

**SPOKANE COUNTY COORDINATED
PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES
TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Prepared by:



"SRTC provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods into, within, and through the Spokane Region with an integration of balanced multi-modal transportation choices."



**Adopted by
SRTC Board
December 13, 2007
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Introduction

The Spokane County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) was developed through the cooperative efforts of the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) and Spokane Transit Authority (STA) on behalf of Spokane County. The SRTC is the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) serving Spokane County. Spokane Transit provides fixed-route bus, paratransit, and vanpool services within the Spokane County Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA).

The Spokane Regional Transportation Council was formed to oversee planning and federal funding for transportation projects in Spokane County. The SRTC receives direction from a board of local elected officials representing the metropolitan-area cities and highway districts. Federal law requires a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) such as SRTC when an urban area's population exceeds 50,000, as certified by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Spokane County PTBA was formed in 1981 by an over-whelming majority of Spokane County voters. At the same time a three-tenths of one percent (0.3%) sales tax was approved to fund the transit authority. In 2004, the voters within the PTBA authorized a temporary additional 0.3% sales tax to fully fund STA. This increase was made permanent in 2008 with 65% voter approval. Spokane Transit is governed by a board of directors made up of nine elected officials and one non-voting labor representative.

SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users)

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, commonly referred to as SAFETEA-LU was signed into law in 2005 and authorizes guaranteed funding for federal surface transportation programs, including federal transit programs, through fiscal year 2009.

Starting in fiscal year 2007, projects funded through these three programs included in SAFETEA-LU, including the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC, Section 5316), New Freedom (Section 5317), and the Formula Program for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) are required to be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

Recognizing the significant transportation challenges faced by individuals with special transportation needs, SAFETEA-LU guidance issued by the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) indicates that the plan should be a "unified, comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited income, laying out strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizing services."

The information compiled to create this plan was obtained from a number of sources used during the preparation of a variety of other plans and reports in recent years and conversations with stakeholders including those specifically affected by this Coordinated Plan as well as anyone who has an interest in, or is affected by, SRTC's or STA's actions.¹ This includes:

- Citizens who attend public meetings or submit input during public comment periods
- Local business owners and managers
- Area land and real estate developers
- Users of public transportation
- Citizens who participated in the 2009 On-Board Passenger Study of Spokane Transit Authority riders

¹ A copy of SRTC's Public Involvement Policy can be found as Appendix A of this Plan.

- Citizens who participated in a 2005 Spokane and Kootenai County Regional Travel Survey²
- Representatives from social service agencies that met on September 26, 2007 and April 22, 2009

This document is incorporated by reference into the Regional Transportation Plan for Spokane County.

Community Description

Spokane County, Washington is made up of 1,763 square miles of beautiful terrain, surrounded by mountains and lakes. The County seat is Spokane, on the banks of the Spokane River. The County has seen a noticeable population expansion in recent years, due in part to the beauty, affordability and "livability" of the area.

Tourism, call centers, a wide variety of manufacturing industries, and the medical sector all provided hundreds of new jobs in recent years. The largest private employers in the County now are two health-care providers: Sacred Heart Medical Center and Empire Health Services, which operates Deaconess and Valley hospitals. A map of the Spokane County area is contained as map 1 of this Plan.

Demographics

A 2006 estimate puts Spokane County's population at 446,706. Spokane is Washington's second largest city. According to 2000 census data, Spokane County grew by almost seven percent between the years 2000 and 2006. The median age for Spokane County is 35. As of 2005, 12.5% of Spokane County residents were 65 or older, 1% higher than the statewide rate of 11.5%.

The increase in older citizens translates to a need for increased alternative transportation sources as many people rely less on personal vehicles and more on public transportation as they age.

Table 1 Senior Population Figures

General Characteristics	Total Population	Persons 65 Years +	Percent
Washington	6,395,798	735,517	11.5%
Spokane County	446,706	55,838	12.5%

Source: 2000 US Census

The percentage of Spokane County residents living below the poverty level (13.3%) is slightly higher overall than the national average (12.7%), but is much higher in several specific areas. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, more than 15% of residents in Airway Heights, Cheney, the City of Spokane, and Deer Park live below the poverty level, as shown in Table 2.

² The 2005 Spokane and Kootenai County Regional Travel Survey is included as Appendix C of this Plan.

Table 2 Median Income by Location

	2000 Population	Median Household Income in 1999	Percent Below Poverty Level
Spokane County	446,714	\$37,308	12.5%
Airway Heights	4,500	\$29,829	22%
Cheney	10,130	\$22,593	31%
City of Spokane	201,600	\$32,273	16%
Deer Park	3,017	\$32,470	15.1%
Fairchild Air Force Base	4,357	\$33,512	5%
Greenacres	5,158	\$36,290	10.5%
Liberty Lake	4,660	\$60,854	3.2%
Medical Lake	3,758	\$42,159	14.8%
Opportunity	25,065	\$38,658	9%
Otis Orchards-East Farms	6,318	\$46,946	4.2%
Trentwood	4,388	\$41,128	8.6%
Veradale	9,387	\$46,676	4.1%

Source: U.S. Census

As Table 3 illustrates, 19% of Spokane County residents are considered disabled, which is higher than the rest of the country, at 15%. In Washington State, 15% of total residents are considered disabled.

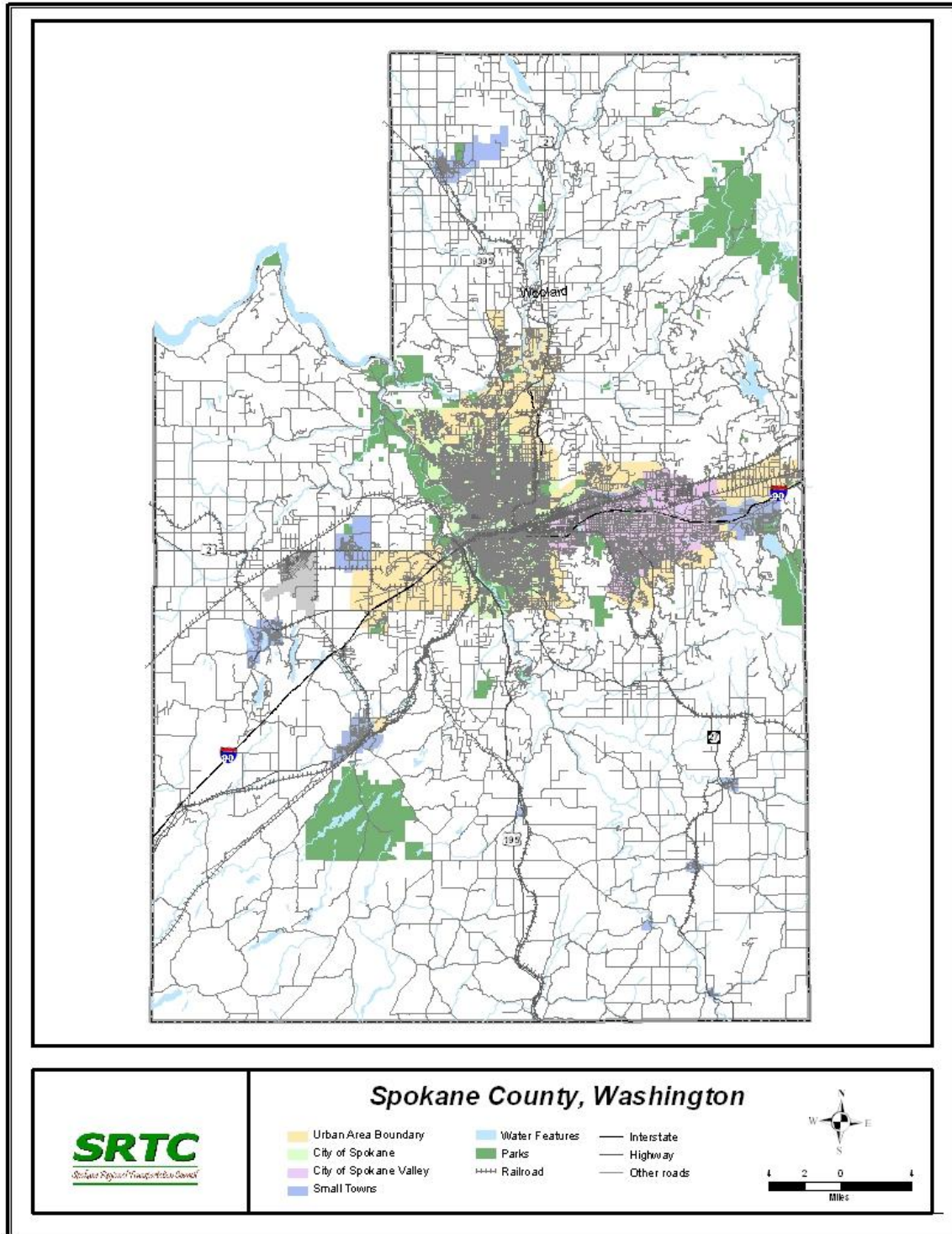
For this Table, the definition of 'disability' is consistent with definitions reported in the 2000 Census, which included two questions with a total of six subparts with which to identify people with disabilities. This definition differs from that used to determine eligibility for paratransit services required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To qualify for ADA paratransit services, an individual's disability must prevent him/her from independently being able to use the fixed-route transit service, even if the vehicle itself is accessible to persons with disabilities (i.e. lift or ramp equipped).

Table 3 Disability Status (Population 5 Years and Older)

	Total Population	# of People With Disabilities	Percent
Spokane County	446,706	72,669	19%
Washington	6,395,798	981,007	15%
United States	299,398,484	49,746,248	15%

Source: U.S. Census

Fig. 1 Map of Spokane County



Service Inventory

Currently, there are a number of organizations providing transportation services in Spokane County. Several of these providers offer transportation only to specific client groups, charge for their services, or restrict use based on specific eligibility requirements. Spokane Transit Authority is currently the only service open and affordable to all members of the general public. However, STA's service area does not extend throughout Spokane County. A map of the Spokane County PTBA is included as Figure 2.

Care Cars

Care Cars is a program that offers volunteer transportation service for persons who are too frail to use paratransit service, or have a disability and live outside of the paratransit service area in Spokane County. They are able to provide door-through-door volunteer escort transportation to medical related appointments. Most of the service is provided by volunteers using their personally owned vehicles, though the program can also secure wheelchair-accessible taxis and still arrange for a volunteer to escort the consumer to and from the medical related appointment. Care Cars provides over 4,000 rides per year for over 300 ambulatory seniors who are medically fragile. Clients are pre-screened over the telephone and must be eighteen years of age or older, need an escort and have no other means of transportation. Volunteer drivers are recruited, screened, and go through an orientation process.

On October 27, 2009, ALTCEW was awarded \$259,726 from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to provide transportation services for individuals with disabilities living throughout Spokane County as part of the Federal Transit Administration New Freedom Program (Section 5317). The match for this program requires a 50% local match. With a portion of the funding, ALTCEW entered into a contract with Care Cars to provide transportation service for those who need assistance.

Caring Concierge

Caring Concierge is a for-profit, fee-based business that provides a variety of personal services to the general public, including transportation for ambulatory clients. People, including those who are elderly or disabled, call in advance to set up transportation to their destination, whether to medical appointments, shopping or personal errands. The owner of the local Caring Concierge franchise is a social worker, willing to attend appointments with clients, in order to facilitate conversations with medical staff, especially for seniors with dementia. Services can be retained on a routine basis or individually as needed.

Caritas Center

Churches in northwest Spokane united to form *Caritas Center*, a neighborhood center serving the area north of Wellesley and west of Division and the Spokane County portion of the 99026 zip code, on the east side of the river. One of the services provided by the Caritas Center is limited, ambulatory transportation for seniors or people who are disabled who require transportation help in order to remain living in their own home. This service is part of Catholic Charities' Volunteer Chore Services program. Citizens wishing to use the services must be pre-approved Caritas clients and are required to call approximately two weeks in advance to set up transportation for medical appointments and necessary shopping trips. The service is free to clients, but is constrained by limited resources.

Catholic Charities Volunteer Chore Services

Catholic Charities Volunteer Chore Services is a partnership between volunteers and individuals in need. Volunteer drivers transport ambulatory senior citizens on a low-income and adults with disabilities from their homes to medical appointments and to the grocery store. Drivers also deliver bags of food/commodities monthly to clients who are confined to their home. Drivers provide the vehicle and auto insurance and must pass a Washington State Patrol background check. Clients are screened over the telephone to determine eligibility and then are required to call 48 hours in advance to schedule transportation.

There is no charge to the client for the service and mileage reimbursement is available to drivers. The program is funded primarily through state funding with some additional funding from the Catholic Charities Christmas collection.

There are Volunteer Chore Services offices serving all of Eastern Washington. The Spokane Chore office has approximately 100 different clients using their transportation services each month and thirty volunteer drivers.

DAV Transportation Network

The *Disabled American Veterans (DAV)* Transportation Network provides rides for veterans from all over the area to Spokane's Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities. The network is administered by DAV Hospital Service Coordinators (HSCs) at the VA's 172 medical centers across the United States. Veterans are asked to call several days in advance to arrange for transportation. All DAV van drivers are volunteers and do not receive payment for the services they provide.

The program is funded by DAV Departments and Chapters, which purchase and donate vans to the VA medical facilities for use in the Transportation Network. DAV HSCs also help veterans file claims for VA benefits and refer veterans to DAV National Service Officers for professional benefits assistance.

Greyhound

Greyhound provides inter-city bus service with several daily departures from Spokane to cities in Washington, Idaho, and Montana.

New Hope Resource Center

The *New Hope Resource Center* is a non-profit conglomeration of churches in far north Spokane County (Mead, Colbert, Elk, Chattaroy, and Riverside) who have united to offer a variety of services. One of those services is providing transportation for ambulatory seniors and people who are disabled. Pre-approved clients must call in advance to set up rides to services of any kinds, whether medical related or just to run errands. There is no set limit on mileage and transportation services are free.

Northwest MedVan

Northwest MedVan provides transportation Monday through Friday within a specified service area to appointments at the four area hospitals, St. Luke's Rehabilitation, and to the Doctors buildings connected with the hospitals, at no charge. Twenty-four hour advance notice is required and service is on a first come/first served basis.

Northwestern Trailways

Northwestern Trailways provides inter-city bus service with several daily departures from Spokane to cities in Washington and Idaho.

Washington State Department of Transportation's Travel Washington Gold Line

Travel Washington's newest route began service from Spokane to Kettle Falls in early September 2010. Named for one of the oldest natural resources in northeastern Washington, **Gold Line** runs two round-trips daily along US 395, connecting Kettle Falls, Colville, Arden, Addy, Chewelah, Loon Lake and Deer Park to Spokane and key transit hubs, including Greyhound, Amtrak, Northwestern Trailways, Spokane Transit and Spokane International Airport.

Omnibus, Inc.

Omnibus is a charter and shuttle operation, mostly serving the Spokane Airport. The company offers general public rides but charges more than local cab companies so sees little activity in this area. Omnibus operates five vans ranging from 21- to 25-passenger capability.

Our Place

Our Place is a non-profit ecumenical effort of seven churches in the West Central area of the City of Spokane. Among its services, *Our Place* offers very limited local transportation assistance for residents of West Central only. Clients who qualify and show proof of insurance, title and license can receive a \$15 gas voucher once per year. Individual bus passes are also provided to clients who demonstrate that they have no other form of transportation, up to 32 two-hour passes per year.

Quality Wheelchair Transport

Quality Wheelchair Transport accepts Medicaid and contracts with nursing homes, convalescent facilities, and the Veterans' Affairs Medical Center to provide transportation to people who are elderly, disabled and/or on a low-income. Quality Wheelchair Transport does not offer service to private homes. Clients must call 24 hours in advance to reserve a seat on one of the six vans used Monday through Friday. On Saturday, two vans are available for transport, and one on Sunday.

Precious Cargo

Precious Cargo is a for-profit, fee-based transportation service for people who are elderly and/or disabled in Spokane County, Coeur d'Alene, and Davenport. *Precious Cargo* is able to transport wheelchairs.

Senior Residential Facilities

A number of senior residential and assisted living facilities have vans to provide transportation for their residents. Most provide shopping trips once or twice a week and regularly scheduled medical trips.

Special Mobility Services

Special Mobility Services (SMS) is a non-profit provider of transportation to Medicaid recipients in the seven northeast counties of Washington. Transportation services are provided to Medicaid clients who are attending *Medicaid-paid appointments* when the client has no other means of transportation available. Clients are required to call 48 hours in advance to arrange transportation. Clients are screened in advance for eligibility. *Special Mobility Services* contracts with other transportation providers to give clients access to whatever type of services they require. Clients are normally only transported to the closest provider of type in their local area. However, clients are sometimes flown to Seattle or other large cities to receive treatments not available in northeast Washington. In addition, SMS provides rides through volunteers and distributes fuel vouchers and bus passes to clients who are able to drive or ride a bus, but don't have the funding to do so. *Special Mobility Services* also operates Rural Mobility Routes between Spokane and Ritzville, Davenport, Deer Park, Newport, and Priest River, Idaho.

Specialty Transport

Specialty Transport is a for-profit business that contracts with Specialty Mobility Services to provide transportation services to the elderly and disabled. Specialty Transport has been operating for six years and currently has six vans in steady use. Clients schedule rides by appointment in advance.

Wheels R Turning

Wheels R Turning is a for-profit, fee-based, non-emergency medical transportation service for people who are ambulatory, use wheelchairs, or need transport using a gurney to locations within Washington and Idaho. *Wheels R Turning* is able to transport larger wheelchairs.

Spokane Transit Authority (STA)

Spokane Transit Authority includes Airway Heights, Cheney, Medical Lake, Millwood, Liberty Lake, Spokane, Spokane Valley, and some unincorporated areas of Spokane County. Spokane Transit operates seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Spokane Transit also provides Paratransit service, a wheelchair-accessible shared ride service for individuals who are determined to be eligible for service because their disabilities prevent them from using the regular fixed route bus service. Paratransit operates in a service area that is comparable to that of the fixed route service and follows the rules required through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Vanpools are another transportation resource offered by STA for people who commute at least 10 one-way miles to work. Vanpool riders who live and work in approximately the same area commute together in an STA 7- or 15-passenger van. Each rider pays a low monthly fare based on daily travel distance and number of riders using the van. Fares cover the costs of operating the van, including gas, maintenance and insurance. One of the van's commuters volunteers to drive and receives defensive driving and safety training from STA.

Another program offered through the combined efforts of the paratransit and vanpool departments is "Special Use" vanpools. This limited number of vans is offered to local social service agencies that serve clients who also are eligible for STA paratransit services. The Special Use vans operate similarly to the commuter vanpools, except the Special Use vans can be used for any purpose as long as the trip would otherwise be taken on paratransit. At this time, a Washington State Special Needs Transportation grant covers the costs of operating the van, including gas, maintenance and insurance.

Mobility Training is a free Spokane Transit program that helps seniors and persons with disabilities gain more independence by assisting them to become fixed route bus riders. Program participants learn how the system works and most importantly, how the bus system works for the customer's specific needs and schedule. For each training, the STA Mobility Trainers design a one-on-one, individualized training plan, which includes accompanying the customer on the bus.

The 2009 average fixed route weekday ridership on is 38,229, average Saturday ridership is 16,195, and average Sunday ridership is 8,553. Paratransit in 2009 provided 521,578 passenger trips and vanpool service provided 209,822 passenger trips.

Spokane Transit operates every day of the year and services approximately 38 routes. 11,152,841 passenger trips were taken on fixed route buses in 2009. Table 4 shows the route numbers, names, and ridership numbers for the top ten routes by ridership.

Table 4 Top STA Routes by Ridership

Route #	Route Name	2009 Annual Ridership
90	Sprague	1,290,240
25	Division	1,022,537
33	Wellesley	720,357
24	Monroe	714,302
44	29 th Avenue	491,000
27	Crestline	447,007
61	Highway 2	347,517
66	Eastern Washington University	336,537
22	Northwest Boulevard	335,359
20	Spokane Falls Community College	329,004

Spokane Transit offers a variety of fare options to accommodate all riders. The adult fare is currently \$1.25 and will increase to \$1.50 on January 1, 2011. The reduced fare for those aged 65 or over, those with qualifying disabilities, and/or those with valid Social Security Administration documents is currently \$0.60 and will increase to \$0.75 on January 1, 2011. Currently, the paratransit fare is \$0.75 and will increase to \$1.25 and \$1.50 on January 1, 2011 and January 1, 2012, respectively. This increase will result in paratransit fares equal to the base fare on fixed route buses. Monthly passes are available for all fare types.

In addition, STA offers 'City Ticket' for \$25 a month. City Ticket drivers park their personal vehicles outside the downtown core at the Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena and ride to downtown on a STA shuttle bus. Service is as frequent as every five minutes during peak commute hours.

Eastern Washington University (EWU) 'Eagle Pass' allows EWU faculty, staff and students to ride free by swiping their EagleCard when boarding the bus. The partnership between Spokane Transit and EWU is designed to reduce additional parking lots, lower student living costs and meet the state-mandated commute trip reduction goals for reducing employee commuter traffic. The program is paid for by EWU Parking Services, the University, and Associated Students of EWU.

Needs Assessment

Stakeholders identified the following needs for public transportation and public transportation alternatives in Spokane County³:

- Expanded STA routes/route hours.
- Service is needed for persons living outside the STA paratransit boundary.
- Assistance for helping pay transit fares is needed for persons who are living on low incomes.
- Additional capacity for bicycles on buses.
- Additional transportation providers for people who are elderly or disabled or on a low-income. Several of the non-profit providers contacted by telephone for this plan said that funding is minimal and the need is maximal. As one program director described it, 'Business is *too good*.'
- Sidewalk improvements for increased accessibility.
- Due to declining resources, additional funds will be needed to provide public transportation services to the rural area.
- Need to assist with relocation of potential employees as well as current employees that lose or may lose transit service to urban centers in order to provide better access to jobs and services.
- Increased numbers of Special Use vans.
- Sidewalks installed on streets that don't currently have any.
- Sidewalks/bus stops cleared of snow more effectively and efficiently; improved accessibility on sidewalks/bus stops for people who use wheelchairs.
- Service to people who are elderly or disabled outside of STA's paratransit service boundary. Access to transportation is a significant challenge for people who are disabled who live outside of the paratransit service area.
- Provide transportation services connecting Kootenai County to Spokane and/or Spokane Transit.
- Transportation is needed from rural areas, such as outside of Spokane County lines, to Spokane.
- Implement a streetcar system through downtown Spokane to the U-District and other districts.
- Improved north-south roadway capacity through the Spokane area, such as with the completion of the North Spokane Corridor.
- Place shelters at more bus stops.
- There is significant demand for medical transportation in Spokane County, which is relatively well served by SMS and other agencies, but could use additional providers.
- An alternative to STA is needed when fixed route and Paratransit rides are too long for people who are ill or extremely frail.
- There is significant demand for transportation in Spokane County for citizens *not* qualified for Medicaid. Many of the current non-Medicaid providers say their budgets are extremely tight and they aren't sure from year to year if they will be able to retain funding.
- Increased options for basic non-medical trips such as groceries or prescriptions or for non-emergency medical services such as alternative health care, elective procedures, and dental services. There are companies who charge to take clients to do everyday errands, but not many who do it free-of-charge or for reduced rates.
- There are growing concerns regarding the future transportation needs of an increasingly aging population, particularly those with low incomes.
- STA does not offer special services, such as increased security, that may be required for mental health patients.

³ Comments used to compile Needs Assessment list were gathered from public comments received through the North East Transportation Study, East Valley/West Rathdrum Prairie Transportation Study, Bridging the Valley Study, South Spokane Transportation Study, On-Board Passenger Study, STA TDP; STA one-on-one provider meetings, and the Spokane and Kootenai County Regional Travel Survey.

- Transportation options are needed for clients who are not allowed to use STA services due to behavioral problems.
- Access to jobs for people on low-incomes and residents who are disabled is a major concern.
- Increased transportation options for juveniles and young adults in the county who are unable to drive and have difficulties improving their lives because they do not have reliable transportation to employment.
- STA bus and paratransit operations do not cover the off-shift times (late night and/or early morning) often associated with entry-level employment.
- Except for STA fixed route and local taxi services, there is very little transportation service that can be reserved on the same day that service is needed.
- The depressed economy in rural areas of Spokane County, combined with increasing housing prices has led to increased levels of poverty in rural communities. Many of these households cannot afford to operate a car. Transportation between rural areas and job centers is a priority need. Establishing fixed routes in rural areas is not justifiable because the population densities do not warrant the service.

Due to funding constraints Spokane County has not been able to contribute match money for the North Spokane County Service that SMS operates with a WSDOT 5311/Rural Mobility grant. The service has been operating at capacity for some time and SMS is not able to meet the demand with the current level of funding. SMS intends to apply for additional WSDOT funding and look for alternate sources of match money in the hopes of expanding service, especially to Deer Park. SMS is also finding that there is an unmet need for transportation in Southern Spokane County.

In September 2010 the Kalispel Tribe hosted a public meeting to identify unmet transportation needs within the local communities, as part of the transportation updates of the Human Service Plan through the North Eastern Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization. There were seven identified needs or gaps in service reported during the community meeting. They are listed as follows:

- KALTRAN has a difficult time getting to some of the people in their transit service area. Many residences have driveways that are difficult for a bus to access and so, depending on the situation, they may have the passenger meet the bus on the highway. They usually work with the passenger to identify the safest location possible for providing that trip.
- Need for transportation service near Sacheen Lake and Davis Lake. KALTRAN provides a needed service along State Highway 211.
- Need for transportation on weekends for individuals to access the cities of Airway Heights and Spokane, and the Northern Qwest Resort and Casino, for employment and various social and cultural activities.
- Need for transportation from Metaline and Lone (couple times per week). This service may be provided by KALTRAN in the future.
- KALTRAN indicated that they receive a lot of calls on the Le Clerc Road side (north of State Highway 20 which has the river between Le Clerc Road and State Highway 20 and hence acts as a physical barrier). They do accommodate those trips as best as they can due to their existing schedule.
- Needs for identified bus stops in the KALTRAN service area, especially in Newport and Lone. Many times, passengers are unsure where to wait for the bus and start walking along the highway for fear of missing the bus.
- There are many people from the Diamond Lake area (long US Highway 2) that would like to go to the Wellness Center. They currently have to connect with the Newport Shuttle to go into Newport or get a ride to the 211 corridor to connect with KALTRAN to access services into the Wellness Center.

Local Coordinated Planning

The Coordinated Plan required by SAFETEA-LU builds on cooperative efforts already visible in the Spokane region. Agencies that provide transportation services in Spokane County recognize the need

for coordination and fill in accordingly, in an effort to plug gaps in transportation needs. Some examples are:

- Special Mobility Services contracts with smaller agencies such as Specialty Transport.
- Eastern Washington University has made special arrangements with STA to provide free bus passes to students in an effort to reduce vehicle miles traveled and address its parking shortage.
- A few Spokane Transit vanpools currently run between Kootenai County and Spokane, reducing the number of single occupancy vehicles on Interstate 90 during the workweek.
- SRTC and STA coordinated on the 2002 On Board Passenger Survey⁴ of STA riders to gauge public transportation users' wants and needs.
- Local agencies such as SRTC, STA, Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, and Washington State Department of Transportation work with the County's Commute Trip Reduction program to encourage citizens to bike, walk, carpool, vanpool, ride the bus to work, or use any other alternative to driving alone.
- The Care Cars program cannot serve citizens in wheelchairs so refers them to other agencies and companies.
- STA provides a limited number of accessible Special Use vans to social service agencies to help fill the transportation gaps faced by their clients.
- With funding from the Washington State Special Needs Transportation grant program, STA provides Mobility Training and matches funds for the current JARC program.

Strategies

Starting in Fiscal Year 2006, projects funded through three programs included in SAFETEA-LU are required to be derived from a locally-developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. Those programs are: Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC, Section 5316), New Freedom (Section 5317), and the Formula Program for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310).

The programs focus on the needs of people whose transportation needs cannot be met through means such as access to automobiles or public transportation. The Spokane County coordinated plan will use the Washington State statutory definition of people with special transportation needs: "those people, including their attendants, who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age, are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation."

The three programs and examples of eligible projects are described below:

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

The purpose of the JARC program is to fund local programs that offer job access services for low-income individuals. Federal funds are distributed on a formula basis reflecting that area's low-income population. When used for operating purposes, JARC funds must be matched 50/50. Capital projects are matched on an 80% JARC/20% local basis. Matching funds cannot come from other Federal Transit programs but can be matched by other federal programs, local or state funds.

Examples of eligible JARC projects include:

- Later night and weekend public transportation service
- Reverse commutes between Spokane and Kootenai County
- Guaranteed Ride Home Programs
- Vanpools to improve access to employment or training sites

⁴ The 2002 On Board Passenger Survey is included as Appendix B of this Plan.

New Freedom Program

The New Freedom Program provides funding to serve persons with disabilities. The objective of the New Freedom Program is to provide new or enhanced public transportation and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the ADA for individuals with disabilities in both rural and urbanized areas. Federal funds are distributed based on an area's population of people with disabilities. The match requirements for New Freedom programs are the same as for JARC.

Examples of programs eligible New Freedom funds include:

- Alternative transportation programs for people with disabilities to access employment
- Provide transportation in geographic areas beyond the paratransit service area
- Provide transportation to people too frail to use paratransit
- Build transportation facilities such as sidewalks, accessible bus stops and shelters

Elderly and Disabled Program (Section 5310)

Funds for this program are allocated by formula for capital costs of providing services to seniors and people with disabilities. Typically, vans or small buses are available to support non-profit transportation providers. A 20% match is required.

Solutions Suggested for Mitigating Needs

In an effort to meet the needs listed above and implement additional public transportation and alternative public transportation services in Spokane County, it is recommended that the following steps be taken:

- Provide more extensive training for drivers who work with citizens in wheelchairs.
- Coordinate Medicare, Special Mobility Services, and Spokane Transit to provide better, more expansive service.
- Meet with employers to discuss where transportation boundaries are and what is available to get employees and/or customers to their businesses.
- Consider compensating family members, friends, neighbors, etc. for providing transportation.
- Create private/public partnerships to provide transportation services.
- Provide more special needs vans to agencies.
- Develop a 'pool' of personal care attendants for all agencies to use when an attendant is needed to accompany clients to medical appointments.
- Create a program for agencies to share vans.
- Educate agencies and citizens that they can use Special Mobility Services for traveling rural routes.
- Get citizen groups more involved.
- Examine and reconsider current structure of Paratransit corridor.
- Develop alternate service outside of Spokane Transit.
- Educate public on paratransit service area.
- Develop a 'travel trainer' or 'bus buddy' program of volunteers who either teach elderly and disabled people how to use the bus and paratransit or who actually ride with them to make sure they reach appointments and receive the help they need.

Implementation Strategies

In order to accomplish the suggested mitigation methods above, the following steps are recommended:

1. Build on and continue to improve communications, cooperation, and coordination between SRTC, STA, human service providers, human service transportation providers and other groups or individuals in the Spokane region who are interested in transportation for seniors, those on low incomes, people who are disabled, and the people who are striving to increase their employability.

2. Convene meeting of human service providers with a special interest in seniors, people who are disabled and/or employment for review of, additions to, and finalization of public transportation and public alternative transportation needs. (First meeting held September 2007)
3. Establish a Public Transportation – Human Services Coordinated Planning Working Group to improve future planning processes, update the Coordinated Plan, and establish program funding prioritization criteria. Additionally, the Working Group will be responsible for recommending the prioritized programs to the SRTC Board of Directors and the STA Board of Directors.
4. With input from the Working Group, expand the larger stakeholder list to continually assure comprehensive representation of social service providers.

The Working Group will, at least, be comprised of:

Representative from SRTC

Representative from STA

Representative from the Medicaid provider

Representative from alternative transportation providers

Representative from social service providers for seniors

Representative from social service providers for people who are disabled

Representative from service providers for people on low-incomes seeking employment

5. Reconvene large stakeholder meeting at least once a year for continual coordination and long-range planning.
6. Work with local agencies to improve sidewalks and ramps for access to transit stops.

Additional suggestions were given during the public comment period, including a letter of support from Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington suggesting some specific uses for available funds, a request from a citizen to adjust an existing STA route in order to service more elderly and disabled citizens living near the Sunset Hill in Spokane, and a letter from the Kalispel Tribe outlining Tribal transportation needs and a new Tribal Transportation System that is in the works for 2008.

The Transit System will serve the Kalispel Indian Reservation near Usk and Cusick and Reservation lands in Airway Heights. It will be designed to provide better service to tribal members who work or live in Spokane, deliver tribal members to appointments in Airway Heights, improve transportation from the Reservation to Spokane and vice versa, and provide transportation between rural areas and job centers.

Those letters and comments can be found in Appendix D of this Plan.

Appendix A SRTC Public Involvement Policy

Available on the SRTC website: <http://www.srtc.org/Publications/documents-plans-studies/08%20PIP%20FINAL.pdf>

Appendix B STA On-Board Passenger Survey

Available from Spokane Transit: <http://www.spokanetransit.com/contact-sta/>

Appendix C

2005 Spokane and Kootenai County Regional Travel Survey

Available on the SRTC website: <http://www.srtc.org/Publications/documents-plans-studies/HTCS%20final%20report.pdf>

Appendix D Public Comment

Public Comments Received Regarding Spokane County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

- The match required to receive SAFETEA-LU money can be a major barrier to area social service agencies.
- Perhaps classifications should be developed to determine how severe a citizens' disability is.
- It is difficult to find services for younger people in wheelchairs.
- Lack of sidewalks is a major issue in the Spokane area.
- More protected, clean, covered bus shelters are needed in the area.
- There is going to be a push in effect to educate government agencies to take into consideration the age wave that is approaching. The amount and affect of 'baby boomers' should be incorporated into every plan and document developed.
- Jurisdictions should look into some of the new kinds of crosswalks being used in European countries.
- Start a public service campaign of how to behave on public transit.

2010 Amendment Comments



October 28, 2010

To: Spokane Regional Transportation Council
221 West First Avenue, Suite 310
Spokane, WA 99201

From: Kalispel Tribal Transportation Program

Re: Updates to the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

I am writing this letter in regards to our request to update the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan through the SRTC. In September 2010 the Kalispel Tribe hosted a public meeting to identify unmet transportation needs within the local communities, as part of the transportation updates of the Human Service Plan through the North Eastern Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization. There were seven identified needs or gaps in service reported during the community meeting. They are listed as follows:

- KALTRAN mentioned the difficulties getting to some of the people in their transit service area. Many residences have driveways that are difficult for a bus to access and so, depending on the situation, they may have the passenger meet the bus on the highway. They usually work with the passenger to identify the safest location possible for providing that trip.
- Need for transportation near Sacheen Lake and Davis Lake. KALTRAN provides a needed service along State Highway 211.

- Need for transportation on weekends for individuals to access Airway Heights to the casino, the youth population who would like to go to Spokane for work, and for other social activities such as going to the mall.
- Need for transportation from Metaline and Lone (couple times per week). KALTRAN indicated that there is a need that might be fulfilled by its program in the future.
- KALTRAN indicated that they receive a lot of calls on the Le Clerc Road side (north of State Highway 20 which has the river between Le Clerc Road and State Highway 20 and hence acts as a physical barrier). They do accommodate those trips as best as they can due to their existing schedule.
- Needs for identified bus stops in the KALTRAN service area, especially in Newport and Lone. Many times, passengers are unsure where to wait for the bus and start walking along the highway for fear of missing the bus.
- There are many people from the Diamond Lake area (long US Highway 2) that would like to go to the Wellness Center. They currently have to connect with the Newport Shuttle to go into Newport or get a ride to the 211 corridor to connect with KALTRAN to access services into the Wellness Center.

The Kalispel Tribe is requesting that these identified needs be added as an amendment to the current plan as it stands now, so that we meet the requirements to apply for both State and Federal funding. I have attached copies from the NEWRTPO Human Service Plan, as back up documentation to support the identified needs. Please let me know if there is any other information that you may need or questions that you may have.

Thank you.

Julia Seyler
Transportation Manager
Kalispel Tribe of Indians
509-671-6523

From: Howell, Gordon [mailto:GHowell@spokanetransit.com]

Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2010 3:49 PM

To: Ryan Stewart

Cc: Otterstrom, Karl; Millbank, Susan; Hynes, Mike

Subject: 2010 Plan updates SHv1.docx

Attached are edits for the Coordinated Plan. Delete the strikethrough and add all text highlighted in red. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Updates to Human Services Transportation Plan

On Page 1:

Paragraph 3 should read:

The Spokane County PTBA was formed in 1981 by an overwhelming majority of ~~the voters in Spokane County~~ **Spokane County voters**. At the same time, a three-tenths of one percent (0.3%) sales tax was approved to fund the transit authority. In 2004 voters within the PTBA authorized an **temporary**, additional 0.3% sales tax to fully fund STA. ~~This second 0.3% sunsets in 2009.~~ **This increase was made permanent in 2008 with nearly 70% voter approval.** Spokane Transit is governed by a nine member board of directors made up of regionally elected public officials.

On Page 5:

Care Cars for Elders

Care Cars ~~for Elders~~ is a program ~~offered through Spokane Mental Health~~ that offers volunteer transportation service for **seniors** ~~those~~ who need assistance getting to medical appointments. Care Cars provides over ~~4,500~~ **4,000** rides per year for **over 300** ambulatory seniors who are medically fragile. Clients are prescreened over the telephone and must be sixty years of age or older, need an escort and have no other means of transportation. Volunteer drivers are recruited, screened, and go through an orientation process. ~~They use their personal cars to transport clients and are reimbursed for gas through funds provided by Spokane County, donations and fundraisers. Many of the volunteers give up their mileage reimbursement to help the program's financial situation.~~

~~Care Cars for Elders lost its funding from Spokane Mental Health three years ago. The Spokane County Commissioners stepped in with some funding and a warning for Care Cars to broaden its financial support.~~

On October 27, 2009, ALTCEW was awarded \$259,726 from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to provide transportation services for individuals with disabilities living throughout Spokane County as part of the Federal Transit Administration New Freedom Program (Section 5317). The match for this program requires a 50% local match. With a portion of the funding, ALTCEW entered into a contract with Care Cars to provide transportation service for those who need assistance.

On Page 6:

Paragraph 4 should read:

Greyhound

~~Greyhound operates intercity buses into Spokane via Interstate 90 to/from Idaho and the west side of Washington State. Eastbound trips leave Spokane at 9 a.m. and 6:15 p.m. daily. Westbound trips leave at 12:00 a.m., 7:25 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. daily.~~

Greyhound provides inter-city bus service with several daily departures from Spokane to cities in Washington, Idaho, and Montana.

Northwestern Trailways

Northwestern Trailways provides inter-city bus service with several daily departures from Spokane to cities in Washington and Idaho.

Washington State Department of Transportation’s Travel Washington Gold Line

Travel Washington’s newest route began service from Spokane to Kettle Falls in early September 2010. Named for one the oldest natural resources in northeastern Washington, **Gold Line** runs two round-trips daily along US 395, connecting Kettle Falls, Colville, Arden, Addy, Chewelah, Loon Lake and Deer Park to Spokane and key transit hubs, including Greyhound, Amtrak, Northwestern Trailways, Spokane Transit and Spokane International Airport.

On Page 8:

~~Travel~~ **Mobility** Training is a free Spokane Transit program that helps seniors and persons with disabilities gain more independence by assisting them to become fixed route bus riders. Program participants learn how the system works for the customer’s specific needs and schedule. For each training, the STA ~~Travel~~-**Mobility** Trainers design a one-on-one, individualized training plan which includes accompanying the customer on the bus.

~~Funding for STA’s services is largely provided by a local sales tax only levied within the Public Transportation Benefit Area (a special taxing district established by Washington State for the purpose of providing public transportation). By state law, the only legal means of local public funding for transit agencies is through a sales and use tax of no more than 0.9% on taxable purchases. Currently, STA collect 0.6%. Voter approval is required before a tax can be levied.~~

The ~~2009~~ average **fixed route** weekday ridership on STA buses is ~~29,038~~ 38,229, average Saturday ridership is ~~16,195~~ 122,123, and **average** Sunday is ~~8,553~~ 6,808; ~~up 15% between August 2005 and August 2006.~~ Paratransit ridership increased 6% from August to August. **Paratransit in 2009 provided 521,578 passenger trips and vanpool service provided 209,822 passenger trips.** ~~Total customer trips for vanpool service rose significantly, up 43% from August ’05 to August ’06 due to putting additional vans into service.~~

Spokane Transit services approximately 39 routes, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Nine out of the top ten routes for ridership are along major arterials in the urban area, particularly in north Spokane. Table 4 shows the route numbers, names and ridership numbers for the top ten routes.

Spokane Transit operates every day of the year and services approximately 38 routes. 11,152,841 passenger trips were taken on fixed route buses in 2009. Table 4 shows the route numbers, names, and ridership numbers for the top ten routes by ridership.

Table 4. Top STA Routes by Ridership

Route #	Route Name	2009 Annual Ridership
90	Sprague	1,290,240
25	Division	1,022,537
33	Wellesley	720,357
24	Monroe	714,302
44	29 th Avenue	491,000
27	Crestline	447,007
61	Highway 2	347,517
66	Eastern Washington University	336,537
22	Northwest Boulevard	335,359
20	Spokane Falls Community College	329,004

~~Spokane Transit offers a variety of fare options to accommodate all riders. The adult one-way fare is \$1.00. The Reduced Fare for people who are age 65 or over, those with qualifying disabilities, and/or those with valid Social Security Administration documents and Paratransit fares are 50 cents, and a day pass is \$2.50. An adult pass is \$33 per month, a youth pass is \$20 per month (or a \$39.95 summer youth pass can be purchased that provides unlimited rides for the months of June, July and August), and a Reduced Fare pass is \$16.50 per month.~~

Spokane Transit offers a variety of fare options to accommodate all riders. The adult fare is currently \$1.25 and will increase to \$1.50 on January 1, 2011. The reduced fare for those aged 65 or over, those with qualifying disabilities, and/or those with valid Social Security Administration documents is currently \$0.60 and will increase to \$0.75 on January 1, 2011. Currently, the paratransit fare is \$0.75 and will increase to \$1.25 and \$1.50 on January 1, 2011 and January 1, 2012, respectively. This increase will result in paratransit fares equal to the base fare on fixed route buses. Monthly passes are available for all fare types.

On Page 9:

In addition, STA offers “City Ticket” for ~~\$19~~ \$25 per month. City Ticket drivers park their personal vehicles outside the downtown core at the Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena and ride downtown on an STA ~~Streetcar~~ shuttle bus. Service is as frequent as every five minutes during peak commute hours.

On Page 11:

Bullet 3 (Care Cars needs...) should be deleted.

The following bullets should be added for inclusion as part of the Needs Assessment:

- Sidewalk improvements for increased accessibility.
- Due to declining resources, additional funds will be needed to provide public transportation services to the rural area.
- Need to assist with relocation of potential employees as well as current employees that lose or may lose transit service to urban centers in order to provide better access to jobs and services.

On Page 12:

Bullet 1 should read:

- Except for STA fixed route and local taxi services, there is little transportation service that can be reserved on the same day that service is needed.

Bullets about “Care Cars for Elders” may need adjustment

- The Care Cars for Elders program cannot serve citizens in wheelchairs so refers them to other agencies and companies.
- ~~Care Cars for Elders also refers people who are not over 60 years of age to other providers, such as STA or Specialty Mobility Services.~~
- STA provides a limited number of accessible Special Use vans to social service agencies to help fill the transportation gaps faced by their clients.
- With funding from the Washington State Special Needs Transportation grant program, STA provides ~~Travel~~ Mobility Training and matches funds for the current JARC program. ~~and~~

~~partners with Feed Spokane (a consortium of free meal providers) to distribute monthly bus passes.~~

From: Millbank, Susan [mailto:SMillbank@spokanetransit.com]

Sent: Wednesday, October 13, 2010 12:29 PM

To: Ryan Stewart; Howell, Gordon

Cc: Glenn Miles

Subject: RE: Human Services Plan

Hi Ryan,

I gave Gordon a couple of updates for the needs assessment and I just thought of a couple more that have come up that I hope you will add.

I am sure that serving outside the paratransit boundary is already on the list, but just in case it is not, I want to add it.

Another re-occurring need is assistance for people who are living on low incomes to help pay transit fares.

Finally... more room for bicycles on buses.

Susan

From: Burkett, Lynn [mailto:BurkeLA@dshs.wa.gov]

Sent: Monday, November 15, 2010 3:04 PM

To: Ryan Stewart

Subject: RE: SRTC Call for Projects for the 2011-2013 Consolidated Public Transportation Grant Program

Thank you Ryan. I do want to note that the Care Cars description on page 5 with revisions still isn't quite accurate. Care Cars serves adults 18 and older who are too frail to use paratransit service, or have a disability and live outside of the paratransit service area in Spokane County. They are able to provide door-through-door volunteer escort transportation to medical related appointments. Most of the service is provided by volunteers using their personally owned vehicles, though the program can also secure wheelchair-accessible taxis and still arrange for a volunteer to escort the consumer to and from the medical related appointment.

Thanks again,

Lynn Burkett

Assistant Planner

Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington

(509) 458-2509 ext 212

burkela@dshs.wa.gov

From: Beth Mulcahy [mailto:bethm@sms1.org]

Sent: Friday, August 13, 2010 1:40 PM

To: Ryan Stewart

Subject: Public Transit -Human Services Plan

Hello, Ryan. Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Public Transit-Human Services Plan. We did have a few suggestions for additions to the plan.

On page 7, Special Mobility Services' description, you may want to change the second to the last sentence to read:

In addition, SMS provides rides through volunteers and distributes fuel vouchers and bus passes to clietns who are able to drive or ride a bus, but don't have the funding to do so.

Also, it might be worth mentioning that because of funding constraints Spokane County did not contribute match money for the North Spokane County Service that SMS operates with a WSDOT 5311/Rural Mobility grant. The service has been operating at capacity for some time and SMS is not able to meet the demand with the current level of funding. SMS intends to apply for additional WSDOT funding and look for alternate sources of match money in the hopes of expanding service, especially to Deer Park.

SMS is also finding that there is an unmet need for transportation in Southern Spokane County. SMS is proposing to apply to WSDOT for capital and operating funds for the following project: South Spokane County Expansion Project - Spokane-Mica-Freeman-Rockford-airfield- Latah-Plaza-Spangle-STA Plaza (8:00 a.m. finish) – Total route mileage 84 miles x 2/day=168 miles per day. Route to run twice per day five days per week, starting at 5:45 a.m. STA Plaza Downtown, then to STA Valley Transit Plaza, and then as stated above. The p.m. route could run the same way or we could go opposite direction. This will meet an unmet need for several communities within the Southern Spokane County who are currently without public transportation options.

Please feel free to contact me or Rusty Koontz, our Regional Manager located in Spokane (rustyk@specialmobility.org) if you have any questions.

Beth Mulcahy

Contract Administration Manager

Special Mobility Services

2101 NE Flanders

Portland OR 97232

503-232-1440 phone

503-232-2230 fax

From: Inga Note [mailto:inote@spokanevalley.org]
Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2010 8:01 AM
To: Ryan Stewart
Subject: RE: public transit human services plan

Suggest this addition to page 17.

Implementation Strategies

6. Work with local agencies to improve sidewalks and ramps for access to transit stops.

From: Otterstrom, Karl [mailto:KOtterstrom@spokanetransit.com]
Sent: Friday, December 10, 2010 3:20 PM
To: Ryan Stewart
Cc: Howell, Gordon; Millbank, Susan
Subject: Humans Services Plan - additional amendments

Hi Ryan,

The introduction was updated to say that nearly 70% favored the permanent sales tax in 2008. It was actually a smidge over 65%. So you can simply say 65% and drop "nearly 70%"

Also, our board structure now has a labor representative, making 10 members. The following paragraph could read "Spokane Transit is governed by a board of directors made up of nine elected officials and one non-voting labor representative.

Thanks

Karl