

Integration of Paratransit & Fixed-Route Transit Services

Presentation to ACTIA Joint PAPCO/TAC Meeting
February 23, 2009

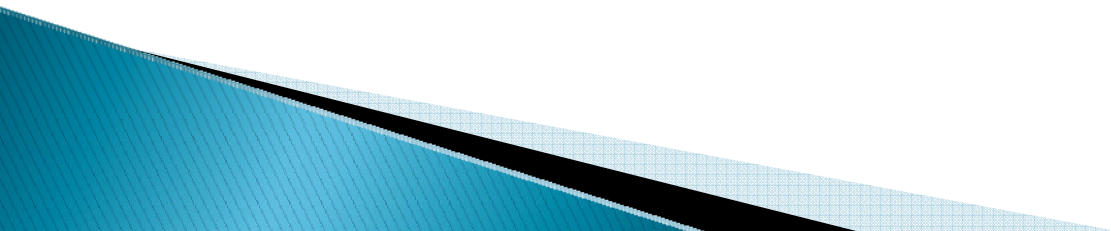
PROJECT FOCUS

Compelling reason for setting up the integrated service has been the need to manage paratransit costs or reduce the need for separate paratransit service.

- ▶ Designed with people with disabilities in mind, or have benefited people with disabilities and reduced paratransit demand
- ▶ Least attention – “feeder” service
- ▶ Variations on the traditional model of ADA paratransit feeder service – more are combination of general-public Dial-A-Ride and/or Route Deviation, feeding into Fixed-Route, than regular paratransit feeder

Web-based survey, phone interviews, site visit – 34 agencies

Topic Areas

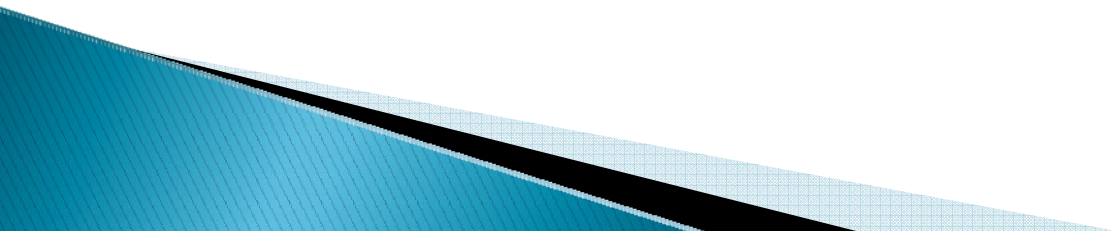
- ▶ Eligibility screening processes
 - ▶ Operational procedures
 - ▶ Travel training
 - ▶ Education and outreach
 - ▶ Marketing
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Key Findings

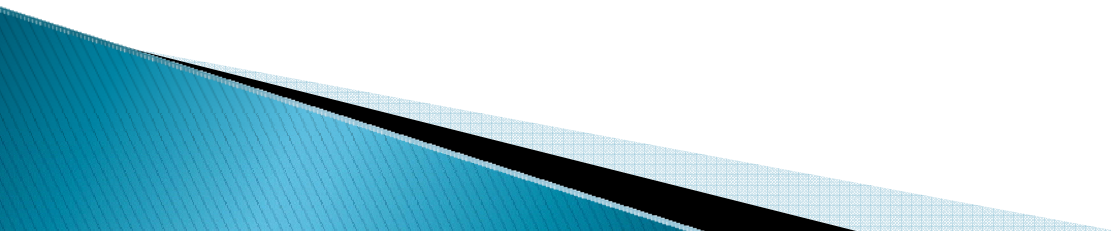
Feeder Service

- ▶ Feeder not widespread – impact on mobility of riders; a perception that it's difficult to implement; lack of consensus about cost savings
- ▶ Trip-by-trip screening – significant cost savings. Need ability to integrate fixed-route and paratransit schedules, accurate screening, environmental barrier information. Political will, involvement of disability community
- ▶ Technology not required, 3 software packages all include feeder modules
- ▶ Feeder must be mandatory to work well
- ▶ Only well-received where frequent fixed-route service, or after much community education
- ▶ Feeder effective means of complementing travel training

Other examples of Integrated Service

- ▶ Free fixed-route to ADA paratransit registrants
 - ▶ Promoting neighborhood circulators through ADA call-in center
 - ▶ Travel Host
 - ▶ Alternating between Fixed-Route and Demand-Response modes at different times of the day.
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Types of Integrated Service Models included:

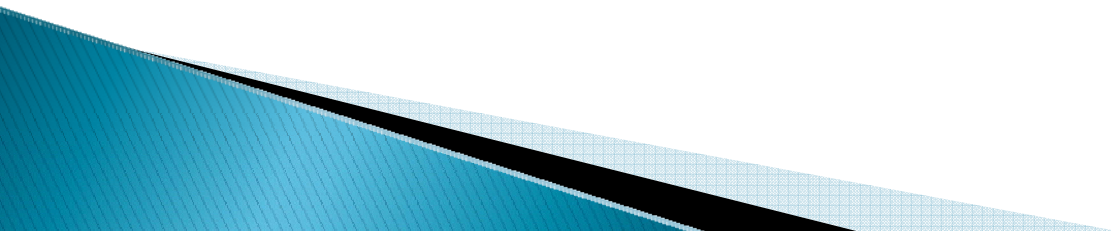
- ▶ Community bus operating on designated days of the week in rural areas and connecting with Fixed-Route
 - ▶ City-based community bus service that connects with FR stops and other community based bus service stops
 - ▶ FR bus that deviates for people with disabilities and older adults, and connects to the mainline FR service
 - ▶ ADA paratransit feeds into FR
 - ▶ General Public Dial-A-Ride feeds into FR at bus stops, park-and-rides, and light rail stations
 - ▶ Travel Host
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Service Design

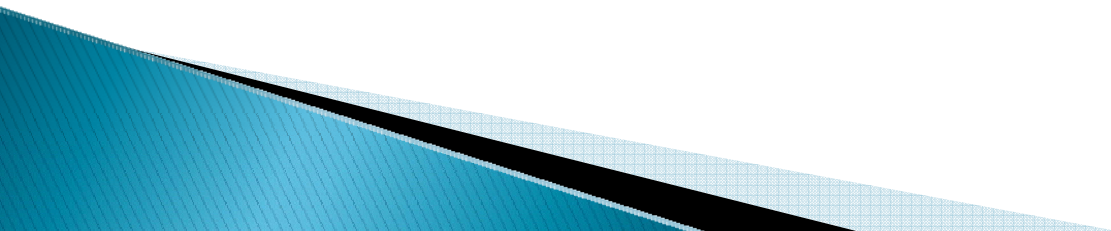
Populations Served

- ▶ Feeder – primarily people with disabilities, other general public
- ▶ Mandatory – specific eligibility conditions
- ▶ Disability % varied significantly– Asheville 40% of Route Deviation, Portland 81% shuttle, SamTrans employer shuttle 14%, Route Deviation Amador Co. 39%

Fares and Multiple Transfers

- ▶ Of 15 requiring transfer, 5 charge integrated only, 5 FR only, 4 both, 1 free.
 - ▶ Lowest fare most successful feeder
 - ▶ Most feeders are two legged trips, but some do three – usually paratransit to FR to FR
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Delays to Vehicles and Passengers

- ▶ Most don't wait for FR
 - ▶ “Drop and go” wait times 5 to 10 minutes most common
 - ▶ If transfer is missed, unless fixed-route service is very frequent, most systems guarantee direct paratransit trip
 - ▶ Safe sheltered transfer locations, transit centers, shopping malls, major park-and-ride facilities
 - ▶ Criteria – shelter, seating, a telephone, and serve multiple routes
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Cost Savings

- ▶ Hard to isolate cost benefits
- ▶ From reduced paratransit vehicle time – \$139,000 for BC Transit (1.3% of total paratransit budget) and \$147,000 at Pierce Transit (1.2%)
- ▶ Reduction in demand at Pierce Transit – cost savings \$709,000 (when combined with time savings 7.5% of paratransit budget)
- ▶ San Joaquin cost reduced by 50% through Route Deviation replacing paratransit
- ▶ UTA package – Savings from decline in ridership over \$350,000
- ▶ Whatcom \$350,000 from FLEX instead of fixed-route and paratransit in rural
- ▶ Fare incentives – LA 1.3 million fixed-route trips – \$26 million.

Conclusion

- ▶ Limited application
 - ▶ But found in all geographic areas/densities
 - ▶ Where implemented, working well
 - ▶ Contain costs, serve isolated areas
 - ▶ Used to test new markets
 - ▶ Expand options for people with disabilities
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