of the process of developing and working to implement the Coordination Plan.

CHAPTER 4 FTA GRANTS DATA

Under the SAFETEA-LU, FTA Section 5316 JARC and Section 5317 NF grant program funds are allocated to large urban areas and state DOTs by formula. In this chapter, the JARC and NF grant appropriations and obligations for the first 3 years of SAFETEA-LU, FY 2006 through FY 2008, are evaluated with data and reports available from FTA's website to help quantify any difficulties states and their grantees are having in selecting projects and obligating JARC and NF funds. This evaluation includes the comparison of annual appropriations to annual obligations, both at the program level and at the state level.

In both the JARC and NF grant programs, 60 percent of the funds are allocated to designated recipients in urbanized areas with populations over 200,000; 20 percent to state DOTs for urbanized areas under 200,000; and 20 percent to state DOTs for non-urbanized areas. Generally speaking, most of the designated recipients are transit agencies or organizations with established finance staff that understand and know the intricacies of drawing down allocated federal funds. Therefore, the primary focus of this summary is on how the states draw down and obligate the 40 percent of JARC and NF funds that

have been allocated to them. After states select service providers through a competitive process, states can either:

1. Transfer the claim on funds to a service provider and allow the provider to apply directly to FTA for program funds, which may expedite the time it takes for the provider to receive federal funding, or
2. Apply to FTA for the funds apportioned to it and pass through the funds to subrecipients serving small urbanized areas or non-urbanized areas.

Using data from the FTA website, FY 2006 and FY 2007 *FTA Statistical Summaries* (the *FY 2008 FTA Statistical Summary* was not available at the time of the analysis), and the U.S. Government Accounting Office's (GAO's) Report: *Progress and Challenges in Implementing and Evaluating the JARC Program* (May 2009), the following tables examine the portion of JARC and NF funds that have been appropriated to and obligated by the states. These tables help identify the extent to which states and their grantees are having difficulty obligating the appropriated funds before they expire, because these grants must be obligated within 3 years of appropriation. Any funds not obligated after 3 years will be reapportioned among all recipients in the next FY appropriations, e.g., lapsed FY 2006 funds are reapportioned as part of FY 2009.

Summary of JARC and NF Programs

Tables 21 and 22 summarize the total appropriated funds (for all states and urbanized area designated recipients) for the JARC and NF grant programs for FY 2006 through FY 2008. They reveal that nearly 45 percent of the FY 2006 through FY 2008 JARC and NF appropriations have been obligated; however, nearly 14 percent of FY 2006 JARC appropriations lapsed and more than 12 percent of FY 2006 NF appropriations lapsed. Additionally, roughly 40 percent of FY 2007 JARC and NF funds have been obligated and 15 percent of FY 2008 JARC and NF funds have been obligated.

While the tables indicate that there were some initial delays in obligating JARC and NF funds, they also demonstrate that the amount of JARC and NF funds obligated in the appropriation year is increasing and the amount obligated in each successive year is also increasing as states and grantees gain familiarity with the required coordinated planning process and grant administration associated with the new NF program and the new formula-based allocation of JARC funds under SAFETEA-LU.

JARC Program

For details on the JARC obligations of individual states and urbanized areas, data from the *FTA Statistical Summaries* for FY 2006 and FY 2007 and GAO Report to Congressional Committees 09-496, *Progress and Challenges in Implementing and Evaluating the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program* (May 2009) were analyzed. Since the JARC program was in place prior to SAFETEA-LU, and funds appropriated under the JARC program can be obligated within 3 years of appropriation, the analysis of FY 2006 and FY 2007 *FTA Statistical Summaries* data on JARC obligations by population group and urbanized areas (UZA) was not at an appropriate level of detail for determining how much of the FY 2006 and FY 2007 appropriations had been obligated by the end of FY 2007. Many states had significantly larger obligations than appropriations, likely due to appropriations made prior to FY 2006. As a result, the analysis of JARC obligations in comparison to appropriations relied on data available in the GAO Report, which does not include the

Table 21 Summary of total JARC funds appropriated and obligated between FY 2006 and FY 2008.

FY	Appropriated	Obligated in FY 06	Obligated in FY 07	Obligated in FY 08	Transferred Out (as of 9/30/08)[1]	Remaining	% Unobligated
2006	$136,620,000	$5,291,004	$22,731,680	$87,374,069	$2,621,612	$18,603,175	13.6%
2007	$144,000,000		$7,204,231	$47,596,190	$1,909,878	$87,289,701	60.6%
2008	$156,000,000			$22,376,472	$859,596	$132,763,932	85.1%
Total	**$436,620,000**	**$5,291,004**	**$29,935,911**	**$157,346,731**	**$5,391,086**	**$238,656,808**	**54.7%**

[1]States are allowed to transfer JARC funds to Section 5307 Urbanized Area formula grant program and Section 5311 Rural Transit Assistance Program.

Source: FTA, http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_9293.html.

Table 22 Summary of total NF funds appropriated and obligated between FY 2006 and FY 2008.

FY	Appropriated	Obligated in FY 06	Obligated in FY 07	Obligated in FY 08	Total Obligated	% Unobligated
2006	$77,200,000	$1,269,027	$6,786,605	$59,556,856	$67,612,488	12.4%
2007	$81,000,000		$2,537,311	$28,079,915	$30,617,226	62.2%
2008	$87,500,000			$12,233,883	$12,233,883	86.0%
Total	**$245,700,000**	**$1,269,027**	**$9,323,916**	**$99,870,654**	**$110,463,597**	**55.0%**

Source: FTA, http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_7188.html.

state detail for each year, but rather talks about the obligations in general and includes data on those states and UZAs that had FY 2006 JARC funds lapse.

As shown in Table 21, the states and urbanized areas have obligated (or transferred out) $118 million of FY 2006 JARC appropriations (approximately 86 percent), $57 million of FY 2007 appropriations (approximately 39 percent), and $23 million of FY 2008 appropriations (approximately 15 percent). While the obligation percentages increased during the 3-year obligation period after appropriation, FY 2006 still had $18.6 million (or 13.6 percent) in JARC appropriations lapse at the end of FY 2008. Table 23 summarizes the urbanized areas and states that had FY 2006 JARC funds lapse and the amount of funding lapsed.

The largest amounts of lapsed funding occurred in large urbanized areas ($10.9 million) and small urbanized areas ($5.2 million); approximately 13 percent of FY 2006 JARC appropriated funds to large urban areas and approximately 19 percent of FY 2006 JARC appropriated funds to small urban areas expired. However, in large urbanized areas, 20 of the 28 areas with lapsed funds (71 percent) allowed 100 percent of their FY 2006 funds totaling $9.4 million to lapse; while, in small urbanized areas, six of 12 areas with lapsed funds (50 percent) allowed 100 percent of their FY 2006 funds totaling $2.9 million to lapse. In non-urbanized areas, two of five areas with lapsed funds (40 percent) allowed 100 percent of their FY 2006 funds totaling $0.42 million to lapse.

NF Program

For details on the NF obligations of individual states, data from the *FTA Statistical Summaries* for FY 2006 and FY 2007 were analyzed to determine the appropriations and obligations of the state portion of the NF grant program and are shown in Table 24. Since the NF program was a new program under SAFETEA-LU, the *FTA Statistical Summaries* for FY 2006 and FY 2007 provided reliable data on obligations of these grants prior to the end of FY 2007 because there were no appropriations prior to FY 2006. Table 24 demonstrates that by the end of FY 2007, only 6.6 percent of FY 2006 and FY 2007 NF appropriations had been obligated. However, it is important to note that by the end of FY 2008, an additional $87.6 million of FY 2006 and FY 2007 NF appropriations were obligated, bringing the percentage of FY 2006 and FY 2007 appropriations that had been obligated up to 62 percent.

Due to the obligation data available in the *FTA Statistical Summaries,* the apportionments and obligations shown for each state in Table 24 include the sum of the large urbanized areas, small urbanized areas, and non-urbanized area portions. The NF funds for urbanized areas that are located in multiple states are included in each state shown in Table 24; this means that the total apportionments for each of the states with urban areas that cross state lines and the total for all states include duplicate entries. As a result, the apportionments are overestimated. The table attempts to correct this in the total apportionments; however, it is difficult to correct for the double counting within states as it is not known how the urbanized area funds are distributed to projects within each state.

As shown in Table 22, the states and urbanized areas have obligated $67.6 million of FY 2006 NF appropriations (approximately 88 percent), $30.6 million of FY 2007 NF appropriations (approximately 40 percent), and $12.2 million of FY 2008 NF appropriations (approximately 12 percent). Of these FY 2006 and 2007 obligations, Table 24 indicates that the obligations were made by only 20 states (or territories) by the end of FY 2007. At the end of FY 2007, 31 states had not obligated any of their FY 2006 and FY 2007 NF funds. Only one state, Wyoming, had obligated all of its FY 2006 and 2007 NF grants, while three states (Iowa, Oregon, and Washington) had obligated at least one-third of their FY 2006 and

Table 23 Urbanized areas and states with lapsed FY 2006 JARC funds.

Service Area	Allocated Amount	Lapsed Amount	Lapsed %
Large Urbanized Areas			
Aguadilla-Isabela-San Sebastian, PR	$ 530,843	$ 530,843	100%
Austin, TX	$ 406,084	$ 406,084	100%
Bakersfield, CA	$ 318,265	$ 238,265	75%
Barnstable Town, MA	$ 75,115	$ 14,105	19%
Columbia, SC	$ 191,671	$ 191,671	100%
Columbus, GA-AL	$ 487,856	$ 149,168	31%
Daytona Beach-Port Orange, FL	$ 136,539	$ 136,539	100%
Durham, NC	$ 152,453	$ 18,975	12%
Fayetteville, NC	$ 152,079	$ 152,079	100%
Greenville, SC	$ 154,803	$ 154,803	100%
Gulfport-Biloxi, MS	$ 116,718	$ 116,718	100%
Harrisburg, PA	$ 118,352	$ 118,352	100%
Honolulu, HI	$ 296,056	$ 296,056	100%
Jackson, MS	$ 188,181	$ 188,181	100%
Lexington-Fayette, KY	$ 125,080	$ 125,080	100%
Miami, FL	$ 2,798,658	$ 2,798,658	100%
Milwaukee, WI	$ 586,353	$ 307,613	52%
Mission Viejo, CA	$ 110,760	$ 110,760	100%
Palm Bay-Melbourne, FL	$ 162,591	$ 162,591	100%
Philadelphia, PA-NJ-DE-MD	$ 2,177,282	$ 156,161	7%
Port St. Lucie, FL	$ 134,102	$ 134,102	100%
Poughkeepsie-Newburgh, NY	$ 138,244	$ 138,244	100%
Reading, PA	$ 108,520	$ 108,520	100%
Richmond, VA	$ 325,063	$ 292,557	90%
Riverside-San Bernadino, CA	$ 1,025,531	$ 347,894	34%
San Juan, PR	$ 3,175,710	$ 3,175,710	100%
Spokane, WA-ID	$ 178,704	$ 178,704	100%
Victorville-Hesperia-Apple Valley, CA	$ 130,784	$ 130,784	100%
Total Large Urbanized Areas with Lapsed Funds	**$ 14,502,397**	**$ 10,879,217**	**75%**
Total All Large Urbanized Areas	**$ 81,972,000**	**$ 10,879,217**	**13%**
Small Urbanized Areas (State)			
California	$ 2,846,331	$ 1,050,607	37%
Delaware	$ 47,028	$ 47,028	100%
Hawaii	$ 51,652	$ 51,652	100%
Indiana	$ 672,488	$ 18,627	3%
Louisiana	$ 793,743	$ 250,000	31%
Mississippi	$ 142,431	$ 142,431	100%
Nevada	$ 37,708	$ 37,708	100%
New York	$ 513,343	$ 426,704	83%
North Carolina	$ 871,922	$ 550,122	63%
Puerto Rico	$ 2,571,505	$ 2,571,505	100%
Utah	$ 126,160	$ 1,535	1%
Wyoming	$ 97,515	$ 97,515	100%
Total Small Urbanized Areas with Lapsed Funds	**$ 8,771,826**	**$ 5,245,434**	**60%**
Total All Small Urbanized Areas	**$ 27,324,000**	**$ 5,245,434**	**19%**
Non-urbanized, Rural Areas (State)			
California	$ 1,392,047	$ 880,209	63%
Delaware	$ 60,739	$ 60,739	100%
Indiana	$ 547,252	$ 312,252	57%
North Carolina	$ 1,377,832	$ 862,267	63%
Puerto Rico	$ 354,265	$ 354,265	100%
Total Non-Urbanized Areas with Lapsed Funds	**$ 3,732,135**	**$ 2,469,732**	**66%**
Total All Non-urbanized Rural Areas	**$ 27,324,000**	**$ 2,469,732**	**9%**

Source: Appendix II from the GAO-09-496 Report, *Federal Transit Administration: Progress and Challenges in Implementing and Evaluating the Job Access Reverse Commute Program*, May 2009, http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/GA0_09_496(1).pdf.

Table 24 Comparison of NF apportionments and obligations by state for FY 2006 and FY 2007.[1]

	Apportionments		Obligations		Total Obligations	% Obligated
State	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006-2007	2006-2007
Alabama[2]	$ 1,428,410	$ 1,549,415	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Alaska	$ 104,035	$ 116,682	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Arizona	$ 1,361,883	$ 1,412,997	$ -	$ 803,237	$ 803,237	28.9%
Arkansas[2]	$ 1,004,603	$ 1,103,232	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
California	$ 9,674,000	$ 10,241,457	$ 352,141	$ 1,608,351	$ 1,960,492	9.8%
Colorado	$ 1,058,292	$ 1,088,537	$ 472,048	$ -	$ 472,048	22.0%
Connecticut[2]	$ 6,963,755	$ 7,012,164	$ -	$ 580,703	$ 580,703	4.2%
Delaware[2]	$ 1,606,049	$ 1,581,231	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Florida[2]	$ 5,187,295	$ 5,697,223	$ 314,866	$ -	$ 314,866	2.9%
Georgia[2]	$ 2,463,121	$ 2,337,923	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Hawaii	$ 289,784	$ 310,637	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Idaho[2]	$ 395,970	$ 434,827	$ -	$ 10,552	$ 10,552	1.3%
Illinois[2]	$ 4,112,410	$ 3,902,883	$ -	$ 2,260,880	$ 2,260,880	28.2%
Indiana[2]	$ 4,426,496	$ 4,399,392	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Iowa[2]	$ 819,690	$ 831,970	$ -	$ 643,830	$ 643,830	39.0%
Kansas[2]	$ 796,948	$ 842,226	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Kentucky[2]	$ 1,263,595	$ 1,541,572	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Louisiana	$ 1,277,422	$ 1,399,660	$ 78,723	$ -	$ 78,723	2.9%
Maine	$ 294,926	$ 353,257	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Maryland[2]	$ 3,625,637	$ 3,495,840	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Massachusetts[2]	$ 2,179,355	$ 2,198,497	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Michigan[2]	$ 2,962,718	$ 2,970,668	$ -	$ 61,525	$ 61,525	1.0%
Minnesota	$ 951,281	$ 980,199	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Mississippi[2]	$ 955,515	$ 1,003,230	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Missouri[2]	$ 1,553,940	$ 1,627,581	$ -	$ 120,279	$ 120,279	3.8%
Montana	$ 215,173	$ 222,185	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Nebraska[2]	$ 327,448	$ 346,509	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Nevada	$ 527,671	$ 607,306	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
New Hampshire[2]	$ 1,534,771	$ 1,463,289	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
New Jersey[2]	$ 7,670,901	$ 7,718,454	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
New Mexico[2]	$ 560,598	$ 689,698	$ 51,249	$ 14,700	$ 65,949	5.3%
New York[2]	$ 7,519,513	$ 7,710,296	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
North Carolina[2]	$ 2,131,719	$ 2,249,643	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
North Dakota	$ 146,896	$ 164,289	$ -	$ 51,343	$ 51,343	16.5%
Ohio[2]	$ 2,819,825	$ 3,047,964	$ -	$ 273,133	$ 273,133	4.7%
Oklahoma	$ 779,289	$ 882,760	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Oregon[2]	$ 826,913	$ 935,545	$ -	$ 670,298	$ 670,298	38.0%
Pennsylvania[2]	$ 3,921,041	$ 3,873,010	$ -	$ 80,000	$ 80,000	1.0%
Puerto Rico	$ 1,325,846	$ 1,842,071	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Rhode Island[2]	$ 1,547,940	$ 1,522,115	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
South Carolina[2]	$ 1,358,241	$ 1,468,798	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
South Dakota	$ 165,571	$ 172,368	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Tennessee[2]	$ 1,524,684	$ 1,732,247	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Texas[2]	$ 5,616,227	$ 5,917,447	$ -	$ 500,280	$ 500,280	4.3%
Utah	$ 426,158	$ 479,139	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Vermont	$ 118,817	$ 123,475	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Virginia[2]	$ 2,421,710	$ 2,352,142	$ -	$ 73,036	$ 73,036	1.5%
Washington[2]	$ 1,858,731	$ 2,029,587	$ -	$ 1,272,783	$ 1,272,783	32.7%
West Virginia	$ 530,542	$ 620,419	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Wisconsin[2]	$ 1,377,298	$ 1,354,055	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.0%
Wyoming	$ 99,830	$ 119,156	$ -	$ 218,986	$ 218,986	100.0%
Total[2]	**$ 104,110,483**	**$ 108,077,267**	**$ 1,269,027**	**$ 9,243,916**	**$ 10,512,943**	**5.0%**
Program Total	**$ 77,200,000**	**$ 81,000,000**				**6.6%**
Duplicated Urban Area Funds	**$ 26,910,483**	**$ 27,077,267**				

[1]Please note that while the percentage of NF funds obligated by the end of FY 2007 was only 6.6 percent, by the end of FY 2008, an additional $87.6 million of FY 2006 and FY 2007 NF appropriations was obligated, bringing the percentage of FY 2006 and FY 2007 appropriations that had been obligated up to 62 percent.

[2]Note that the apportionments for each state include money designated for urban areas. The urban area funds may be duplicated in other states because some urban areas cross state lines; therefore, the sum of apportionments is greater than the program apportionments for FY 2006 and FY 2007.

Source: FTA Statistical Summaries, FY 2006 and FY 2007, http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/data/grants_financing_1090.html.

2007 NF funds. Of the remaining 16 states with FY 2006 and FY 2007 NF obligations, four had obligated between 10 and 30 percent, and 12 had obligated less than 10 percent.

Conclusions

While initially there was some difficulty in obligating the JARC and NF funds with nearly 14 percent of FY 2006 JARC and 12 percent of NF apportionments lapsed at the end of FY 2008, significant improvements in obligations have been made in recent years. The FTA and GAO data presented in the tables demonstrate that the amount of JARC and NF funds obligated in the appropriation year is increasing and the amount obligated in each successive year is also improving. The initial delays may have been the result of several factors, including the SAFETEA-LU requirement for having an approved Coordination Plan in place (not required previously), difficulty in designating the appropriate grant recipients in large urban areas, uncertainty regarding what "beyond ADA" meant for NF projects, and adjusting to the learning curve associated with drawing down funds from the NF program and the new formula-based allocation of JARC funds.

In addition, it is important to note that the federal apportionments are not always released in a timely manner often due to delays in congressional appropriations or authorization bills. For example, the SAFETEA-LU apportionments for FY 2006 through FY 2008 were all published well after the start of each fiscal year. FY 2006 apportionments were published in the December 20, 2005, Federal Register and revised on February 3, 2006. Similarly, FY 2007 and FY 2008 apportionments were published in the Federal Register on March 23, 2007, and January 28, 2008, respectively. Since many state DOTs do not announce the availability of funds or begin the competitive process until the annual federal apportionments are published, further delays in JARC and NF obligations are possible.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

The findings from the Internet survey of state DOTs and the telephone interviews with local coordinated planning participants in Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, and Washington helped identify the perceived costs and benefits associated with the human services transportation Coordination Plans and grant programs. In general, the study revealed that respondents were satisfied with the development of the Coordination Plan and the grant programs; however, they believed that there are opportunities to improve the planning process and grant administration that could significantly help states and local recipients implement the Coordination Plans and reduce the perceived administrative burdens associated with the human services grant programs and their requirements. This chapter summarizes these costs, benefits, and perceived opportunities (from the perspective of the respondents) to improve the accomplishment and effectiveness of the Coordination Plans and human services transportation grant programs.

Costs Associated with Human Services Transportation Plans and Grant Programs

The study attempted to quantify the costs associated with the development of the Coordination Plans, specifically in terms of a dollar amount and/or time spent on the initial plan development and maintaining the plan. The costs were collected from state DOTs as part of the Internet survey and from local Coordination Plan participants during the telephone surveys.

State DOTs (Internet Survey)

In the Internet survey, 57 percent of state DOT respondents indicated that the costs of the initial Coordination Plan development were less than $250,000 for the state. The remaining 43 percent of respondents indicated that the state DOT costs of the plans were between $250,001 and $1 million. For those states spending more money on the initial plan development, many indicated that the state was providing a significant portion of the money for the Coordination Plan development, including providing technical assistance, consultants, and workshops. Similarly, 86 percent of responding state DOTs projected that the costs for maintaining the Coordination Plans would be less than $250,000. While some states paid for the cost of the initial plan development, no responding states indicated that the state would pay for the maintenance of the Coordination Plans, which likely contributed to the lower projected state costs for the maintenance of plans.

The Internet survey respondents also provided insight on some of the additional costs associated with the development of the Coordination Plans. Nine respondents (43 percent) had hired consultants or addi-

tional employees to help meet the plan requirements at the state level, and 53 percent had hired consultants or additional employees at the local level. Even with the hiring of additional resources, the responsibilities for preparing the Coordination Plans has fallen largely on existing staff. Eighteen (86 percent) of respondents indicated that the plans have placed an additional burden on the state transit office, many of whom are already short-staffed. One respondent indicated that they are not allowed to expand staff, even if the position is 100 percent grant funded.

The primary sources of funding for the development of the Coordination Plans for the responding state DOTs were federal planning/administrative funds (48 percent) and state funds (30 percent). The respondents using state funds generally were concerned about the sustainability of these revenues since many state funds came from one-time sources (such as an Executive Order) or were taken from funds (both state and federal) that would have gone toward providing services. As a result, Internet survey results indicate that funding for the Coordination Plans may become increasingly a local responsibility.

Local Agencies (Telephone Interviews)

During the telephone interviews, many local agencies had a difficult time quantifying the Coordination Plan development costs, particularly if the plan was developed in-house and the main expense was staff time. Often the best cost estimate available was an approximation of the number of staff people or the percentage of a person or team's time devoted to the Coordination Plans. As a result, the overall costs associated with the development of the plans at the local level vary significantly in level of detail.

Missouri DOT provided significant assistance to the Rural Planning Commissions (RPCs) for the Coordination Plan development, including technical assistance through workshops held throughout the state as well as funding for the development of the plans. MoDOT observed that initially consultants did not have more capability or information than the state on the Coordination Plans, so MoDOT staff used $4,000 in UWR grants to coordinate and facilitate workshops across the state on the coordinated planning process. MoDOT held six workshops in 2006, at various locations across the state, communicating plan requirements and circulars and advertising the grant programs to local agencies. MoDOT will hold more workshops in anticipation of the plan updates in 2010 by utilizing the remaining $21,000 in UWR funds. In addition, MoDOT gave the 17 RPCs in the state the 10 percent planning money from Section 5303 funds, with a maximum of $21,000 for each RPC. Table 25 summarizes the amount of the Section 5303 planning funds used to develop the initial Coordination Plans by RPCs throughout the state.

Table 25 Missouri Section 5303 planning funds used for the initial development of the Coordination Plans.

Amount of 5303 Funds Used	Number of Rural Planning Commissions
$21,000	13
$17,000	2
$16,000	1
$10,000	1
$19,559	Average

Source: Missouri DOT.

Several telephone interview respondents provided descriptions of staff time required for the development of the Coordination Plan. Since many of these agencies developed the plan in-house, they do not have an estimate of actual hours spent because they do not record their time in this manner. However, several respondents were able to discuss the number of people or the percentage of time devoted to the Coordination Plans, as well as the JARC and NF grant programs. One transit agency in a large, urban area estimated that six people on a day-to-day basis work on JARC and NF for at least a portion of the day. This includes everything from participating in the coordinated planning process, sub-recipient agreements, contracts, legal, and engineering. Several other smaller agencies indicated that they have one full-time staff person for JARC and NF as well as the coordinated planning process. Another respondent indicated that the planning section of the agency spends approximately 25 percent of their time on the coordinated planning process. However, in general, the agencies felt that the amount of time put into the process was worthwhile and comparable to most other political processes. The respondents' largest complaint about time spent was on the grant administration, particularly in preparing applications and helping sub-recipients with applications.

In addition to staff time, several agencies mentioned other costs associated with the Coordination Plan development:

- One agency has spent the last few years working on a Framework for Senior Mobility that identifies current services, gaps, and barriers

to senior mobility to aid the regional council with the development of the Human Services Coordination Plan. The Framework is funded by sustainable non-profit community funding and is estimated to have cost between $80,000 and $100,000.

- Another agency spent an additional $60,000 to look at medical transportation services. This study was funded through a federal transportation planning grant. The Coordination Plan will be amended to include the results of this study.
- One agency discussed the additional expense of having to translate materials into Spanish when there is not a significant Spanish-speaking population. The agency estimated that they spent 24 hours reviewing Spanish translation and had to hire a translator.
- Two agencies discussed the costs associated with the public meetings, and one emphasized the costs associated with a survey, particularly the mailings (more than 2,000 stamps).
- Agencies in South Carolina noted that the initial plan development was the first effort for this type of planning; therefore, there was a learning curve and the costs may not be representative. The agencies also noted that the coordinated planning efforts are likely to expand outreach in the future, which likely will occupy the same amount of time, if not more, than the learning curve associated with the first plans. In addition, the state helped support the development of the first Coordination Plans, but this support is not expected to continue.

Successes Associated with Human Services Transportation Plans and Grant Programs

The study attempted to determine the perceived success associated with the development of the Coordination Plans, particularly in terms of meeting FTA's goals of enhancing transportation access for target populations, minimizing the duplication of human services transportation provided, and facilitating the most appropriate and cost-effect transportation possible. The perceived successful aspects of the coordinated planning process were gathered from state DOTs as part of the Internet survey and from local Coordination Plan participants during the telephone surveys.

State DOTs (Internet Survey)

The Internet survey revealed that the state DOTs have mixed views on whether the Coordination Plans have successfully met FTA's goals. More than 75 percent of the Internet survey respondents felt that the Coordination Plans achieved average to significant success in meeting FTA's goal of enhancing transportation access for the target populations in their state. However, just over 50 percent of respondents indicated that the plans have achieved average to significant success in meeting FTA's goal of minimizing the duplication of transportation services for target populations (57 percent) and facilitating the most cost-effective transportation possible with available resources (52 percent).

In addition, 52 percent of the state DOT respondents indicated that additional state or local goals had been met by the federal Coordination Plan requirement. For some states, the federal requirement tied their local Coordination Plans to funding or brought the coordination effort up to the state level. These varied additional goals included:

- State coordination, rather than local
- Tied coordination plans to funding
- Mobility Management projects in areas without transit
- Developed regional coordination councils
- Interagency Committee on Special Transportation goals
- Governor created transportation committee
- Did not have state or local specific goals previously
- Demand response state-funded program
- 5317 provided alternative to paratransit

One of the greatest successes of the coordination planning process is the improved and new relationships formed between public and private agencies. The DOT survey respondents acknowledged that the perceived level of commitment and participation in the development of the Coordination Plans has been relatively strong at both the state and local levels. Over 70 percent of the survey respondents indicated that the amount of commitment/participation at the state and local levels was average or better. However, some respondents felt that funding levels and restrictive federal requirements for the JARC and NF grant programs often make it difficult to attract participants to the process, particularly other human services agencies.

In terms of the level of coordination achieved as a result of the Coordination Plan, 67 percent of the Internet survey respondents believed that the level of coordination was better than before the federal requirement. Several respondents reported that there is now increased awareness and additional stakeholder participation. While most of the respondents indicated that the level of coordination has improved after the federal requirement for the Coordination Plans, 62 percent of the responding DOTs believed that the same objectives could be met without the plans because several states already had coordinated planning requirements in place. However, two respondents indicated that the federal requirement sped up the coordinated planning process, and one indicated that coordination requires mandates.

Local Agencies (Telephone Interviews)

The telephone interviews revealed that on the whole the local Coordination Plan participants across all six states interviewed believed the plans to be effective. While some states had individual agencies that reported mixed or negative feelings about the plan requirement, the overall assessment by the states interviewed was positive. This support for the plans was a bit surprising given that three of the six states interviewed indicated in their Internet survey responses that the plans were not effective.

There is widespread agreement among the interviewees that the planning requirements of the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs have been effective in developing new relationships and expanding the provision of human services transportation. Respondents talked of the coordination process bringing in new organizations and improving information among all participants about the resources available and the needs of customers. While the FTA human services transportation programs are relatively small, the coordinated planning process is designed to get the right people into the room, including other human services agencies that have larger transportation budgets. In addition, the FTA programs have the flexibility to use other federal human services agency grants as match. In some instances in Ohio, agencies were able to use federal dollars from other human services agencies to match the JARC and NF projects; however, other states found it was not possible to coordinate between the human services FTA grant programs and other federal grant programs.

In addition, several respondents indicated that customer outreach and improved information through service marketing and promotion have enabled the programs to better meet customer needs. Several states noted having previous requirements, including Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Washington; however, federal specifications generally required even more outreach and coordination. In turn, Washington State now has state programs that make use of the same planning requirements as the federal programs.

In addition, the telephone interviews highlighted the successful expansion of human services transportation. Based on the interviews conducted, successful projects accomplished under Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 funding include:

- Sponsoring taxis for commuters without other means of transportation (JARC).
- Developing a plan for shuttle service to a military base, which led to a private operator implementing the service (JARC).
- Contracting with taxis for door-to-door demand response service to the elderly and disabled (NF).
- Providing a new fixed-route service to a workforce development and state services center (NF).
- Purchasing a new bus for a workforce development board (JARC).
- Purchasing a GPS system to improve the coordination of demand-response service (5310).
- Improving website information on services available (NF).
- Developing a "Bus Buddy" program to introduce elderly and disabled citizens to public transit (5310).
- Providing a demand-response service for return trips for hospital users, enabling them to arrive via fixed-route services for appointments but have flexibility for return trips given variations in appointment duration (5310).
- Creating Mobility Management programs to connect customers with services, providing information, and collecting data (5310).
- Sponsoring volunteer-operated transportation services (5310).
- Providing bus stop accessibility improvements for wheelchair users (NF).
- Improving access to shopping for low-income customers (5310).

Pennsylvania DOT noted that the largest benefit from human services transportation funding has been the ability to purchase new vehicles and expand

service, as the state already had a well-developed human services transportation plan. Pennsylvania also noted that they believe most of the benefits are at the margins, including providing service later into the evening and route extensions. More importantly, the availability of the funding has allowed them to meet new needs and to test new services, continuing and expanding successful programs.

Many organizations commented that the programs have been more successful than expected. Customer demand has been high; in the words of Town & Country Transit in rural Pennsylvania, ridership "has grown exponentially, far beyond what the state had projected." In addition, respondents indicated that human services transportation has also increased the use of general mass transit, as customers can combine services that meet their needs. They also believe that improved information and greater familiarity with the transportation options available has also increased general transit ridership.

Findings

The Internet survey of state DOTs and the telephone interviews with local Coordination Plan participants conducted as part of this study resulted in the development of several findings in regards to the perceived accomplishment and effectiveness of Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plans, related requirements, and grant programs. The findings from respondents identified in the following section revolve around three central themes: ***flexibility, administrative responsibility,*** and ***transparency.***

- **Several respondents suggested the consolidation of Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grant programs.** The most frequently suggested improvement for the human services transportation grant programs was the consolidation of the Section 5316 JARC and 5317 NF programs with other grant programs such as Section 5310, 5311, and 5307. Respondents noted that with consolidation, the individual grant program goals could still be reflected in program and planning requirements, including dedicating percentages of funding to each program goal. Section 5310 Transportation for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities was the most frequently mentioned program for consolidation with JARC and NF and was viewed as the most logical by respondents, given the similar target populations and requirement for the Coordination Plan. Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program and 5311 Rural and Small Urbanized Area Program provide funding for more traditional transit services for general populations, contradicting the intentions of the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grant programs. As a result, there was general agreement by those surveyed and interviewed that the planning requirements for Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs are very similar, and that a combination of these grant programs would make planning and administration easier for all concerned.

  Respondents stated that by consolidating the three grant programs, state administrators would have greater flexibility to meet local customer needs without the multiple requirements associated with each of the individual grant programs. Many respondents indicated that they believe the administration of multiple funds that are relatively small in funding levels is time-consuming and requires significant staff resources for state and local agencies that are already short-staffed. Since many agencies are unable to hire additional staff or consultants to assist with the process, the responsibilities often fall on existing staff, many of whom have already been asked to take on additional responsibilities.

  While the Internet survey and telephone interview respondents highlighted the benefits associated with the consolidation of Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 grant programs, other organizations have indicated that there could be potential drawbacks to consolidation as well. A recent AARP study on *Policy Options to Improve Specialized Transportation* noted that several aging and disability organizations have expressed concern that the consolidation of these programs could have unintended consequences, including reducing the quality of Section 5310 services because the target populations of these grants programs do not necessarily have the same transportation needs *(2).* In addition the AARP study highlights that there are some major issues associated with the consolidation of these grant programs that have not been evaluated sufficiently, including identifying designated recipients and determining how the grant money would get to providers. Under the current grant programs, the desig-

nated recipient is the state for Section 5310 and either the state or local agency in large urban areas for JARC and NF. As a result, the suggestion to consolidate these grant programs would need to be evaluated more closely.

- **Suggested federal grant process improvements.** The study respondents indicated that they felt the federal grant process could be improved to be more transparent, timely, sustainable, and flexible. Planning organizations observed that the multiple levels of prioritization and project selection may interfere with transparency to local officials and stakeholders, which would adversely impact the commitment and perceived benefits of the coordinated planning process. These respondents suggested that more guidance from FTA on the grant selection and prioritization process could improve the understanding of all stakeholders (local and state) in what the federal priorities are and how grant awards match up with the intention of the Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 programs.

  In addition, respondents stated that improvements to the administrative process, particularly the length of time it takes to apply for and receive grant money, are desired. They noted that the year it can take between grant application and receipt of funds also impacts the link between planning efforts and the projects. In addition, they believe annual competition for funding of long-term, ongoing projects is redundant and wasteful; several respondents felt that the distribution of funds on a longer schedule (such as funding for 4 years) or on a programmatic basis could be more effective for these types of projects. Many respondents added that greater flexibility for state and local recipients to redirect at least portions of the grant money to meet emergent needs or redirect funds from projects that no longer need or cannot use the funding in a timely manner would also improve the grant administration process.
- **Requests for additional federal guidance on performance measures.** Study respondents expressed a strong desire and need for additional federal guidance on performance measures that look beyond basic service indicators and consider the effectiveness of funded projects in promoting job sustainability; compare the effectiveness of the providers in supplying these services against the baseline conditions (unemployment, senior/disabled population, and distribution of customers and destinations); and measure the number of customers graduating from the need for JARC transportation. Quantitatively, relatively few interviewees mentioned performance measures playing a significant role in evaluating the effectiveness of projects, primarily because they believe customer-focused measures have been lacking.

  Those states interviewed that did utilize performance measures in some manner primarily relied on standard transportation service indicators to gauge the performance of the programs funded by the grants. However, many respondents believe the use of standard performance measures fails to sufficiently measure the human services aspect of the projects and often favors urban areas over rural, because rural areas often have higher transportation costs due to longer distances, dispersed customers and destinations, and little other infrastructure to support human services customers, which may make rural transportation appear ineffective or inefficient.
- **Requests for additional federal guidance that strengthens the link between the planning process and grant funding.** There was concern expressed by some planning organizations interviewed that providers do not always see the benefit of coordinated planning efforts, given the distinction between the planning process and the grant approval and disbursement process. Respondents felt that federal guidance that strengthened the link between the planning process and the grants would be appreciated by both the planning organizations and the service providers; this could be accomplished by providing more technical advice, tying grant money to performance measures, and rewarding cooperative efforts.

  Many respondents suggested that some funding could be tied to the planning process and performance measures, preferably those identified at the federal level to help improve the perceived transparency and equity of federal grant distribution. They believed that this could include consideration of the existing conditions and backgrounds of areas. Some respondents also indicated that performance

measures should also go beyond basic service indicators or cost data to be more results-oriented or outcomes-based. They felt that data should be collected on the success of projects in getting customers to the services they need and on the effectiveness of the providers in supplying these services against the baseline conditions.

The respondents' support for performance measures and the perceived opportunity for an improved federal grant process come back to the effectiveness of the coordinated planning process. These respondents believe that by using performance measures and data and linking federal funds to the results of the process, coordinated planning could make better use of quantitative information and link the plans to the results more closely. They believe that stakeholders making use of a performance-driven coordinated planning process would get even more out of the process of developing and working to implement the Coordination Plan.

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1. Ellis, Elizabeth, KFH Group, Inc. "Key Characteristics of the Section 5310, JARC, and New Freedom Programs" table, *AARP Insight on the Issues 39: Policy Options to Improve Specialized Transportation,* October 2009, pp. 1–8.
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAA	Area Agency on Aging
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
ACRTA	Allen County Regional Transit Authority
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AVL	Automatic Vehicle Location
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
CMCOG	Central Midlands Council of Governments
COG	Council of Government
DATA	Delaware Area Transit Agency
DBE	Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRPT	Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
DVRPC	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	United States Government Accounting Office
GPS	Global Positioning System
HHS	United States Department of Health and Human Services
HRPDC	Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
HRT	Hampton Roads Transit
HUD	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
IRS	United States Internal Revenue Service
IT	Information Technology
JARC	Job Access and Reverse Commute
KCATA	Kansas City Area Transportation Authority
LACRPC	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
LCATS	Licking County Area Transportation Study
LCPC	Lycoming County Planning Commission
LOS	Level of Service
LSCOG	Lower Savannah Council of Governments
MARC	Mid-America Regional Council of Governments
MoDOT	Missouri Department of Transportation
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MRPC	Meramec Regional Planning Commission
MSAA	Mobility Services for All Americans
NCHRP	National Cooperative Highway Research Program
NF	New Freedom

NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRHA	Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority
ODOT	Ohio Department of Transportation
PDC	Planning District Commission
PennDOT	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
QUADCO	Quad-County Regional Transportation Planning Organization
RPC	Rural Planning Commission
RPO	Rural Planning Organization
RRRC	Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Council
RTMA	Regional Transit Management Agency
RTPO	Regional Transportation Planning Organization
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
SCDOT	South Carolina Department of Transportation
Section 5310	Transportation for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Grant Program
Section 5316	Job Access and Reverse Commute Grant Program
Section 5317	New Freedom Grant Program
SLRCOG	Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments
SMTS	Southeast Missouri Transportation Services
SEPTA	Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
STEP	Success Through Engagement and Partnership
STP	Surface Transportation Program
TACT	Town & Country Transit
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century
TMA	Transportation Management Area or Agency
TRB	Transportation Research Board
TRPC	Thurston Regional Planning Council
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
UWR	United We Ride
UZA	Urbanized Areas
VRT	Virginia Regional Transit
WAT	Williamsburg Area Transit
WIB	Workforce Investment Board
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

APPENDICES A, B, AND C

Appendices A, B, and C as submitted by the contractor are not published herein. The titles of the appendices are as follows:

APPENDIX A:	Blank Internet Survey Form
APPENDIX B:	Telephone Interview Questionnaire
APPENDIX C:	Detailed Telephone Interview Summaries

These three appendices are available online at http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/165471.aspx.

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