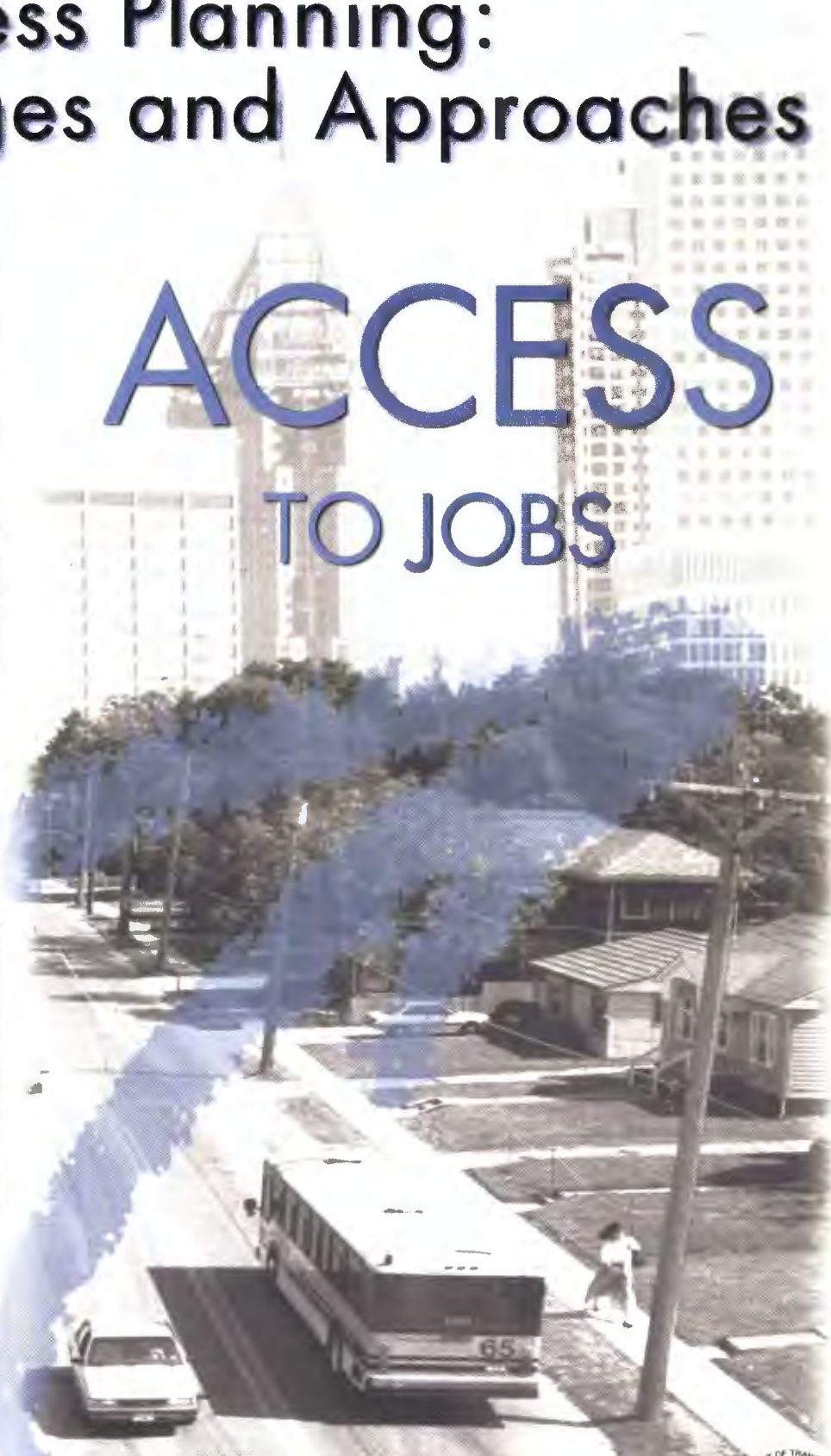


Job Access Planning: Challenges and Approaches



May 2001

ACCESS TO JOBS



Federal Transit Administration
Federal Highway Administration



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16. Abstract This document has been prepared to assist individuals and organizations as they plan and develop effective transportation services for people who are moving from public assistance programs to new or improved job opportunities. The Federal Transit Administration's Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) grant program is an example of one opportunity for states and local agencies to become involved in offering new or improved transportation services in their communities. This document can assist organizations in their job access planning efforts and is designed to benefit a wide variety of readers including public and private sector audiences. Successful job access transportation alternatives address both the short-term and long-term needs of individuals. The planning approach illustrated in this document is a step-by-step process for developing programs and services that can enable individuals to access jobs, childcare facilities and the services they need as they prepare to enter or advance in the workforce. Identifying stakeholders and establishing stakeholder groups to engage in collaborative planning efforts is a critical element of the process and is emphasized throughout the document. Representative organizations and agencies that can play an important role in identifying the needs of the target population and developing alternatives to successfully meet those needs are identified. Additional steps in the process include gathering available data, identifying gaps in existing transportation services and determining the unmet needs of individuals and employers in a community. Case studies are provided as examples of how areas around the country have addressed transportation issues relative to their unique community needs. In addition to moving the reader through a step-by-step planning approach, this document discusses planning considerations and different program objectives, along with information sources and analytical techniques associated with different levels of planning. Potential funding sources in addition to the JARC program are provided acknowledging the arena of opportunities the reader may wish to pursue to support job access services and programs in their community.					
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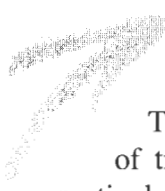
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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM



Welfare reform legislation, enacted in 1996, requires welfare recipients to work as a condition of receiving public assistance. One of the most significant barriers to finding and maintaining employment is lack of transportation. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has prepared this report to advance the development of transportation services for recipients, and former recipients of public assistance, particularly to access jobs and job-related services.

Although this guide presents an effective step-by-step approach to the planning and implementation of job access transportation services, it is not the only method. Several community transportation programs are illustrated.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), as the regional umbrella for transportation planning and other services, can improve coordination among local public and private agencies developing regional approaches to welfare to work transportation.

For purposes of this study, the “target population” of job access transportation has been defined as follows:

- Individuals participating in Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) programs or subsidized employment programs.
- Individuals participating in other public assistance programs, such as medical assistance and access to jobs.
- Low-income individuals at risk of needing public assistance.

Based on data availability and the desired results, it is the responsibility of localities, regions and states to refine the “target population” and the programs to implement.

This introductory chapter is a prelude to the issues surrounding welfare reform and job access planning. Subsequent chapters are as follows:

- Chapter II – Provides an overview of job access planning.
- Chapter III – Identifies stakeholders and their roles in the planning process.
- Chapter IV – Identifies information needs and potential sources of data.
- Chapter V – Describes the analysis process to identify unmet transportation needs.
- Chapter VI – Provides potential transportation solutions and funding sources.
- Appendix A – Provides an overview of welfare reform.
- Appendix B – Describes one approach to creating and conducting a cost/benefit analysis.

Welfare Reform & Regional Impacts

The Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, signed by President Clinton in 1996, changed social welfare policy throughout the United States. The Act requires most welfare recipients to work as a condition of receiving public assistance. Under the Act, the Federal Government provides funding to states in the form of block grants based on a combination of past federal expenditures on public assistance programs. The cash grant component of the Act is known as the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. States are responsible for creating their own public assistance programs and establishing eligibility and benefit levels. A more complete description of welfare reform and its impacts is found in Appendix A.

State, regional and local officials face significant challenges as they develop programs to meet local needs within the guidelines of the TANF program. These challenges include:

- A gap between the number of people seeking jobs and the number of suitable jobs available.
- The “spatial mismatch” between the locations of people seeking jobs and the locations of suitable jobs.
- The availability of jobs with wages that permit families to leave public assistance.
- The series of transportation concerns encountered by welfare recipients as they progress from job readiness training to part-time, full-time, and long-term jobs.

Planners have begun to recognize the critical role of transportation in linking people to employment. Historically, social service and other welfare organizations discounted the connection between transportation and welfare issues, emphasizing simple, short-term solutions, such as repairing a decrepit automobile or purchasing bus passes. Welfare reform has prompted social service organizations to analyze the adequacy of current transportation services, and to consider the opportunity to develop new, sustainable transportation services that will support a wider range of needs.

The metropolitan planning process takes a multi-jurisdictional approach to problem solving, engaging a wide variety of organizations in planning efforts and exploring a wide array of transportation services. This process is the appropriate venue to address job access needs.

Role Transportation Can Play

Transportation is the “to” in “welfare to work.” Welfare reform has made job access transportation a national priority, and it has opened doors for new sources of funding. Transportation services are becoming a distinguishable part of the human services support system. New and expanded transportation programs have been implemented to assist individuals in training, job searching, employment, and retention.

The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program, part of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), provides an opportunity for states and local agencies to become involved in offering new or improved transportation services. The JARC program is intended to fund transportation programs that assist welfare recipients and low-income families to access jobs. The program was initiated in 1999 and extends over a five-year period. Grants are to be used for the purchase of buses, vans and shuttles, or for the marketing of these services to employers and employees. Coordination among a broad group of stakeholders on a regional scale is an important feature of the program. Regional planning organizations such as metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are being encouraged to participate in planning efforts and to take a lead role in coordination and facilitation.

Projects and activities proposed under the JARC program must be incorporated into the Regional Job Access Transportation Plan. The Plan is meant to build upon existing welfare-to-work transportation planning activities and must identify the following:

- Geographic distributions of welfare recipients and low-income individuals.
- Geographic distributions of employment centers and employment related activities.
- Existing public, private, non-profit and human services transportation services.
- Gaps in existing transportation services between welfare recipients and low-income individuals, and employment centers and activities.
- Activities and projects designed to address the transportation gaps.
- Priority of each project or activity.

The complexity of the Plan will vary according to the area location and size of each community or region. Additional information regarding the Transportation Plan can be found at the FTA web site, <http://www.fta.dot.gov>.

Challenges Presented in Job Access Planning

As committees, task forces, and other stakeholders begin to develop transportation initiatives, they will be faced with a number of challenges. Considering the diverse geographic characteristics of the country and the diversity of needs among low-income job seekers and welfare recipients, the task can seem overwhelming. Examples of these challenges are summarized below:

- New Partnerships – Job access planning must be a collaborative effort involving a variety of stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. Resulting partnerships are often non-traditional; they may generate contradictory views and opinions, or create new, contrary perspectives on organizational roles and responsibilities.
- 2nd and 3rd Shift Workers – Developing transit alternatives to accommodate 2nd and 3rd shift schedules presents a challenge. Public transportation may not operate during late evening or early morning hours to meet unconventional start and end times. Public transportation

providers may be aware of the need for additional service, but may be unable to afford the operational costs.

- Job Placement, Advancement and Retention – Transportation options must reflect the long-range prospects of employment. It is imperative to look beyond transporting an individual to his or her first day on the job. Flexible alternatives should be designed for those who need public transportation for their first job, and for those who need long-term public transportation.
- Personal Automobile – Vehicles owned by the target population are often aged and undependable. Programs can provide interim transportation solutions until they have sufficient income to purchase and operate a reliable vehicle.
- Appropriate Service Type – Transportation needs vary in urban, suburban and rural areas. The challenge lies in identifying locations of prospective employers and employees, the number of individuals who own vehicles, and the feasibility of public transportation.
- Specialized Transportation Programs – A vast number of transportation programs have evolved to meet the needs of a variety of populations. Social service agencies, schools, churches, civic and elderly organizations have come forward to provide transportation services.
- Existing Investments – Maximizing existing resources eliminates the duplication of services and reduces the number of uncoordinated new systems. Varying types of services, multiple origins and destinations, and unsuitable hours of operation make coordination a formidable task.
- New Program Strategies – Changes in values, lifestyles, economics, and demographics prompt innovation in transportation services.
- New or Additional Services – Creating new or additional services must take into consideration the time of implementation, acquisition of resources, and communication with prospective customers.
- Employer Support – Obtaining support from employers is crucial to the success of transportation programs directed to sustain longer-term employment, yet providing outreach to employers is labor intensive and never ending.

Potential Solutions

Transportation initiatives have been implemented around the country with varying degrees of success. Although many of these programs are new, some states have been operating programs long enough to evaluate their progress. Transportation alternatives designed to meet the needs of urban, suburban and rural communities are discussed in this document, including vanpool

services, fixed route enhancements, school buses, emergency ride home programs, employer involvement, reimbursement programs and organizing resource centers. Transportation alternatives should be developed based on the needs of the target population and employers in each community. The outcome of these services should promote self-sufficiency, be sustainable over the long run, and maximize the use of existing services.

Examples of Regional Approaches

The following examples briefly identify regional job access initiatives. A more detailed description of initiatives is provided in Chapter VI.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Works, (or W-2), is Wisconsin's employment-based assistance program for low-income families with dependent children. This program replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

In 1997, the State of Wisconsin embarked on a series of studies that focused on using public transportation to link people on public assistance with employment prospects. The first study focused on Milwaukee County, with similar studies following for Dane, Wood, Brown, Outagamie, Calumet and Winnebago Counties. These Counties represented a range of rural and urban environments and provided valuable information on transportation planning for people moving from public assistance programs to new or improved jobs.

The core group of stakeholders included senior staff from the following organizations: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Public Transit Section (Wis/DOT), the Wisconsin Urban Transit Association (WUTA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Examples of initiatives include:

- Expanding fixed route service hours to include early morning and later night service.
- Adding/improving weekend fixed route service.
- Providing shuttle service to County businesses and industrial parks.
- Transit service planning and coordination with employer groups, private companies and Transportation Management Associations (TMAs).

Philadelphia

Greater Philadelphia Works (GPW) is Philadelphia's \$54 million welfare program designed to find employment for 15,000 TANF recipients in two years. GPW efforts include intensive job placement and support services, a transitional work program, child-care and wage subsidies, transportation assistance, and services for the homeless and persons with substance abuse problems. The transportation component of GPW is a \$1.2 million effort focused on improving job access, job retention and job development.

The City of Philadelphia took the lead in developing transportation initiatives as part of the GPW program, and formed a group of stakeholders that participated in job access planning. The stakeholders included the representatives from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), Private Industry Council (PIC) of Philadelphia, two suburban Transportation Management Associations (TMAs), Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), and the City of Philadelphia. GPW transportation initiatives include the following:

- Transitional transit subsidies - SEPTA Pass Program
- Emergency Ride Home
- Transit Information Centers
- Transportation / Jobs Roundtables

New Jersey

Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) is New Jersey's welfare reform program designed to help welfare recipients find and maintain employment. The program is carried out at the county level and includes strong private sector partnerships and initiatives from many State Departments. The transportation element of the program is referred to as *New Jersey's Community Transportation Initiatives – Connecting People to Jobs*.

Initially, state organizations formed partnerships to address the mobility needs of WFNJ participants, low-income and other transit dependent persons. This group included stakeholders such as: the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJ DHS), the New Jersey Department of Labor (NJDOL), NJ Transit, and the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC). The following transportation initiatives were created:

- Local Demonstration Projects
- NJ Transit WorkPass Program
- Get a Job, Get a Ride!
- Transit Use Training Video
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- WFNJ Transportation Block Grant
- Statewide County Planning

Detroit

Michigan's welfare reform program, *To Strengthen Michigan Families (TSMF)*, provides a link to employment through job training and placement. The State's Family Independence Agency (FIA – formerly the Department of Social Services) is working with State and local departments of transportation and the Michigan Jobs Commission (MJC) to overcome barriers to employment.

The two major transit operators in the Detroit area are Suburban Mobility Authority on Regional Transit (SMART), and Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT). Working in collaboration with private corporations, non-profit human service agencies, chambers of commerce and government agencies, SMART and DDOT have designed several services to assist individuals in moving from welfare to work. These services include:

- Job Express
- Suburb to Suburb Routes
- Route Deviated Service
- Get a Job, Get a Ride
- Buses to Work
- SMART JobLine
- Metro-Lift

In addition to the transit agencies, the metropolitan planning organization, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) helped form a consortium of non-profit organizations, public agencies, and employers. Several of the newly created programs are listed below:

- Office of Mobility Management
- Guaranteed Ride to Work
- Regional Welfare to Work Plan
- Geographic Information System (GIS) Technology

Another agency playing an innovative role is the Metropolitan Affairs Coalition (MAC), a regional coalition of business, labor and government formed in 1958 to address public policy issues affecting the economic vitality of the region. MAC is a private non-profit civic organization co-located with SEMCOG, the Detroit area MPO. MAC's efforts geared toward transportation and employment include:

- TransitChoice
- EZ Ride
- SmartMatch
- Empowerment through Car Ownership Program
- Employer to Employer Job Ladder

San Luis Obispo County

California's welfare reform program, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), strives to assure that welfare is a temporary support in times of crisis, rather than a way of life. The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) addressed the issue of transportation in welfare reform by establishing the framework for a Welfare Mobility Plan prepared for San Luis Obispo County.

The key stakeholders in job access planning included the Department of Social Services, human resource agencies, training institutions, employers, transit and ridesharing service providers, job developers and CalWORKs participants. As a result, mobility barriers were identified and prioritized according to short, mid and long-term projects. Some of these projects include:

- Regional Transportation Guide
- Trip Planner Database Enhancements
- Guaranteed Ride Program
- Universal Transit Pass
- Shuttle Services
- Community Work Unit
- Personal Automobile Programs
- One-Stop Shop Centers

Minnesota

Minnesota's welfare reform program is referred to as the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP). MFIP is designed to help families increase their income, support movement toward self-sufficiency, prevent long-term dependence on welfare, and simplify the administration of the welfare system.

The McKnight Foundation, a major contributor to MFIP, is a private organization that funds programs assisting individuals, families, and communities to become more productive and self-sufficient. The Foundation has played a significant role with an investment of \$20 million in welfare to work activities throughout the State.

McKnight planning efforts were focused at the county level, with each of the 87 counties forming planning committees and developing transportation initiatives separately. Stakeholders involved in job access planning generally included individuals from similar organizations in each county, such as: Caseworkers, job counselors, program managers, transportation coordinators, transportation providers (local and metropolitan), human service staff, job trainers and representatives from the Metropolitan Council.

In 1997, the state allocated \$2 million for a two-year investment in transportation services in the seven county Minneapolis-St. Paul area for MFIP recipients. The seven counties were responsible for administering public assistance and employment programs. Planning efforts resulted in the following initiatives:

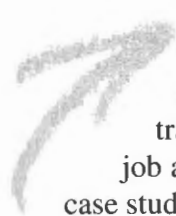
- Enhanced Fixed Route Service
- Purchase of Dial-a-Ride Service
- Reimbursement Programs
- Car Purchase/Repair Loan Programs
- Employer Outreach
- Specialized Programs for Immigrant Populations
- Shuttle Service

- Reverse Commute
- Shared-Ride Taxis
- Donated Cars
- Employer Provided Transportation
- Commuter Services
- Car Leasing
- Taxi Vouchers
- Volunteer Drivers

Kentucky

The “Empower Kentucky” Initiative is Kentucky’s welfare reform effort to reduce state government costs, increase revenue, and improve services by reengineering the state’s business systems. Developed under Empower Kentucky, the Human Service Transportation Delivery (HSTD) Program provides transportation services for non-emergency Medicaid trips, employment, and daycare.

II. JOB ACCESS PLANNING OVERVIEW



This chapter provides an overview of key components that can assist stakeholders as they engage in job access planning. Characteristics and needs of the target population, governmental structure and involvement, and existing transportation resources can vary from place to place with no single approach for job access planning. The information in this document outlines a useful approach with case studies at the end of each chapter illustrating each step in the planning process.

The graphic on the following page illustrates a regional framework and one approach to job access planning. The step-by-step process begins with organizing stakeholder groups and establishing goals and objectives for job access planning. Identifying the appropriate stakeholders and encouraging their involvement from the early stages of planning to service implementation is a critical element.

The next step is to identify and gather information that will enable stakeholders to identify unmet needs of the target population and employers in their community. Then, potential transportation alternatives to address those needs can be developed. Communities familiar with job access planning may choose to evaluate potential alternatives utilizing a cost/benefit analysis or other methods.

Establishing Stakeholder Groups

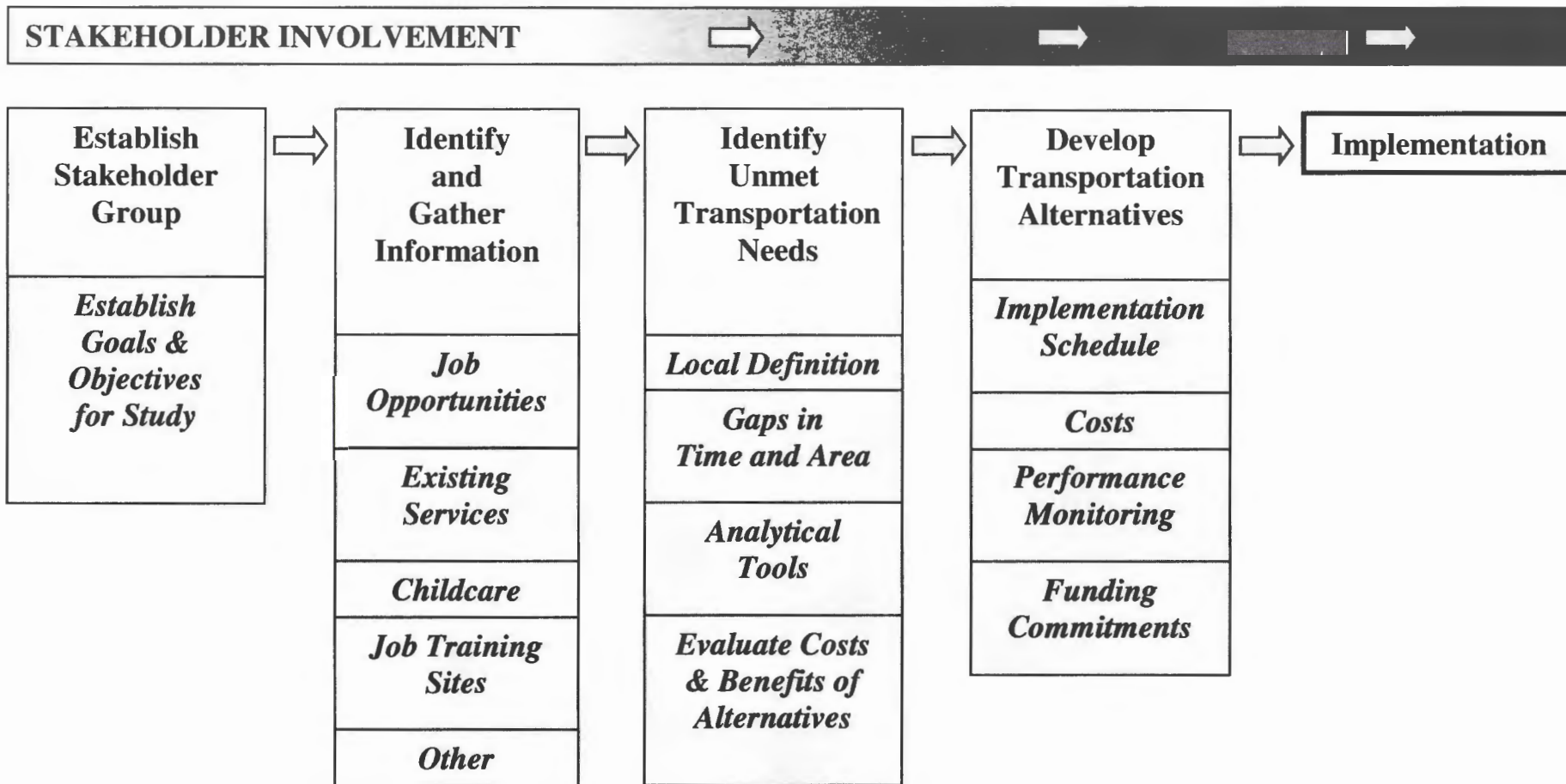
Successful job access planning begins with stakeholders coming together to address the transportation issues facing the target population. Stakeholders are decision-makers from agencies and organizations involved with providing services to the target population, and those who have a vested interest in the outcomes of job access planning. Stakeholders will vary from place to place, and most successful plans will involve them in a collaborative effort.

For purposes of this job access planning approach, stakeholders from various organizations are grouped into categories according to the type of service they provide to the target population. Examples of stakeholders are listed under the appropriate category below. These categories are referenced again in Chapter III:

Transportation Services Providers – includes stakeholders who provide a direct service. Examples include public and private transportation providers, or job placement organizations.

Transportation Support Services – includes stakeholders providing or administering support services. Examples include guaranteed ride home programs, transportation reimbursements, bus passes and vouchers for long and short-term assistance, enabling individuals to overcome transportation barriers to obtaining and retaining employment.

Access-to-Jobs Transportation Planning Approach



Transportation Service Coordination – includes stakeholders involved in coordinating services. Transportation brokers, Transportation Management Associations, transportation hotlines and information centers are a few examples.

Target Population Assistance – includes stakeholders who provide financial assistance, training and job search activities, childcare, healthcare and other services designed to enable the target population to become self-sufficient.

A further distinction of stakeholders should be made between primary and secondary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders typically represent the “front line” of services, for those who either interact directly with the target population or provide immediate services. They include case-workers, job placement specialists, employers and transportation providers. Secondary stakeholders are generally those working behind the scenes providing guidance to the front line workers and performing administrative functions. It is important for both sets of stakeholders to be involved; however, this study focuses on primary stakeholders and what they can bring to the planning process.

Communication between two primary stakeholders: transportation providers and welfare organizations, is critical to job access planning. These organizations represent different services; however, welfare reform links them together. Interaction between them is essential to identify needed services and strategies to deliver and pay for the services. Additional participants should include organizations responsible for regional planning functions. Participants may include local units of government or state agencies if they have responsibility for employment, job development, transportation service delivery, financial assistance, or job retention.

Another key element to successful stakeholder participation is the level of interest and commitment of each stakeholder. Members should be focused on identifying specific transportation challenges and finding solutions to those challenges. Successful planning requires commitment from stakeholders in the planning phases, the development and implementation phases, and program evaluation. Stakeholder involvement is discussed in greater detail in Chapter III.

Regional Differences

Welfare reform provides states the freedom to develop programs and program requirements. Each state determines how the welfare to work and public assistance programs will be administered and which public agencies will be responsible for program development, implementation, and evaluation. Responsibilities for leading or participating in plan development will vary from region to region with each region selecting the participants, such as service delivery organizations, social service and employment organizations and members of the target population.

Some states place responsibility for transportation planning on one regional organization, and responsibility for employment planning on another organization. In some states, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are encouraged or required to take the lead in transportation planning efforts. One or two agencies typically take the lead in job access planning by providing facilitation and direction to a larger work group.

Role of MPOs, COGs, etc

The role each stakeholder plays in job access planning will vary from place to place. It is often tied to services they provide, the territory they serve, their legal roles and responsibilities, and federal funding requirements/guidelines. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Councils of Governments (COGs) often have responsibility for regional transportation planning responsibilities. Therefore, they may be the appropriate organization to prepare plans, collect and analyze data, develop strategies, and allocate funds. MPOs are responsible for the prioritization of projects that span over a variety of highway, transit, mobility and job access needs. They can play a significant role in stimulating regional cooperation among agencies and help minimize the fragmentation of services provided in a community or region.

Regional planning organizations can improve coordination among public and private sector agencies developing regional welfare reform plans. MPOs and COGs often take a multi-jurisdictional approach to job access planning and problem solving, engaging a wide range of groups including social service, human resource and economic development agencies. Coordination among welfare reform agencies, under the guidance of such regional planning organizations, has led to effective transportation systems for “welfare to work” clients.

This structure is consistent with the planning process mandated by ISTEA and TEA-21. TEA-21 legislation requires that the metropolitan planning process coordinates the delivery of all Federally funded non-emergency transportation services. In addition, the bill requires MPOs to select applicants for FTA Access to Jobs funding on behalf of the region.

Grassroots Approach

The design of new services should utilize the experiences and insights of employment case-managers and target population members. Individuals representing these groups can identify both transportation barriers and successful components of existing services. Involving members of the target population in various ways adds perspective and increases the likelihood that strategies and services will meet the target population’s unmet needs for the short and long-term.

Data Gathering and Information

To identify job access transportation solutions, agencies must collect and analyze the appropriate data. Examples of useful information include locations of low-income populations, entry-level employment opportunities, childcare facilities, and existing transportation services. Information sources are discussed in greater detail in Chapter IV.

Identifying Unmet Transportation Needs

The ultimate goal of data collection and analysis is to identify the various types of transportation challenges and “gaps” in existing transportation services. Although analysis of the information gathered is a critical element of the process, some assumptions and conclusions will need to be made by the stakeholders to determine whether a transportation problem exists and each community may have a different definition of unmet transportation needs.

A number of factors may explain why a specific area is under-served by existing transportation services. Insufficient demand and high subsidies needed to justify services in some areas may be a major factor. Transit services may not operate during early morning or late evening hours to accommodate shift start and end times. Another factor may be that service cannot legally extend beyond a particular service area or boundary. Whatever the issue, local stakeholders will need to determine the extent of the problem and the best way to address it. Chapter V further addresses a process for identifying unmet transportation needs.

Analytical Tools

Data collection and analysis tools range from basic to very technical. An effective tool used in many areas is Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software that produces maps displaying various data. Maps make it possible to view complex information and the spatial relationship among them. Examples include showing where members of the target population live, likely employment sites and existing transportation routes.

Interviews and surveys can also be an effective tool for determining transportation needs. Target population members can provide valuable information regarding their access to existing transportation services and the type of transportation services they need. Additionally, interviews with employers can shed light on recruiting or attendance issues related to transportation problems. A discussion of analytical tools is presented in Chapter V.

Developing Transportation Alternatives

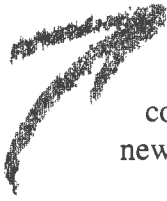
Transportation solutions will vary in each area depending on the resources available, the size of the market for each alternative and the extent of existing services.

Options include increasing fixed route service (extending hours or territory), employer vanpool services, dial-a-ride services, volunteer ride services, gas vouchers, bus passes and other forms of subsidies. Transit and non-transit transportation solutions are discussed in greater detail in Chapter VI.

Evaluation of Alternatives, Costs and Benefits

It is important to explore a wide range of services and determine the benefits associated with each alternative. Estimating the number of individuals potentially served by an alternative and the cost to provide the service is one way to measure benefits. Another consideration is savings associated with reductions in welfare benefits including public assistance, housing, childcare and health. Increasing income tax revenue, impact on individuals (e.g. increased income vs. decreased benefits vs. increased expenses) and compliance with welfare reform guidelines, are other factors that can be considered. Cost and benefits of transportation alternatives are discussed in greater detail in Chapter VI and in Appendix B.

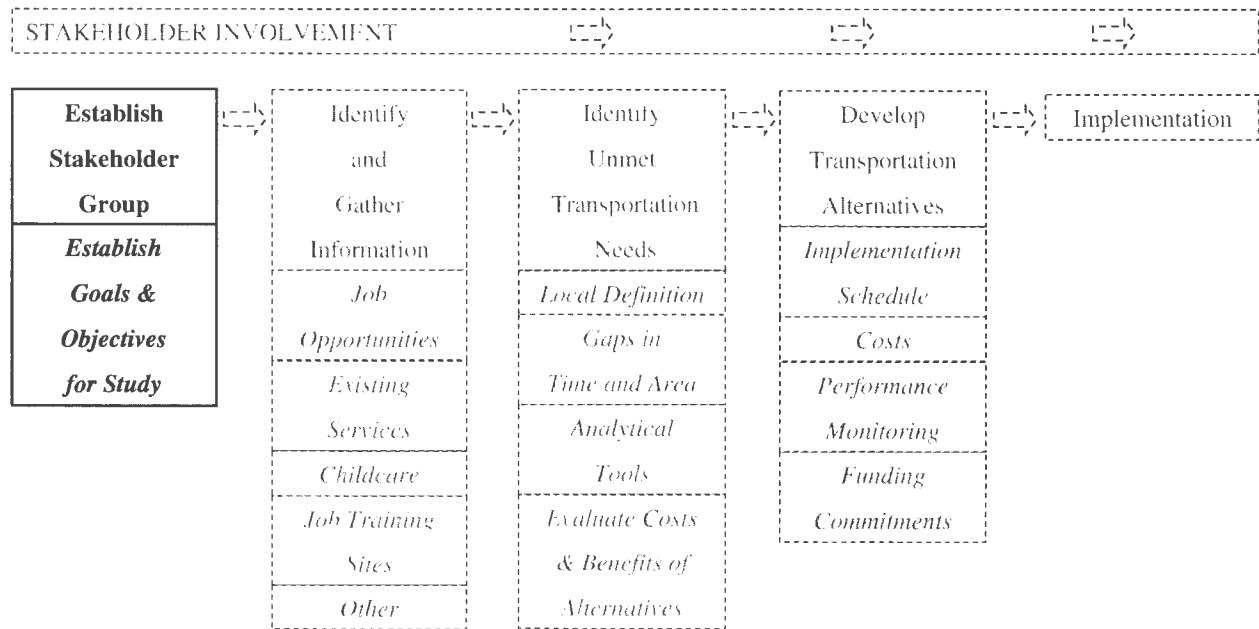
III. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT



Stakeholder involvement is the key to successful access to jobs planning. Engaging the appropriate organizations and individuals in planning efforts is critical to identifying the needs of the target population, the needs of the community/region, the transportation services available, and the identification of new solutions.

Stakeholder participation will vary in communities and regions around the country. Developing successful transportation initiatives to assist members of the target population find jobs and keep jobs is a task that no one agency can manage alone. A variety of services and support mechanisms are necessary to help these individuals successfully overcome the transportation barriers they face. Identifying the appropriate stakeholders and enabling their participation in job access planning is a critical element for making welfare reform a success.

This chapter focuses on identifying which organizations or agencies should be involved as a stakeholder, what role they may play, regional differences, and issues associated with forming new partnerships.



Who are Stakeholders and How to Identify Them

Stakeholders in the context of welfare reform have an investment in moving people out of the welfare system and into employment. In order to be successful, job access planning must be a collaboration of stakeholders from appropriate agencies. Identifying these agencies means determining who is responsible for providing and/or administering services the target population needs, such as jobs, training centers, and childcare facilities.

The Job Access and Reverse Commute grant program is intended to be a coordinated planning effort, particularly between public transit and human service agencies. Guidance submitted by the Federal Transit Administration in November 1998 states that the planning process must include local transit agencies, the agencies administering TANF and WtW grants, welfare recipients and low-income people. The guidance also *suggests* involvement from the following organizations:

- Regional planning officials
- Human service, private, non-profit and other appropriate transportation and support service providers
- Community residents and organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Disability groups and representatives
- Local and state workforce development organizations
- Recipients of TANF and WtW grants
- Public and assisted housing providers
- Community development agencies
- Economic development agencies
- Employers and employer groups (transportation management organizations and Chambers of Commerce)
- Private Industry Councils/Workforce Investment Boards
- Political officials including mayors, county supervisors, state legislators, governors and other state and local officials

Stakeholders can be categorized as primary and/or secondary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders typically have direct communication or contact with the target population through the provision of services and may also be referred to as “front-line” resources. Secondary stakeholders work behind the scenes in a variety of forms. Examples include strategy/program development and administration, allocation and distribution of funds, technical assistance, policy implementation, data collection and tracking, and reporting functions.

No two communities are alike in respect to welfare reform. The following section provides a generic description of where stakeholders may be found, grouped by the level at which they function: local, state, regional, or federal. Stakeholders are also grouped by whether they are a transit-related organization or function as a traditional/non-traditional organization in transportation planning activities. Some organizations may fall into more than one category.

Local/Non-Traditional

- Employers – Employers may be educated on the welfare to work target population characteristics and their needs, and may become the focus for delivery of services and incentive programs. Employers are primary stakeholders in job access planning.

- Civic, Religious and Charitable Groups – Agencies such as churches, ad hoc crisis intervention centers, food pantries, and day care centers traditionally are active in providing services to low-income households. They may provide insight identifying transportation needs of low-income individuals. They may be considered primary or secondary stakeholders.
- Target Population – Low-income individuals and those receiving public assistance can provide information regarding the barriers to accessing employment, childcare and transportation. They are primary stakeholders.
- Childcare Providers – They provide childcare to the target population. In job access planning, they have insight to parental needs regarding transportation. They may be considered primary or secondary stakeholders.
- Chambers of Commerce – These agencies generally have ties to employers and employment opportunities, and may serve as a forum for discussion of transportation options. They are secondary stakeholders.

Local/Traditional

- Commissions/Boards – They generally have decision-making power over program implementation. They may be involved in the delivery of transit related services and are considered secondary stakeholders.
- Individual Cities and Villages – These units of government may be involved in the delivery of services that benefit the target population. Planning commissions may have an interest in program development. They are considered secondary stakeholders.
- Educational Institutions – These agencies provide short and long-term job training and adult education programs such as job counseling, placement services, educational programs, adult basic education and GED programs. They may also assist in providing research in job access planning. They may be considered primary or secondary stakeholders.

Transit Related

- Transit Authorities, Systems and Providers – Transit providers can render administrative and/or planning authority in addition to providing transportation services. Services can include fixed route, demand response, vanpools and others. These agencies are considered primary stakeholders.
- Transportation Providers (Public and Private) – These agencies provide transportation services in a specific area and can assist in developing initiatives that may provide useful services within cost and use parameters. They are primary stakeholders.
- Transportation Brokers – Brokers provide advice to the target population and agencies on the purchase of services and may coordinate delivery. They work directly with the target

population, with employment/job counselors and various transportation service providers. They may be primary or secondary stakeholders in the planning process.

- Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) – TMAs are non-profit organizations working with employers and transportation providers to coordinate transit services in a region. They are secondary stakeholders.

Regional

- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) – MPOs serve as regional planning bodies that allocate and program federal surface transportation funds for cities with populations over 50,000. MPOs assist communities in data collection and analysis regarding residential patterns, transportation and labor markets. Generally MPOs have access to mapping techniques and are experienced in collaborating with a variety of agencies. MPOs are secondary stakeholders.
- Counties – These units of government generally administer and provide a variety of support programs to the target population. They typically play a dominant role in job access planning and the provision of services. Job placement specialists and case managers serve as a critical link between the target population and available services. They are a primary stakeholder.
- Commissions/Boards – These bodies generally have decision-making power over program implementation. They may be involved in the delivery of transit-related services and are typically secondary stakeholders.
- Private Industry Councils (PICs) – PICs exist in some states and can be eligible for state and federal grants to facilitate welfare reform activities. They are considered secondary stakeholders.
- Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) – WIBs develop and provide policy analysis to determine how state government can best serve the employment and training needs of employers, employees, and the future workforce. They are considered secondary stakeholders.

State

- State Departments of Transportation (DOT) – DOTs are separated into district offices. These offices may play a role in the delivery of transportation services and/or program funding for a specific area. DOT staff can provide knowledge of the industry and assist in partnering activities. DOTs are considered secondary stakeholders in job access planning.
- State Departments of Human Services, Social Service and Employment Services – These departments generally provide a broad range of support programs such as Food Stamps, childcare reimbursement, Medicaid, child immunization, substance abuse and a variety of

other social service assistance programs. Job placement specialists and case managers serve as a link between the distribution of services and the target population. These agencies are examples of primary stakeholders.

- State Workforce Development Agencies – These primary agencies are often responsible for finding jobs, assisting the target population in preparing a job plan and facilitating job search and placement. These agencies are primary stakeholders
- State Department of Labor (DOL) – Part of the DOL’s mission is to prepare members of the workforce for new and better jobs, and to ensure adequacy in the workplace. These agencies are usually secondary stakeholders.

Federal

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) – FTA provides financial and technical assistance to the local transit systems. The FTA is considered a secondary stakeholder.
- U. S. Department of Labor (DOL) – Part of the DOL’s mission is to prepare members of the workforce for new and better jobs, and to ensure adequacy in the workplace. The U.S. DOL is a secondary stakeholder.
- U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – FHWA is a part of the U.S. Department of Transportation. FHWA provides technical assistance and education, supports transportation infrastructure through investments, and strives to achieve technological advances in transportation systems. FHWA is a secondary stakeholder.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) – the U.S. DHHS is the principal agency for protecting the health of Americans and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves. DHHS works closely with state and local governments and many DHHS-funded services are provided at the local level by state or county agencies, or through private sector grantees. They are a secondary stakeholder.

Generally, some combination of these agencies will be involved in job access planning. Involvement and collaboration between transportation providers and welfare organizations, particularly job placement specialists, can be considered the most critical partnership to successfully addressing access to jobs issues.

The structure of government in an area often determines who is responsible for program development and what agencies should be included in job access planning. In most cases, one or two agencies may take the lead in organizing committees and facilitating meetings.

New Partnerships

In order to be effective, job access planning must involve a variety of stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. Resulting partnerships bring new people to the table with unique views and opinions. As a result, new roles and responsibilities that each agency might play add to the challenge of keeping stakeholders involved and communication lines open.



Many of the organizations involved in job access planning may provide services to the same group of people; however, most of these organizations are working together for the first time. In the past, transit agencies and social service agencies had no apparent reason to work together or include one another in their planning activities; today this partnership is crucial to the success of moving people from welfare to work.

Job placement organizations play a critical role in helping the target population access jobs, serving as a direct link between job seekers and employers. Job placement counselors are responsible for contacting employers both initially and on an ongoing basis. Based on the employer needs, counselors identify potential candidates for employment. In most cases, they are also responsible for arranging transportation to the job site for interviews and other assistance to the individual. Partnering with job placement organizations enables other agencies to obtain information about the target population. Job placement counselors typically receive information during the initial interview with an individual and are able to determine their transportation needs - whether they have access to an automobile, live on a bus line or can carpool with a neighbor. Job placement counselors develop relationships with both the target population and employers, and, therefore, can assist in forming new relationships with other organizations.

Forming and maintaining new partnerships requires a long-term commitment from stakeholders. It is imperative that committees continue to meet even after programs are implemented, evaluating services and adjusting them accordingly. The target population's needs change as they progress through the various stages of job training, job search, interviewing, obtaining and retaining employment. A continuum of communication and evaluation of transportation services is essential for addressing those changing needs.

Establishment of Goals and Objectives for Job Access Planning

Collectively, stakeholders determine mutual interests and outcomes for moving people from welfare to work. Working through this exercise in the beginning helps to develop a consensus among stakeholders and sets the direction for the committee. Goals such as "to identify unmet transportation needs" or "to maximize existing resources" are broad goals. As stakeholders become more familiar with the subject, goals and objectives become better focused to identify

specific issues. Some communities have found that beginning with easily implemented, short-term strategies helps to develop success early in job access planning and gains trust among stakeholders.

Not all issues that are brought to the planning process are equally important or can be addressed in the same timetable. Making a list of the issues and prioritizing is one way to approach the most important tasks. Many of the issues identified in this process are related to the following:

- Job Locations – these change as a person moves from an initial, sometimes part-time job to a full-time one, from a lower paying to a higher paying job and /or from one close to home to one further away
- Time of Job
- Transportation to Childcare
- Transportation Options – access to an auto or to transportation services

Regional Differences

Stakeholder roles and involvement in job access planning will vary from place to place for a number of reasons. Previous or existing benefit programs, existing transportation services, available funding and the overall geography of an area can help identify the key players. Each state has the power to implement welfare reform guidelines as they choose. Their arrangement of responsibilities often determines who will be the primary stakeholders and their roles.

Responsibility for the distribution of funds in each state can also influence stakeholder involvement. In some cases, private agencies are hired to administer funding tasks and facilitate committee involvement. Additionally, some states charge the MPO or the transit agency to take the lead in job access planning.

Unique Perspectives that Stakeholders Bring to Job Access Planning

Stakeholders may have primary or secondary roles in job access planning. It is important to identify their specific roles. Sharing this information with the group can help everyone understand why they are “at the table.” Stakeholders need to learn why each group is at the table and what experience it brings to transportation challenges and services. Human service agencies, for example, need to learn how transportation services are provided, their cost, and their operating characteristics. Transportation service providers, in turn, need to understand the choices facing the target population as they move from welfare to work.

Focusing on the goals and objectives previously established by the committee can help focus the initial discussion. A knowledgeable facilitator might be helpful in launching the discussion.

Issues and Obstacles to Effective Partnering

Collaborative planning requires approaching issues on many levels. Many of the participating stakeholders will be working together for the first time; others may have historic relationships. There will be different opinions on what services are needed and how they should be provided. It is important for stakeholders to become familiar with many unique terms, as information and analysis often cross disciplinary lines. Clearly defining terms can eliminate communication barriers and increase stakeholder knowledge. Role clarification may be helpful as well.

Public Outreach

Individuals and organizations may become increasingly aware of welfare reform, and they may wish to participate in the job access planning effort. As an example, faith-based organizations and religious congregations are generally very active in providing services to low-income families and individuals in crisis. Some non-profit agencies such as Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services and the American Red Cross are major providers of social and support services. They may be interested in providing transportation assistance.

Involving these agencies may provide insight and options for job access planning. Interviewing employers may encourage their involvement and provides an opportunity to discuss issues unique to them, such as employee recruitment or retention. Similarly, interviews with members of the target population can be a helpful source of information for successful job access planning.

State Variations in Organizing Delivery of Services

Stakeholders often determine how the transportation initiatives will be implemented, and who will provide the necessary service. The goal should be to establish policies and procedures that create the most effective services.

Funding comes from a variety of sources, including federal, state, and local units of government. Private sources may also contribute. Allocation and distribution of funds at the state and local level generally are assigned to a regional government or administrative body. Private Industry Councils and Workforce Development Agencies may support welfare reform with DOL funds.

Existing resources often determine what services and purchases can be made. A job counselor typically has contact with members of the target population, and can distribute gas vouchers or bus passes, eliminating the need to make numerous stops for assistance. In other states, one-stop resource centers on transit routes have been developed enabling individuals to meet with a job counselor, receive training or utilize on-site childcare.

Transit providers often increase service to accommodate needs, especially when there are large numbers of potential riders. In some cases, a transportation broker may consolidate various services.

State and local agencies are increasingly contracting for delivery of transportation services. The contract model encourages agencies to determine the transportation trip needs, determine how trips can be organized, and determine how a service will operate. Contract price and service monitoring are important considerations as well.

Examples of Regional Approaches

Wisconsin

The core group of stakeholders for the Wisconsin transportation planning approach included senior staff from the following organizations:

- Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Public Transit Section (Wis/DOT)
- The Wisconsin Urban Transit Association (WUTA)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

Wisconsin Works, (or W-2), is Wisconsin's employment-based assistance program for low-income families with dependent children that replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program. The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is the State agency that manages the W-2 Program and was a major participant in job access planning. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation, (Wis/DOT), Public Transit Section, provides funding and support for a variety of public transportation services throughout the State. Wis/DOT was also a major contributor to the transportation planning effort by providing funding and staff assistance throughout. A third major stakeholder involved in Wisconsin's transportation planning process was the Wisconsin Urban Transit Association, (WUTA), Wisconsin's statewide transit association. FHWA and FTA provided funding for the transportation study. While WUTA, Wis/DOT and the FHWA had a long-standing working relationship, little interaction existed between DWD and Wis/DOT, FHWA or WUTA.

With a core group of stakeholders committed to the process, stakeholders from the Milwaukee area were invited to participate in job access planning, including the following agencies:

Public Transit:

- Sheboygan Transit
- Milwaukee County Transit System
- City of Racine Transit

Regional Planning:

- Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Local Government:

- Waukesha County
- City of Waukesha
- Milwaukee County Public Works
- City of Kenosha

This group of stakeholders served as a steering committee for job access planning and selected a consulting firm for assistance. The steering committee met on a regular basis with the consultants and provided guidance and assistance as planning progressed.

This approach was used for the transportation planning in other counties. The core group of stakeholders remained and stakeholders from each additional county were enlisted to participate in the transportation planning for their respective counties.

Philadelphia

The City of Philadelphia took the lead in job access planning and involved the following core group of stakeholders:

- City of Philadelphia
- Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA)
- Private Industry Council (PIC) of Philadelphia
- Transportation Management Associations (TMAs)
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

The DVRPC, an interstate, inter-county and inter-city agency, provides continuing, comprehensive and coordinated planning for the Delaware Valley region. DVRPC's responsibilities include transportation and land use planning for the greater Philadelphia area. The organization has completed a number of projects, many of them utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS), to analyze regional employment centers and transportation corridors.

The DVRPC is also responsible for developing a list of prioritized projects for Fiscal Year 1999 funding through the FTA Job Access and Reverse Commute Competitive Grant program. The list of projects was developed in conjunction with DVRPC's member governments and operating agencies, and the Pennsylvania and New Jersey DOTs.

Funding for the programs is provided by the U.S. Department of Labor and managed by the Private Industry Council (PIC).

New Jersey

State organizations were responsible for developing the initial partnerships designed to address mobility needs of the target population in New Jersey. Stakeholders in this group included:

- New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT)
- New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJHHS)
- New Jersey Department of Labor (NJLDR)
- NJ Transit
- State Employment and Training Commission (SETC)

Although the overall structure was created at the state level, much of the work is being done at the county-level. Each county is responsible for developing a Community Transportation Plan in addition to creating a steering committee to assist in the development of the plan.

New Jersey created a statewide transportation planning and coordination process to address access-to-jobs issues. This process involves stakeholders from three state-level agencies: NJHHS, NJDOT and NJT. These organizations initiated the County Transportation Coordination Process in which counties are responsible for developing a Community Transportation Plan. In addition, each county was asked to create a steering committee made up of members from the following organizations to assist in plan development:

- Workforce Investment Boards (equivalent of PICs)
- County Planners
- County Welfare Agencies
- Unified Childcare Agencies
- Local Transportation Providers
- Other local stakeholders

DVRPC participated on some of the counties' committees and a consultant was hired by the State to assist in producing the plan.

Detroit

The State's Family Independence Agency (FIA – formerly the Department of Social Services) is working with State and local departments of transportation and the Michigan Jobs Commission (MJC) to overcome barriers to employment.

The stakeholders in job access planning included the two major transit operators in the Detroit area (the Suburban Mobility Authority on Regional Transit – SMART and the Detroit Department of Transportation –DDOT). SMART provides primarily suburb to suburb transit services, while DDOT provides transit services primarily in Detroit. In addition to the transit agencies, the metropolitan planning organization, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), helped form a consortium of non-profit organizations, public agencies, human service agencies and employers.

Another agency playing an innovative role is the Metropolitan Affairs Coalition (MAC), a regional coalition of business, labor and government formed in 1958 to address public policy issues affecting the economic vitality of the region. MAC is a private non-profit civic organization co-located with SEMCOG, the Detroit area MPO.

San Luis Obispo County

The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for San Luis Obispo County. SLOCOG is responsible for initiating the Welfare Mobility Plan for the County.

The key stakeholders in job access planning included the following:

- Department of Social Services
- Human Resource Agencies
- Training Institutions
- Employers
- Transit Providers
- Rideshare Service Providers
- Job Developers
- CalWORKs Participants

Minnesota

Welfare to work transportation planning efforts in Minnesota focus primarily on the seven-county metropolitan area of Minneapolis-St. Paul. Each county has formed planning committees and developed transportation initiatives as a separate entity. Stakeholders are similar organizations in each county; these organizations include:

- Employment and Training
- Financial Assistance and Social Services
- Human Service Departments
- Transportation Management Organizations
- Transit Agencies
- Job Training Organizations
- Non-Profit Agencies
- Faith-Based Community Representatives
- The Metropolitan Council – the seven county MPO

Transportation program decisions for welfare to work transportation are made by county boards. The McKnight Foundation, a major financial contributor to welfare to work activities, has played a significant role.

The Metropolitan Council and county staff are responsible for policy implementation, oversight, and distribution of welfare to work transportation funds authorized by the State legislature.

Kentucky

The Office of Transportation Delivery, under the Transportation Cabinet, works with transportation brokers to ensure participation of all willing and able transit providers. The brokers monitor safety requirements for vehicles and aid in developing target population satisfaction.

Stakeholders involved in the planning process include:

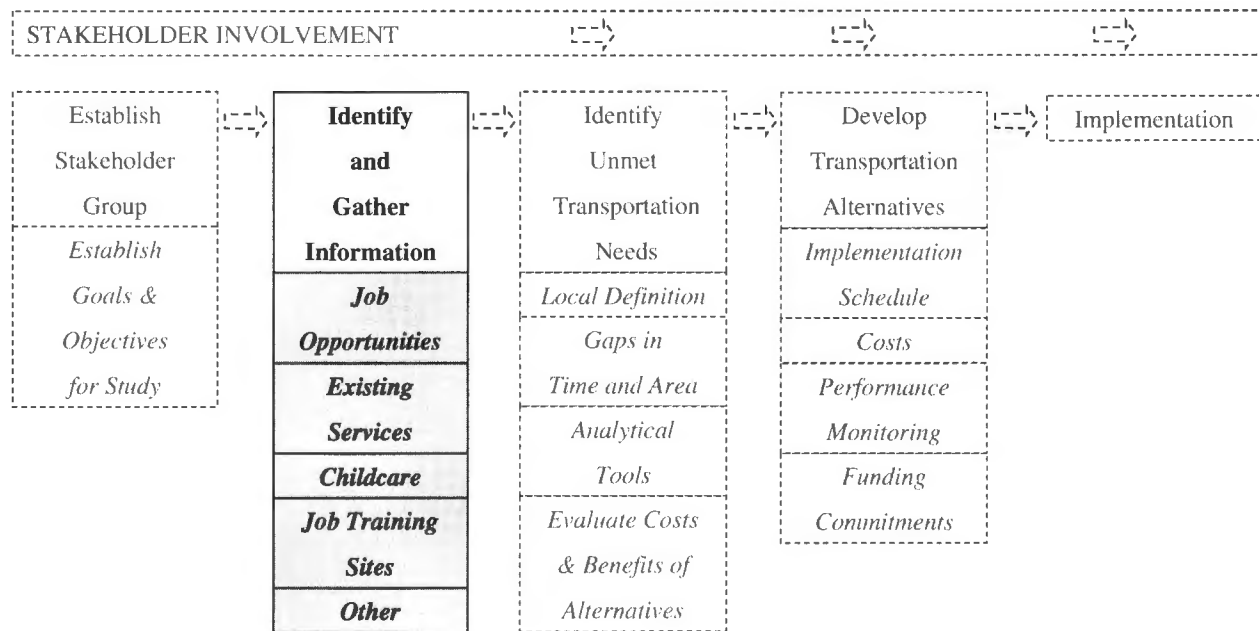
- Transportation Cabinet
- Office of Transportation Delivery
- Human service organization
- Transportation brokers

IV. INFORMATION NEEDS



To create effective job access programs, planners must not only identify program goals, but also define the planning objectives and implementation strategies. The planning effort should explicitly identify the following:

- The target population,
- The target job centers or industries,
- The universe of reasonable transportation strategies,
- The barriers that a successful program must overcome, and
- Methods of evaluating the value of program options at meeting program goals.



This section discusses information sources and analysis needs of job access planning. Information and tools discussed in this chapter are not appropriate for every community. Initial planning efforts may merely skim the surface of the access-to-jobs dilemma, establishing a signpost for future planning and program efforts. More ambitious planning efforts, or planning efforts subsequent to the initial effort, may further explore program options, long-term sustainability, and cost/benefit relationships.

Who is the Target Population in Need of Transportation Services and Where are They Located?

Gathering relevant and up-to-date information is an important step in job access planning. Individual communities will have different perspectives on target population members.

Listed below are three different definitions and associated characteristics for welfare reform program beneficiaries:

- Welfare to Work Recipients – The head of a household participating in a TANF welfare-to-work program. Generally, these individuals will have children, are single parents, are more likely to be transit-dependent than the general population, and are not currently employed. As a condition for receiving cash assistance, the participant works a minimum of 20 hours per week.¹ Adequate transportation options may be crucial for these individuals to fulfill their work obligation, and for TANF agencies to meet job placement goals.
- Other Public Assistance Program Participants – Participants in the Food Stamp, Medicaid, and Childcare programs. A much broader range of individuals participate in these programs, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and the unemployed. The subsets of program participants that are in the work force have a similar economic profile to welfare recipients, and similarly, tend to be transit-dependent.

Two important distinctions should be noted between these individuals and Welfare to Work (TANF) recipients:

1. Many Food Stamp and Medicaid recipients are already participating in the work force. Some states have linked food stamp benefits with TANF, while others have separated the eligibility for the two programs. All states, however, provide food stamps to working individuals at least during a transition period. Similarly, Medicaid is provided to households participating in the workforce, but who are designated as low-income or require special medical needs.
2. Participation in the Food Stamp or Medicaid programs generally does not require the participant to actively seek a job, to develop a job plan or report to an employment counselor. Because these individuals may already be employed, or are not required to enter the labor force, improving transportation options is not integrally linked to their economic well being or to the demands on Food Stamp or Medicaid program administrators. Improved access to jobs will benefit this population by offering additional opportunity, but the benefit is unknown.

¹ In some states and some situations more than 20 hours is required. Work can, in many instances, include job training or education, or a combination of jobs and training.

- **Low-Income Households** – Any household whose annual income is below one of several thresholds indexed to the Federal poverty level (calculated each year, by household size, by the U.S. Department of Labor). Definitions of “low-income” generally include both those households under the poverty line and those near the poverty line. The more inclusive thresholds go as high as 200% of the poverty level, while less inclusive thresholds may approach the poverty line (100% of the poverty level).

1999 Federal Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia

Number in Family	Gross Monthly Income*	Gross Yearly Income	Approximate Hourly Income**
1	\$687	\$8,240	\$3.96
2	\$922	\$11,060	\$5.32
3	\$1,157	\$13,880	\$6.67
4	\$1,392	\$16,700	\$8.03
5	\$1,627	\$19,520	\$9.38
6	\$1,862	\$22,340	\$10.74

* Rounded to the nearest dollar.

** Assumes a full-time job for a full year (2080 hours).

Source: Oregon Center for Public Policy, www.ocpp.org/poverty.htm

The table below shows the poverty threshold used by several Federal programs for a single parent family of three. State program standards are likely to differ from the Federal standards. Planners should investigate what thresholds are used by agencies in their state.

Poverty Threshold for Single Parent Family of Three

Federal Program	Poverty Threshold (as % of Federal Poverty Level)	Gross Yearly Income	Approximate Hourly Income*
Department of Labor's Welfare-to-Work Program	130%	\$18,044	\$8.68
FTA Job Access & Reverse Commute Program	150%	\$20,820	\$10.00

*Assumes a full-time job a full year (2,080 hours).

Low-income households include both households that are headed by individuals in the labor force and individuals not in the labor force. Regardless of labor force participation, low-income households have a much higher rate of transit-dependency than the general population.² Without commensurate transit infrastructure, transit-dependency results in under-employment for low-income households, and limits employers' access to labor.

Identification of Appropriate Job Opportunities

As part of the data collection process, the "type of job" is often the first question the employment counselor and member of the target population address. The "location of the job" is secondary.

Target Population Issues – Entering the Workforce, Obtaining a Better Job and Job Retention

Entering the Workforce

Planners must not only identify the target population, but also must understand employment issues the target population faces. Planning efforts should address the following questions concerning the job opportunities in the community or region:

- What are the job creation rates for high wage industries as compared to low-wage industries?
- Should transportation options target only full-time jobs or should options also be designed for jobs that are part-time or seasonal?
- Should transportation planning target relatively high wage industries, or are wages largely irrelevant?
- Are entry-level or semi-skilled jobs being created in the same geographic areas as other jobs?

Issues that are more job specific, such as those considered by the job-seeker and the job counselor, also shape the planning efforts:

- Does the open job have skill requirements commensurate with the skills of the target population member?
- Is the job only seasonal or part-time employment?
- Does the job offer potential over the short-term of providing a



² In 1995, an estimated 26% of low-income households had access to no vehicles, compared with 4% of the general population, *Daily Travel by Persons with Low Income*, Murakami, Young, Presented at NPTS Symposium, October 29-31, 1997.

wage high enough to raise a family out of poverty?

- Will the job require prior training?
- How close is the job to where the individuals have a child at childcare or school?
- What are the hours of employment and how do they relate to the school hours or childcare hours of children?
- What are the opportunities for addressing increased income and benefits?

The difference between the number of job seekers in a given geographic area and the number of jobs available in the same area is often referred to as the “job gap.” Most job gap analyses attempt to measure the qualifications and needs of the job seeker with the requirements of the available jobs. For the target population, entry-level jobs are the crucial job category. For workers in low-income households, the number of unskilled or semi-skilled positions is compared with the number of job seekers. Measuring the job gap requires identifying the number of job openings in the appropriate categories, and then measuring the total number of job seekers, including both the target population and all other job seekers regardless of participation in assistance programs.

Job Improvement and Job Retention

Successful welfare to work planning goes beyond identifying jobs for the target population; it should address both short-term and long-term employment and transportation needs. Some individuals may need pre-job readiness training, others are looking for a job, some are beginning a part-time job or a low paying full-time job, some may be going to a job and training for another one, while some might be struggling to retain their existing job. In each situation, the individual is faced with a completely different set of issues. Transportation needs associated with these issues may vary considerably as job destinations and time of travel change. Some examples include:

- Temporary short-term transportation, such as transportation to a job interview.
- Long/short-term transportation to work on a regular time schedule.
- Transportation to a part-time temporary/seasonal job where work schedules vary by time of day and/or day of week.
- Temporary/interim transportation while car repairs are being completed or until funds for a different car can be obtained.
- Initial transportation to a full-time job until longer-term transportation arrangements can be made or the individual can purchase an automobile.

In addition to the needs mentioned above, many trips might also require a stop at childcare facilities, health care facilities or grocery stores.

One solution will not work for all situations. The target population's transportation needs change over time and as economic circumstances evolve. A range of alternatives will improve the transportation situation of the target population and enhance the planning options of case managers and job placement specialists. The process of developing these alternatives requires adequate information for analysis.

Program administrators, who are targeting limited resources to increasing demand for transportation services, must answer the following questions:

- Where are concentrations of entry-level jobs that pay or offer the short-term potential of income to support a family?
- Should transportation resources be targeted largely to full-time jobs or also be available to part-time or seasonal jobs that may be a first step to economic independence?

Confidentiality Issues & Resolutions

Addresses of target population members should be used in the data collection and analysis. Names and other identifying information (outside of geographic location) need not be requested or used in job access planning. Confidentiality can be addressed in two ways:

1. The agency or organization responsible for obtaining the information can enter into a confidentiality agreement with the agency providing the data, or the agency providing the data can provide the file of client addresses only.
2. If home locations of the target population are mapped, it is important that the precise location of an individual not be publicly identified. This can be overcome in areas with few individuals by displaying locations on a map with a limited road network. The mapping of target population locations in areas that are predominantly rural should be addressed differently than in other areas. Large maps tend to show individual locations and their relationship to the local road network clear enough that their identity could be determined, producing smaller maps with a limited road network can eliminate this problem.

Type of Jobs

In order to identify the location of appropriate job opportunities for the target population, planners must obtain data on jobs in their planning region. Many sources of economic data are readily available through state and federal agencies. Planners must understand the value and limitations of this data, and how to use the data for job access transportation planning purposes.

Jobs are generally classified in one of two ways. First, jobs can be classified by industry type using Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes (or the newly revised North American Industry Classification System, NAICS).³

Information on employers will usually be grouped using SIC or NAICS codes. The classification by industry is valuable for identifying industries that tend to pay higher wages, offer full-time rather than seasonal work, and are more likely to offer benefits. SIC code data is also often geographically coded (see discussion on location of jobs below).

SIC codes are not helpful in distinguishing between job characteristics within an industry. Janitorial jobs, for example, are grouped with managerial jobs, and seasonal jobs are frequently counted with full-time. Consequently, SIC code data needs to be coupled with other data sources to distinguish job characteristics important to welfare to work planning, including skill-level, full-time or part-time status, and opportunities for advancement.



A summary showing the most generalized industry classifications is shown below:

01-09	<u>Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries</u>
10-14	<u>Mineral Industries</u>
15-18	<u>Construction Industries</u>
20-39	<u>Manufacturing</u>
40-49	<u>Transportation, Communications, and Utilities</u>
50-51	<u>Wholesale Trade</u>
52-59	<u>Retail Trade</u>
60-69	<u>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate</u>
70-89	<u>Service Industries</u>
90	<u>Public Administration</u>

A second approach to job analysis is to examine job types used by the Census Bureau in the population census. Job type analysis allows more selective views on jobs by skill requirements or other job characteristics. Wage surveys, conducted by the Department of Labor (or by the State DOL equivalent) group jobs by type rather than by industry.

³ The SIC codes are the historic method of classifying industries. Over time, however, industries have evolved in form and function, and new industries (such as information technologies) do not fit easily into historic groupings. The NAICS codes which can be translated into SIC, were devised to regroup industry sub-classifications to ensure that like industries are classified under meaningful headings. Timber logging, for instance, is classified as manufacturing under the SIC codes, but is classified with agriculture under NAICS codes.

The data is rarely categorized by employer or employer location and therefore has only slight value in transportation location analysis. To identify job locations or to get an accurate count of jobs by job types, cross-referencing with other data is often required.

The greater the planning and research capabilities of the local or regional planning entity, the higher the level of sensitivity and detail that can be incorporated in the planning effort. Initial planning efforts may focus only on geographic locations of jobs by SIC code. Later efforts can develop techniques to cross-reference disparate sources of information, more clearly identifying areas of need for transportation services or infrastructure.

Location of Jobs

Information on job locations is often available from the state agency that administers unemployment insurance. Jobs covered by unemployment (covered employment) are reported by location and generally constitute 98% of all jobs. Transportation planners can obtain aggregate data on the number and type of jobs for small geographic areas. If confidentiality safeguards are in place, the specific addresses of most employers and the number employed at each location can be mapped. It may be possible to identify the type of industry and apply a further analysis of entry-level jobs to the type of industry.



Decennial Census information is used as the basis for Journey to Work studies completed on a regional and local level. Journey-to-work data, often available from local transit agencies or the MPO, can help substantiate anecdotal information on the location of entry-level and semi-skilled jobs by cross-referencing origins and destinations with geographic areas of low-income households.

Additional Sources for Information

Other information sources for job information include surveying the classified ads, using the state job postings associated with welfare-to-work agencies, commercial business directories, and compiling data from business associations. Relying on a single source of information will rarely result in capturing a representative sample of job locations, numbers, or characteristics. Using these sources to complement other information can, however, enrich the understanding of the availability of jobs and the job characteristics. Listed below are additional data sources. The utility of these sources will vary depending on the planning effort's level of detail, the level of existing research by local agencies, universities, and private institutions, and the participating stakeholders.

Potential sources include the following:

- National Personal Transportation Survey
- Traffic Demand Management Plans developed by large employers
- State agencies administering the TANF block grants
- Surveys of or interviews with representative employers for a geographic area
- Employer databases of employee addresses or zip codes
- 1992 and 1997 Economic Census (1997 results may not be readily available)
- U. S. Department of Labor wage surveys
- Local Economic Development Agency job surveys
- Local university studies or surveys
- State agency responsible for unemployment insurance
- Employer surveys conducted as part of the access-to-jobs planning effort
- America's Talent Bank (www.atb.org)

Year 2000 Census data will also serve as a useful resource once it is made available. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, data will be released on a flow basis from June 2001, through September 2003. Census 2000 data will be disseminated mainly using a new data retrieval system called the American FactFinder (AFF). The American FactFinder will be accessible to the widest possible array of users through the Internet, libraries, universities, and other organizations. Printed reports and electronic files are two forms in which data will be available to the end-user.

What Information is Available and Where to Find It

Knowing what information is necessary for data analysis and obtaining it are two different issues. Sources for information can be the same for some areas; however, the availability of information can vary among organizations and is dependent on a number of factors. State and county organizations are sources for information and the planning committee will usually include stakeholders from these organizations. Local, private and non-profit agencies may not be as able or willing to cooperate, and confidentiality agreements may be necessary to obtain the information. An ongoing planning and program implementation effort will overcome barriers to full participation by these stakeholders.

The table below provides an example of the types of data sources that may be available. A brief description and potential sources for obtaining the information is provided for each data type.

Potential Data Sources

Type of Data	Description of Data	Data Sources
Size of Target Population	Household location, number of working adults, children and vehicle availability.	State or county human service agencies responsible for administering welfare programs. To avoid privacy issues names should be removed from the information.
Employment	Location and availability of job opportunities which the target population may be qualified for (entry-level service / manufacturing industries).	State labor and workforce development agencies. Others include employment projection data from the U.S. Department of Labor. Two types are available: industry employment and occupational employment that indicate which industries or occupations are likely to generate the greatest number of new jobs.
Childcare Facilities	Location of childcare facilities.	State and county childcare service agencies
Transportation	Location and schedule of public transportation routes and the availability and extent of existing social service transportation, paratransit, carpooling, taxi, vanpooling and charter carrier service areas.	Local transit providers, MPOs, social service transportation providers, Transportation Management Associations, and the FTA National Transit Geographic Information Systems (GIS) databases. The Bureau of Transportation Statistics also has available on CD-ROM maps of all major U.S. transit systems, however, they are not guaranteed for accuracy and do not include paratransit or commuter services.
Hours of Transportation Operation	Frequency of transportation services and business hours for employment, child and day care facilities.	Frequency of transportation services may be obtained from local transportation providers. Hours of operation for employment and child and day care facilities may be obtained from the individual business.

Difficulties in Obtaining Data

Access to data can be limited. Confidentiality may restrict access, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Data format may not be conducive, or may lack the desired detail. For example, when obtaining information on the number of available childcare facilities in a given area, data might reflect the total number of childcare facilities located in the area, rather than total childcare facilities with availability for new children. Data may require caveats, such as projections, rather than historic changes.

Most of the before mentioned difficulties can be addressed through careful attention to the assumptions behind the data, and care in applying the results of any analysis. Data incongruities can be addressed in several ways. One method is to report the results of any analysis in a likely range, rather than as a single number (i.e., the number of available childcare openings is estimated to be between 200 and 300). Another is to conduct sensitivity analyses (i.e., the area has an estimated 250 child care openings annually – sensitivity analysis shows this number changes as much as 20% as the estimate’s assumptions change). Finally, planners may have to acknowledge that the existing data is unacceptable.

Data Tracking

The amount and type of information to be monitored will vary based on the funding source and jurisdiction. Local funding sources may require detailed reports of expenditures. In some cases, each bus pass, gas voucher, dial-a-ride passenger, etc. must be tracked back to the appropriate subsidized program and funding source. Data tracking may mean different things to different organizations, and the amount of information that can realistically be collected must be carefully evaluated.

The Job Access Guidance, released in December 1998 and developed by the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health & Human Services and Transportation, provides clarification as to the level of detail required for data tracking and reporting purposes. Prior to the December 1998 Guidance, it was unclear whether a State would be penalized or forced to return TANF dollars allocated to a program or service if it overestimated participating TANF eligible individuals. As a result, communities were reluctant to invest in transportation services for fear funding would not cover committed expenses. The Job Access Guidance explains that after the program/service start-up period, original estimates must be re-evaluated at least annually, and prospectively adjusted as needed; however, changes in funding levels will only affect future years. Any TANF funds used in a project after the start-up period (if applicable) must be based on a current estimate. TANF agencies may use sampling to arrive at a new estimate relieving administering agencies of the difficulty in tracking information regarding each passenger or individual.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has published a final rule that governs key provisions of the TANF program (<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofa/finalru.htm>). It incorporates the core TANF accountability provisions, including work requirements, time limits, State penalties, and data collection and reporting requirements. The final TANF rules regarding transportation do not “tick” a recipient’s 60 month eligibility clock. Also available at the ACF web site is “A Guide on Funding Services for Children and Families Through the TANF Program” (<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofa/funds2.htm>) that can assist planners and administrators understand how these provisions may be applied to their programs and services.

Existing Transportation Services

Collecting information on transit services and programs that support those services is an integral part of the data gathering process. Information should be collected on all transportation services operating in and around the study area including regular route, shuttle, demand-response, paratransit, shared-ride taxi, regular taxi, vanpools, rideshares and other commuter services. Additional information should include hours of operation, service area boundaries, travel time standards, fares, program costs and other operating characteristics. Obtaining this information enables the planning committee to identify underserved areas based on employment center locations and/or individual residence location data.

Programs that support transit services such as transit hubs, park-and-ride facilities and other transfer locations may have on-site childcare, training, and other services nearby that might be used for overall employment plan. These facilities do not provide a transportation service; however, they are directly linked to the service network.

Specialized Transportation Programs

A number of transportation programs provide transportation services to a variety of populations. Schools, churches, civic and elderly organizations operate vanpool or shuttle services specifically for seniors, children or the disabled community.

These nontraditional transportation providers are an important part of a network of job access services, but they may be difficult to identify and to engage in the process. Once they have been identified as potential participants, they may have reservations about making changes to their service. The potential benefits are worth exploring. In some cases, pooling resources can free up administrative time and reduce overall program costs.

Existing Investments

Transportation initiatives should be designed to maximize existing resources whenever possible. One way to accomplish this is to determine “who is doing what.” Doing so reduces the potential of duplicating services and planning efforts can focus on new or improved programs.

Investments are typically in the form of capital or operational/maintenance expenditures. Capital costs include purchase of vehicles, facilities and other equipment. They are a one-time cost that is usually financed over a long period of time. Operational/maintenance investments are intangible costs such as wages and are incremental, often in terms of “per mile” or “per hour.” Operating and maintenance costs are normally derived through a cost allocation process.

Other Components

Transportation initiatives must also consider access to destinations other than work sites. Access to child care, job training, and education is crucial for transit-dependent households, particularly those participating in benefit programs.

Job Training and Educational Sites

Federal welfare reform requires that those who receive assistance must work. States must meet work participation rates for "all families" who receive cash grants and who are non-exempt from work requirements. The term "all families" refers to all families headed by an adult (one or two-parent families) or a minor parent head of household receiving cash assistance under a state welfare program.

Work is generally considered by the federal legislation to be full-time unsubsidized employment. The national legislation, however, allows additional activities to temporarily qualify as work. For the first 20 hours of work for all families (first 30 hours for two-parent families)⁴:

- Subsidized private and public sector employment
- Work experience
- On-the-job training
- Job search and job readiness assistance
- Community service programs
- Vocational education
- Job-skills training directly related to employment
- Remedial education (e.g., high school diploma) directly related to employment
- Provision of child care assistance to an individual who is participating in community service

Hours in excess of the required 20 hours of work for all families (and 30 hours for two-parent families) may be counted when an individual participates in:

- Job search and job readiness assistance
- Job skills training directly related to employment
- Education directly related to employment in the case of a participant who has not received a high school diploma or high school equivalency
- Satisfactory attendance at secondary school, or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalency.

Planning for access to job-training and educational facilities requires a thorough understanding of the welfare reform requirements in each state. Individual state requirements can, for instance, affect access planning in the following ways:

⁴The specifics of the federal work goals and the circumstances in which other activities can qualify as work under the TANF block grant program is described in more detail in the appendix on Welfare Reform.

Centralized facility or multiple facilities - Some states have created or designated centralized job training facilities for an entire county. Other states have taken a more decentralized approach, where training at different sites or different educational facilities qualifies as job training. Locations of approved facilities should be available from the state agency administering the welfare programs.

Breadth, frequency and duration of allowable training – Some states allow TANF participants to engage in the full range of educational opportunities allowed under the federal law. Other states have chosen to restrict job-training or educational substitution for work. As the limitation on substituting education or training for employment becomes tighter, planning for job access becomes more difficult. For instance, job access for a group of full-time students is less difficult than for a part-time student who must also have access to a part-time job. The length of time allowed to substitute job training or education for work similarly affects access planning. If an individual will only attend training for a few months, the access-to-jobs program must be flexible enough to address the shift from training sites and class schedules to work sites and work schedules.

Childcare Sites

Lack of childcare options is often cited as a primary reason for low-income parents to be unemployed or underemployed. Transportation initiatives must consider not only linking job seekers to employers, but also assisting the job seekers in obtaining reasonable transportation to and from childcare facilities. Addressing childcare transportation issues simultaneously with job access transportation is an ongoing challenge for planners.



Most states have a childcare component in their welfare to work program. At a minimum, these programs subsidize childcare. Many states have separated childcare subsidies from TANF participation, providing child care subsidies beyond the cut off from financial assistance under a means-tested program. Listed below are the states that provide childcare after TANF transitional assistance:

Transitional Child Care Available

Colorado, Idaho, Kentucky, Missouri, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, and Wyoming: No limit for families below 200 percent of federal poverty level.

- Connecticut: No limit for families below 200 percent of federal poverty level; sliding-scale fee.
- Hawaii: No limit; sliding scale fee.
- Illinois: No limit for families below 200 percent of federal poverty level; Co-pay for all with earned income.
- Maine: Until youngest is 13 or family loses eligibility.

- Montana: Sliding-scale fee immediately.
- New Hampshire: No limit for families below 170 percent of federal poverty level.
- Wisconsin: No limit for families below 165 percent of federal poverty level; sliding fee co-payment; eligibility is not eliminated if families move above 165% threshold but remain below 200% of federal poverty level.

Access to subsidized childcare is a crucial element of job access even for households not participating in welfare programs. Planners must be aware of the geographic and temporal access implications of childcare. Childcare hours may not coincide with commuting peaks, and employers may not be accessible on the same route or by the same transportation mode.

Non-transportation solutions, such as co-locating childcare with transit centers, public schools or employment hubs from a transportation perspective should be considered; however, other considerations such as the availability of acceptable space, location of the facilities and the cost may be more influential factors.

Examples of Regional Approach

Wisconsin

The Wisconsin planning approach involved gathering the residential addresses of individuals on public assistance programs, locations of likely job opportunities and existing public transportation services. Later, locations of day care facilities, technical colleges and job centers became part of the information gathering and analysis.

Target Population

For the Milwaukee County transportation planning effort, the target population was defined as AFDC recipients. Approximately 21,300 individuals were identified as target population members in the Milwaukee County area.

The Wisconsin Department of Work Force Development (DWD) provided the addresses (complete with mailing address including zip code) of the target population under a strict confidentiality agreement. Developing the agreement and releasing the information took several months and significantly affected the schedule of the Milwaukee County transportation planning process.

For subsequent counties, new confidentiality agreements were required and the information was provided much more quickly. Only information related to an individual's location was provided. As the transportation planning progressed to other counties in Wisconsin, particularly the more rural counties, different definitions of the target population were adopted. The number of W-2 participants was decreasing.

As a result, planning focused on individuals who were currently employed, but had incomes low enough to qualify for other public assistance, such as Food Stamps.

Job Opportunities

For the Milwaukee County study, DWD helped identify industries most likely to hire members of the target population. A review of the employment information suggested that entry level jobs that required few specific skills or physical strength presented the most likely job opportunities for people moving off welfare programs into the workforce. These jobs are grouped below by industry:

- Retail Industry
 - ✓ Building Materials
 - ✓ General Merchandise
 - ✓ Food Stores
 - ✓ Automotive Dealers
 - ✓ Apparel and Accessories
 - ✓ Furniture and Home Furnishings
 - ✓ Eating and Drinking Establishments
 - ✓ Miscellaneous Retail

- Service Industry
 - ✓ Hotels, Rooming Houses
 - ✓ Personal Services
 - ✓ Business Services
 - ✓ Automotive Repair
 - ✓ Miscellaneous Repair
 - ✓ Entertainment Complexes
 - ✓ Amusement
 - ✓ Engineering, Accounting, Managerial Services
 - ✓ Legal Services
 - ✓ Educational Services
 - ✓ Social Services
 - ✓ Museums
 - ✓ Membership Organizations
 - ✓ Health Services
 - ✓ Private Households
 - ✓ Miscellaneous Services

Government Industry

- ✓ Local
- ✓ State
- ✓ Federal

- Manufacturing Industry
 - ✓ Food and Kindred Spirits
 - ✓ Textile Mills
 - ✓ Apparel and Finished Fabrics
 - ✓ Furniture and Fixtures
 - ✓ Rubber/Miscellaneous Plastics
 - ✓ Leather and Leather Goods
 - ✓ Electrical and Electric Machinery, Equipment and Supplies
 - ✓ Measuring, Analyzing and Controlling Instruments

Once the industries were identified, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) provided information on employers in the Milwaukee County area and the percentage of employees in the region. The services industry had the highest number of employees (43%), followed by the retail industry (27%), the government industry (18%) and the manufacturing industry (12%). While this step did not identify specific job openings, it did provide a good understanding of where job opportunities were likely to exist.

The employment information was further analyzed by plotting a series of maps (using a Geographic Information System – see chapter V) showing the following employment information:

- All Employers
- Manufacturing Employers
- Service Employers
- Retail Employers
- Government (Public Administration) Employers
- Selected Industries by Number of Employees

For some of the smaller, more rural counties in Wisconsin, inclusion of additional subcategories resulted in a larger potential employment base.

SEWRPC also provided information on firms to participate in employer interviews. Employers from each industry participated in focus groups designed to gather information on workplace and transportation policies and willingness or likelihood to hire individuals from the W-2 program. The information gathered from these interviews was incorporated into the Milwaukee County study and used for planning in other counties.

Existing Public Transportation Services

For the Wisconsin planning process, gathering information on public transportation services proved to be a much easier task than gathering information on the target population or job opportunities. Fortunately, transportation providers published routes and schedules and provided plans for upcoming service changes.

Wis/DOT's Public Transit Section provided information on publicly subsidized services open to the general public, including small urban regular route service, large urban regular route service and dial-a-ride service operating in rural and urban areas. Information on private, non-subsidized service was not collected.

Generally, the information gathered for each service included the following:

- Service Area
- Hours of Service
- Days of Service
- Cost of Operations
- Number of Vehicles
- Frequency of Service
- Travel Times
- Passenger Fares
- Existing Plans for Service Changes
- Recommended Service Changes

Childcare Facilities

The Wisconsin Bureau of Regulations and Licenses maintains the State's licenses for childcare facilities. This information was used to map addresses of childcare facilities in each of the counties using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software. In addition, GIS software was used to map transportation services, locations of the target population and potential employers for each county.

Technical Colleges and Job Centers

One or two Job Centers served each county and local members of technical colleges and job centers served on the Steering Committee, providing requisite assistance and information.

Data Sources

The Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) maintained cost data on the W2 program. Other sources of economic and demographic information on W2 participants was derived from the following sources:

- Locations and numbers of jobs covered by unemployment insurance (by SIC code) from state agencies;
- Demographic information from the 1990 Census, state and county agencies administering social services, and extensive survey work conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee;

- Quantitative and qualitative information from interviews and focus groups with employers, business associations, social service agencies, and the target population.

Philadelphia

In Philadelphia, participating agencies gathered information to identify barriers to work trips in the region. Information included the residential addresses of individuals on public assistance programs, locations of likely job opportunities, corporate parks and schools, existing public transportation services, childcare centers and the location of regional service centers. While most information was current and available, SEPTA suburban route maps had not been updated in more than 10 years.

Additional information included identifying the transit dependent population and their travel characteristics. Although auto ownership rates are not available for the target population, the Census Bureau provides data and estimates of zero-car households for the general population by county. Journey to work data showed the number of city resident workers that commute by transit. Philadelphia's planning approach assumed the incidence of transit dependency was substantially higher for the target population in the area. Stakeholders also explored factors that influence job retention, such as reasonable commute times, distance from home, and cost. Existing transportation service and provider information was prepared by each county and included private carriers and non-profit providers.

New Jersey

New Jersey's regional coordination efforts began as a result of two welfare to work kickoff events in July 1997 and January 1998. According to a survey distributed at the second event, the absence of regional coordination was the most serious concern. To encourage coordination within the region, the DVRPC partnered with New Jersey DOT to hold a regional mini-summit for select county steering committees in June 1998.

County planning efforts in New Jersey, referred to as the County Transportation Coordination Process, included 21 counties. Each county prepared a transportation plan that included a transportation demand analysis, a transportation supply inventory, identification of gaps in service, and a plan to coordinate existing resources to fill the gaps. The plans helped to identify specific services that were incorporated into the FY 1999 Job Access and Reverse Commute proposals.

Many of the counties utilized GIS as part of their analysis and gathered information on residences' of WFNJ welfare population, childcare centers, major employers, and existing transit services. Although the State supplied transportation consultants and the GIS resources to assist the counties, the process was a large undertaking. The process takes a considerable amount of staff time and resources to commit to a long-term planning effort.

Detroit

SMART, DDOT and SEMCOG utilized GIS to identify the location of transit dependent populations, childcare facilities and potential job locations. By merging databases from multiple sources including employment data purchased from a private firm and U.S. Census data, they were able to determine areas under-served by existing transit services. SMART conducted a corridor analysis by number of businesses, type of business and jobs, to link with existing transit routes. SEMCOG assisted in providing long-range planning functions and travel demand and origin/destination data for service planning. They were instrumental in coordinating data from other sources to utilize a common GIS platform to analyze the metropolitan service area.

Earlier planning efforts to address employment issues in the Detroit area began in the mid-1980's when the Ford plant, one of the largest employers in the region, experienced difficulty in the placement of workers. Suburban employment centers were experiencing rapid growth while the population and employment in Detroit declined. A demographic study was completed to determine where the chronically jobless were located and found that the major older urban areas, including the City of Detroit, had the highest number of individuals living below the poverty level.

San Luis Obispo County

Planning in San Luis Obispo County focused primarily on utilizing GIS to identify the location of CalWORKS participants, potential employment opportunities, childcare facilities, job training centers and existing transportation services. When obtaining the location information of childcare facilities, only licensed facility locations were provided.

SLOCOG also gathered information on traffic volume and traffic movement to determine potential origin/destination information, levels of service and transit corridors.

Minnesota

Planning efforts focused primarily on the seven-county metropolitan area of Minneapolis-St. Paul and each county was at liberty to follow their own planning process. Because there were no rules or guidelines set up to direct stakeholder groups in their planning efforts and very little time, planning took place in a real-time environment rather than a proactive approach. Each county was limited to basic information to begin planning, including total target population residing in the county, and funding available. It was up to each county to develop and implement programs.

Welfare reform efforts varied among the seven counties. Anoka County implemented a mandatory job search program that required members of the target population to attend a 2-week training class. The county determined times, dates and locations of the training.

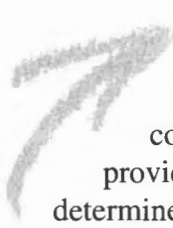
The challenge was determining the origins of the target population and how to transport them to one central training center. Communication between transit providers, job counselors and financial workers proved to be the most effective means to share information and determine what information was necessary, where to find it and how it might be useful to develop transportation

alternatives. Using GIS, the county produced maps that displayed the locations of the target population, existing transit routes, childcare facilities, training centers and employment centers.

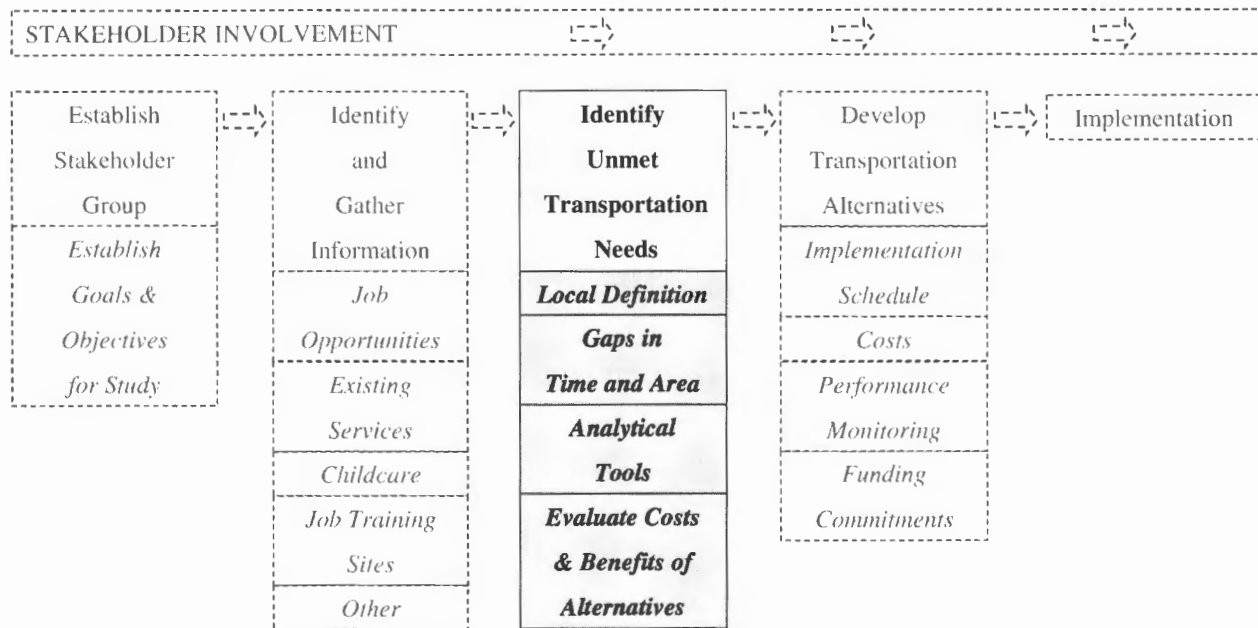
Kentucky

The planning process in Kentucky focused on the implementation of a redesigned statewide transportation network. The Human Service Transportation Delivery (HSTD) program provides a variety of benefits to eligible transportation recipients. Working in conjunction with transportation brokers and providers in the state, the program addresses previous problems with fragmentation of services.

V. IDENTIFICATION OF UNMET NEEDS



Data collection and analysis enables stakeholders to identify transportation challenges and “gaps” in existing transportation services. Although the location of individuals relative to location of services is the most obvious transportation concern, service boundaries, limited hours of service and the type of service provided can be barriers as well. As part of job access planning, stakeholders must determine to what degree a problem exists and the best means to address it.



This chapter discusses analytical tools such as mapping software, interviews and surveys, and how they can be useful to determine unmet transportation needs. Although the results of an analysis may recommend adding or enhancing transportation services, stakeholders must consider the types of jobs the target population is qualified for, whether jobs are part-time, seasonal or temporary, if there are childcare issues, and how to help individuals sustain employment or get a better job.

Data Gathering & Analysis Leads to Identification of Unique Needs of a Region

Transportation planners, social service agencies, and other stakeholders must identify and address the unique needs of their service area. Information that can help identify these needs includes:

- Employers’ need for job readiness and job skills.
- The target population’s work history and job qualifications.
- The proximity of the target population to employment locations and childcare facilities.

- Travel time to jobs and childcare using existing transportation services.
- The relationship between wage levels, job stability, opportunities for advancement and the needs and expectations of the target population.

Knowing the spatial relationships between job seekers, employment, and job-related services enables planning committees to identify ways to improve mobility. Program planners must make decisions about the target population's access to automobiles, job qualifications, income needed to move out of poverty, and the impact of these transitions on transportation needs. Planners should also incorporate monitoring and evaluation methods into transportation programs to measure program effectiveness.

Region's Definition of Unmet Needs

By identifying the unmet needs of the region, stakeholders can ascertain the services that are most appropriate and useful to obtaining sustainable employment. In light of a region's unmet needs, planners must consider an array of service alternatives to accommodate varying transportation needs of urban, suburban and rural areas. Alternatives include fixed route service, demand-responsive service, inter-generational paratransit, employer-based transit services, and combinations of service types.

Urban areas offer a variety of public transportation services especially to the downtown and near downtown destinations. In these areas, it may be possible to accommodate needs through simple changes in service. By extending service hours and expanding service areas, fixed route systems can implement service rather quickly and at a reasonable marginal cost. These services tend to cater specifically to inner-city and inner-suburb markets from inner-city residential areas. The challenge is providing service from the city to jobs in the suburbs. Reverse commute service has become an increasingly popular approach to addressing this market challenge.

Rapid job growth in the suburbs offers many possible job opportunities for welfare to work households in the inner sections of the central city. Existing transportation services in suburban areas tend to focus on moving people from suburb to suburb with potential childcare stops or other trip needs along the way. For these services to be effective, riders must share common origins and destinations. Multiple day care stops can result in travel times that make the service unattractive and unused.



Existing transportation services in rural areas are more limited than urban or suburban areas. Developing transportation initiatives to serve these areas can be challenging. The journey to work for individuals in rural areas can include stops along the way, and the travel distance is generally greater. In addition, many rural and suburban communities provide subsidized housing in areas with little or no public transportation services.

Land is typically more affordable in these areas and more appealing to developers. Planning for transportation to these areas is often an afterthought.

In planning for improved access to employment opportunities, planners should focus on the following:

1. Immediate needs of the target population, such as moving a household from welfare to work;
2. Maintenance needs of the target population, such as keeping the household from slipping from work back into poverty or welfare;
3. Long-term economic sustainability of the target population, such as allowing for job advancement and continuing improvement in standard of living.

Immediate Needs - Proximity of Jobs to Residences, Frequency of Service, Cost of Service

Proximity - For the past two decades, job creation in most regions of the country has occurred in dispersed suburban or exurban areas. Dispersed destinations are more difficult to reach from inner-city homes and from suburban and rural households without access to an automobile. Planning to meet the needs of individuals who do not have automobile access may require a variety of non-traditional transportation options.

Service Frequency - Individuals needing transit service for job access must often drop off a child at childcare on the way. Some parents may not be able to leave for work until the child has been safely picked up for school. The frequency of service may determine whether fixed route service meets the individual's needs. Greater frequency enables individuals to utilize fixed route service for a wider variety of trip purposes such as health care, school or training, shopping and childcare.

Service Cost - The majority of the target population cannot initially afford to purchase transportation services. Programs designed to subsidize bus passes, provide vouchers, reimburse expenses or advance funds for auto ownership costs, can assist individuals until they can afford an automobile or find a better alternative.

An even tougher challenge to transportation service alternatives is to accommodate second and third shift schedules. Public transportation generally does not operate in the late evening or early morning hours, which results in limited service for second and third shift end/start times.

Involving employers to assist with shuttle or vanpool service is one approach to paying for additional resources, though employer interest may vary considerably.

Maintenance Needs – Temporary/Seasonal Jobs, Job Placement, Job Retention

Temporary/Seasonal Jobs – Employers in some industries require temporary and seasonal employees. Job locations for the target population may change as individuals move from an initial, often part-time or seasonal position, to another seasonal position, or to a full-time job.

Some individuals may be participating in education or training while working part-time or looking for a job. Childcare locations and schedules can also conflict, adding complications to the issue of transportation planning. Identifying useful ways to address these issues is critical in helping individuals move through the various phases toward economic independence.

Job Retention - Transportation initiatives must consider needs beyond the interview or the first day of employment. Initiatives should be flexible, addressing the reality of working parents who depend on public transportation for trips to work and childcare. Transportation options should provide access for childcare and responsiveness to childcare or school emergencies. Meeting these needs will help transit-dependent people retain their jobs.

Low-income households who own a car often use public transportation intermittently for job retention. The 1995 National Transportation Survey revealed that low-income households' cars are significantly older and less reliable than other households. Surveys in some regions of the country have noted that the single largest barrier for working families to stay employed is keeping an older car in working condition. Individuals in the target population who are vehicle owners generally own cars in need of repair and lack insurance or proper registration. Loan programs designed to allow working households to repair a vehicle or acquire insurance or registration may be a useful and efficient alternative.

Programs assisting the target population to purchase or repair an automobile are not eligible for funding under the JARC program. Programs supporting forms of mass transportation such as carpooling, shared-ride and special paratransit services are eligible. Activities such as funding transit passes, construction of childcare centers and employment support facilities are not eligible for JARC funding, though they are eligible for grants under TANF and WtW programs.

Involvement from employers and/or employer groups is imperative to identifying job-retention issues. Employer involvement can help facilitate how employers might play a role in the provision of services to support job-retention efforts. Employers may be eligible to receive DOL funds to support transportation programs assisting low-income populations. Engaging them in job access planning efforts can increase awareness of funding opportunities, assist them in maximizing the use of those funds, and develop job-retention initiatives that accurately address the needs of low-income individuals.

Employers and employer groups may wish to consult the Welfare to Work Partnership for information on how to find, recruit, train, hire and retain former members of the target population. The Partnership is a national, non-profit organization created to encourage and assist businesses with hiring individuals from public assistance without displacing current workers. Other functions of the Partnership include building a network of businesses who have experience hiring former welfare recipients and/or have pledged to hire at least one person from welfare. The existing network consists of approximately 10,000 businesses and is a valuable source of information on first-hand experiences with employing members of the target population. For more information, the Partnership web site is located at <http://www.welfaretowork.org>.

Long-Term Economic Sustainability – Job Advancement

Transportation options must consider the long-range prospects of employment. If the only means of moving up the job ladder to higher wages and greater economic security is to move from one job to another, transportation must provide this flexibility. Successful planning must consider the choices and options available as people advance.

Several tools can help planners define unmet transportation needs. This section describes several processes to identify unmet needs, including the following:

- Analytical GIS tools
- Defining Employers
- Defining Employees



Analytical Tools

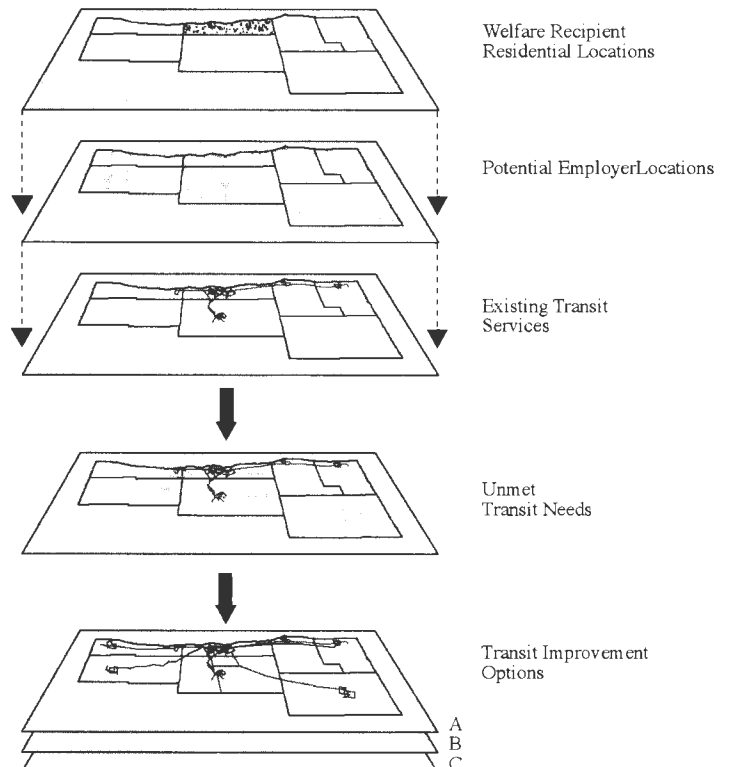
Geographic Information Systems

Geographic Information System (GIS). GIS is a computerized system that integrates geographic and tabular data to show complex spatial information. Producing maps as part of the planning process can assist planners with identifying unmet transportation needs and developing effective transportation alternatives. Additionally, maps can be an effective means of showing decision-makers and members of the public gaps in transportation services.

GIS mapping in the job access planning process can produce the following maps:

- Locations of Residences of Targeted Population
- Locations of Likely Job Opportunities
- Geographic Coverage of Transit Services
- Locations of Childcare and Job Training Sites

GIS can produce individual maps, composite maps, or spatial overlay analyses. Each map produced with GIS software is actually a layer of information, and the different layers can be



displayed on the same map, as depicted in the graphic on the previous page. This map illustrates the following:

- Where the targeted population lives and where heaviest concentrations are located.
- Where likely job opportunities are in relationship to where people live and where existing bus service operates.
- The geographic coverage of existing transit services and the extent to which the services link people with likely job opportunities.

Additional software is required to display the road network on the map. There are generally two options for displaying the road network. Tiger Software is free of charge and available to the public but it is not the most current or complete road network available.

The second alternative is to purchase a complete updated road network from a vendor. In Wisconsin, this resulted in being able to plot 84% – 97% of all addresses.

Understanding Employer Needs

Merely matching job locations with job seeker residences is insufficient. The program should consider the type of job and prerequisite skills, the wage level relative to existing job options, and the willingness of employers to participate.

Job placement agencies understand the needs of local and regional employers. Planners however, may also need to gather additional information or supplement information from job placement agencies to design or improve services. Planners may choose to engage in an information gathering process designed to understand employers' needs and the characteristics of the job and labor market. The process is best conducted in partnership with job placement agencies, business organizations, and regional economic development agencies. Such a process is described below.

Employer Interviews and Outreach

The first step in identifying employer needs is to determine who should be contacted. Contacting all employers within a metropolitan area will likely not be possible. Typically, a particular corridor or sub-area within a metropolitan region will be the primary geographic focus of the interviewers.

Identifying those industries with Standard Industrial Codes with entry-level or semi-skilled positions (or industries that need the skills of program participants) can also be helpful. The manufacturing, wholesale, retail



and service sector industries typically offer entry-level or semi-skilled positions.

Another approach is to consider data helpful with identifying job opportunities:

- Total number of employees: The greatest number of employment opportunities for welfare-to-work participants are found with small- to medium-sized companies.
- Businesses where minimum skills are needed: A large percentage of people moving from welfare to work are likely to lack specialized technical skills and would not be eligible for advanced level employment.
- Companies located in business or industrial parks, where transit services are most convenient.

Once a list of employers to contact has been developed, it is prudent to share the list with regional Chamber of Commerce or area-specific business development council. Staff with these organizations can identify a point person or identify additional companies to include on the list.

Employer Outreach Methods

Outreach methods to gather information from employers include the following:

- Mailed surveys.
- Face-to-face interviews.
- Focus group meetings.

Employer surveys provide excellent information; however, few employers may take the time to complete and mail them. Interviews and focus group meetings are preferred as they generally provide more immediate results. Surveys require time to prepare, distribute and collect. If surveys are not returned within a specified time frame, follow-up phone calls are recommended, and it can be difficult to find the person who actually received the survey. Surveys to employers in the east metro suburbs of St. Paul, Minnesota, resulted in less than a 25 percent return rate. The information that was received, however, was uniformly complete and thoughtful.

A combination of outreach techniques may be useful as surveys and interviews can help shape and enhance focus group design. Through interviews, employment, skills/training, wage rate, and transportation issues can be identified. This information can then provide questions for a focus group and assist in interpreting employer responses and anecdotes.

Interview Process

Each company operates differently and finding the appropriate person to interview can be frustrating. In one company, the appropriate person may be the human resources director; in another, the administrative director is the most knowledgeable; and in a third the appropriate person may be a shift supervisor.

Companies are generally willing to cooperate with interview efforts, but time in the interview is time spent away completing a primary work task. The process must be well organized and

managed. Experience has shown that an hour to an hour and a half interview is typically required to understand company-specific employment procedures and to gather quantitative and qualitative data.

Questions may include the following:

Entry-Level Staffing

1. Define what you believe to be an "entry-level" job and the range of "entry-level" skills.
2. How many jobs at your company does "entry-level" staff currently hold?
3. How many current job openings are for entry-level positions?
4. In your opinion, is the current number of entry-level job openings typical? Higher or lower than normal?
5. What percentage of the entry-level jobs are full-time, non-seasonal positions?
6. Does your company have difficulty filling entry-level positions? Do you believe the labor market is tighter than it was one year ago? Five years ago?
7. Are some employees employed under a union contract? If so, please identify the percentage of total employees who are union and whether this includes entry-level employees.
8. How important is on-time arrival and departure for your employees? How much flexibility is there in the arrival and departure time of entry-level employees?

Training

1. What percentage of entry-level positions requires on-the-job training (other than job orientation)?
2. Does your company have a formal training program? If so, does the program include entry-level employees?
3. Does your company offer training as a means of enticing entry-level job applicants? If so, please describe the training program.
4. What is the approximate cost of training an entry-level employee?
5. Do you prefer that your entry-level employees demonstrate a certain level of skills? What are these?

Job Turnover

1. How many people do you hire each year?
2. Approximately how many positions in your company turn over each year?
3. How many people retire each year?
4. How many non-seasonal, permanent workers quit each year for non-disciplinary reasons?
5. Have you experienced growth in the number of jobs over the last five years?
6. How many temporary workers are currently working at your company? Are certain routine tasks assigned to temporary workers? Is it easy or difficult to move from temporary work to long-term jobs?

Employment Longevity

1. What is the typical length of employment for workers holding entry-level jobs?
2. Do entry-level employees typically move up into more skilled or better paying positions within the company? If so, how long do employees stay in entry-level positions before moving up within the company?
3. For what reasons are entry-level people terminated or decide to leave your company?

Average Entry-Level Wages

1. What is your company's typical wage for entry-level positions?
2. Have you experienced upward pressure on entry-level wages? If yes, to what do you attribute the shift?
3. Has your company's entry-level wage changed in the last year? (Up or down? By how much?)

Transportation Issues

1. Is transportation a problem for your employees; particularly entry-level employees?
2. What transportation benefits does your company provide to employees?
3. Has your company investigated or taken advantage of the tax benefits related to providing transit and vanpool assistance to employees?
4. If transportation were a barrier preventing entry-level job seekers from working at your company, would the company consider assisting with transportation expenses as an incentive to attract entry-level job applicants?
5. Would the company consider providing a transportation subsidy directly to the employee?
6. Would the company consider providing a transportation payment directly to a transportation service provider?
7. Would the company financially support entry-level employees' transportation costs to take advantage of the treatment of such costs as allowable income deductions?
8. Would the company be agreeable to a paying part of the cost of transportation services to entry-level employees?

Barriers to Hiring Inner-City Under-Employed

1. In your opinion, are there any disadvantages to employing central-city residents, with limited or poor work records in your business?
2. Do you see the labor pool in central-city neighborhoods as a potential source for workers in your company? Why or why not?
3. Has it been your experience that recipients of economic assistance programs (AFDC, General Assistance, and Food Stamps) have the basic level of job readiness skills for entry-level positions in your company?
4. Does your company have an outreach strategy aimed at current or former welfare participants? If yes, does it include a transportation support plan?

Employer Focus Group Meetings

Organizing focus groups is a time consuming process. The planners must get commitments from a suitable number of employers (including a cushion for those who will not show up), find suitable locations at a convenient time, and provide adequate notice and reminders to committed individuals.

Compiling Focus Group Results

Planners should note areas of agreement and disagreement in the focus group discussions and compare the findings of the interviews or surveys with the focus group results. Typical results should organize job characteristics by the following:

- Industry sectors that pay lower hourly wages.
- Industries or businesses that have more schedule flexibility and, as a result, can better address tardiness and absences related to limited transportation options.
- Industries or businesses that require technical skills or enhanced communications, language, and interpersonal capabilities.

Interviews and focus groups allow for greater discussion of transportation issues. Anecdotal comments can provide illustrations and insight to tie into survey results or other data. Issues include frequency of service, scheduling to accommodate late shifts, and passenger facilities such as heated shelters.

The matrix on the following page presents a sample set of questions for employer focus group meetings.

Example Summary of Employer Focus Group Meetings

1. Types of Employers (16 employers, 18 representatives)

All but two employers were from the services sector. Types of businesses represented: health clinic, HMO, private university, hospital, technical school, travel agency/tour operator, department store, accounting firm, wholesale grocer, warehouser/distributor, and machine shop.

2. Number of Entry-Level Positions Available

The number of entry-level openings ranged from less than 10 to nearly 400 per year. The total number of employees in the firms ranged from 100 to 9,000; entry-level jobs comprise a significant portion of the total.

EMPLOYER FOCUS GROUP MEETING DESIGN

Context: The Wisconsin State Legislature passed Wisconsin Act 289 (Wisconsin Works or W-2), an act that will eliminate AFDC and offer assistance in getting jobs. It is recognized that job creation has largely taken place in suburban communities and that W-2 participants live in the inner city. Bridging the transportation gap is a critical issue in the success of the W-2 program. Employers in the Milwaukee area have been invited to discuss jobs, welfare reform, and transportation to contribute to the state's efforts to reduce barriers to work that might negatively affect W-2 program success.

Rational Objective: The purpose of the focus group meeting is to surface thoughts and feelings about the issue and dialogue about potential solutions.

Experiential Objective: Participants should feel comfortable about participating in an open, honest exchange of ideas and perceptions.

OPENING	OBJECTIVE (Get Facts)	REFLECTIVE (Emotions, Associations, and Feelings)	INTERPRETIVE (Values and Meaning)	DECISIONAL (Future Resolve)	CLOSING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Meeting objectives • Logistics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role of moderator - Role of observer 	<p>What is your name, occupation?</p> <p>What product does your company produce?</p> <p>What is the size of your company's workforce?</p> <p>Describe your company's experience hiring entry-level workers.</p>	<p>What is your general reaction to the W-2 program? How do you feel about it?</p> <p>Do you feel the program has potential to succeed?</p> <p>What do you see as the program's strong points?</p> <p>What do you see as the program's weaknesses?</p>	<p>Discussion of barriers to work W-2 participants might face.</p> <p>Do you believe that there are barriers?</p> <p>How should they be addressed?</p>	<p>Are there things that companies can do to help W-2 succeed?</p> <p>What are transportation-related issues?</p> <p>How much support of expenses for transportation services should come from the private sector?</p> <p>How much financial support should come from the public sector?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note contributions of participants - why their participation was valuable and how the information will be used. • Thank participants. • Adjourn.
Registration, name tags, refreshments, tape recorder, presentation handouts					
10 minutes	25 minutes	15 minutes	15 minutes	20 minutes	5 minutes

3. Range of Skills Required

Required skills cited most often by employers: customer service, clerical, some computer literacy, filing, data entry, basic math and reading, ability to think quickly on their feet, typing (60 words per minute), some sales experience. Only a few employers required a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED). One employer commented that even college students and some graduates are not prepared for today's workplace.

4. Turnover Rate

The annual turnover rate varied widely among the employers, ranging from 4 percent to 75 percent. Entry-level positions accounted for most of the employers' annual turnover; 30 percent to 40 percent turnover in entry-level positions seems normal.

5. Reasons Entry-Level Employees Were Terminated

Poor attendance was the #1 reason for termination. Many attendance problems can be attributed to transportation issues. Attitude and lack of work ethic were also cited frequently by employers. Other reasons: poor work-readiness; lack of skills; poor performance; cultural differences; background checks; reporting false information on application. Most employers said they had "liberal" attendance policies; one employer forgave up to 24 unexcused absences per year.

6. Reasons Employees Left Positions

Got a better job; received more money elsewhere; didn't like the work; employees just ready to move on; issues in their personal lives, e.g., childcare, housing, etc. Although most employers said there were opportunities for advancement, the average tenure was less than 6 months.

7. Entry-Level Wages

Starting wages paid by the employers ranged from \$6.00 to \$7.50 per hour, with some as high as \$10 per hour. The typical starting wage was \$6.60 to \$6.90 per hour. One employer's starting salary was almost \$25,000 per year. Most employers had different starting wages based on the type of job. Most employers granted wage increases after a probation period, usually six months. Several noted there has been slight (market) pressure to raise starting wages, with some having done so recently.

8. Benefits

Most employers offered some type of (minimal) benefit package. One employer offered full benefits at 20 hours per week; two provided benefits after 30 hours of work per week. Most said they couldn't offer benefits to one group of employees without offering them to all employees. They indicated a need to find a way to standardize benefits. Most employers

recognize the need to provide training, but don't like having to provide remedial education/training.

9. Transportation

Transportation was not usually an issue for employers in the city, since they were located on or near bus lines. Some central-city employers whose businesses required shift work found transportation to be a problem for some employees. Transportation was a problem for most suburban employers. They cited: no bus service or infrequent service in their areas; bus arrival and departure times did not coincide with their shift starting and ending times; employees have to wait outside in the elements, often for long periods of time.

At least three employers commented that they have had periodic discussions with regional transit agencies to extend bus service to their suburban area and to alter routes or schedules, especially during the evenings and on weekends. According to the employers, the discussions have produced few positive results thus far.

No employers provided transportation benefits to their employees, other than (free or reduced) parking or assistance with carpooling. Several have investigated the transit- and transportation-related, allowable expense deductions, but have not yet utilized them. A few indicated a willingness to pay for employees' transportation costs under certain conditions.

Opinions on Welfare Reform

- * We (society) need to have it.
- * I think it can help break the cycle of dependency.
- * It's a good program.
- * Welfare reform is not ready for itself; there are too many unresolved issues, and the fear is that many people will fall through the cracks.
- * The program lacks common sense.
- * Too many variables haven't been worked out.
- * Some people will fall through the cracks.
- * Employers can't do it all.
- * Employers are unclear about what to expect and what they should do.
- * Everyone needs to be more tolerant.
- * Recipients have a lot of problems that prevent them from keeping jobs.
- * Welfare reform is a way for some people to regain their dignity.
- * Let's hope workers don't hold the program's shortcomings (and being forced to work) against the employers.

Other Notable Comments

- One employer encountered 12 languages while interviewing 30 applicants.
- Employers (HR departments) now do things they never had to do before.
- Some employers are uncomfortable with the current situation and can't find good employees, partly because of low unemployment rates.
- Only two employers said the lack of employees has hampered their operations or future plans.
- It's a challenge to get entry-level employees to buy into a "team" concept.

Target Population Information and Outreach

Just as program planners must understand employers' needs to create sustainable programs, the target population has a wide variety of concerns. Input from members of the target population can provide valuable insight into the transportation issues they face and their participation is required as part of the JARC planning process. As noted in Chapter 4, merely matching job locations with job seeker residences is insufficient. The transportation to work program should consider the attractiveness of wages relative to travel time and inconvenience, the skills of the target population, and the effect that availability of services such as health care and child care have on job choice.

Planners should rely on job placement agencies to provide initial information on job seekers' skills, transportation options, and difficulties in finding or keeping jobs. To gather more detailed information, planners should consider conducting a similar process to the employer interview/outreach process described above. Once again, the process is best conducted in partnership with other organizations such as job placement agencies, social service agencies, and providers of support services such as childcare or job training. The process is described below.

Job Seeker Interviews

The Personal Responsibility and Work Reconciliation Act of 1996, (National Welfare Reform), was preceded by programs in several states across the country to reduce the welfare rolls and improve access to training/education programs and public employment agencies. In many of the states where these programs were implemented, community-based outreach facilities were established to better enable affected populations to access information, in-take and screening, and work readiness and training services.

Staff at these community outreach facilities should be able to arrange introductions to target population members who are seeking employment. However, relationships between staff and clients will be stronger when the offices have a long history and are located in targeted communities.

Confidentiality will be a major concern of staff who are asked to assist a welfare-to-work transit study by arranging introductions to clients. Positive interactions between staff working in outreach programs and the clients they serve are dependent on trust and mutual respect. Staff often have invested a great deal of time to build trust and earn the respect of their clients.

Staff in outreach organizations is often unwilling to (or prohibited by administrative regulations to do so) hand over a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers. Instead, they can communicate directly with their clients and ask if they would be willing to participate in an outreach program. With the consent of their clients, introductions can be arranged.

Participation Payments

Inducements are often provided to participants in market research studies. Cash stipends are appreciated and well received when working with a market that consists of target population members. Depending on the setting, it may be appropriate to provide a meal as part of an inducement package.

Providing inducements serves two major purposes. First, they present an incentive to interview participants to show up at the appointed time. Approximately 20 percent of people who agree to participate in an interview or attend a focus group meeting will fail to honor their commitment. Without inducements, this percentage would likely be higher.

Secondly, for those who do honor their commitment, the inducement assists in creating a tone of seriousness and professionalism. Interview and focus group meeting participants are more inclined to give honest, thoughtful responses to questions when it is clear that their responses are valued and they are compensated for their time.

Cash stipends between \$25 to \$50 per person have been used in previous studies.

Information Gathering Formats

Two formats have been used to gather information from job seekers: One-on-one interviews and focus group meetings with up to 15 participants. The preferred format is the focus group meeting because of its efficiency and higher levels of interaction that take place during focus group meetings among the moderator and the participants. Under the control of a skilled moderator, the participants can be prodded to think outside the constraints of their day-to-day routines and address issues in unique ways.

Successful focus group meetings can include as many as 15 participants; however, 10 to 12 participants, is optimal. A skilled moderator can manage this number of participants, keeping them focused and on track, while, at the same time, allowing them to interact among themselves.

Focus group meetings are comparatively more expensive and time consuming to organize and conduct. In addition to locating a conference room for the meeting and arranging catering services for the meal, there are the labor-intensive tasks of:

- Initially identifying at least 25 interested participants.
- Identifying a day of the week and time of the day when at least 15 people can attend.
- Arranging childcare services for single parents without sitters.
- Preparing a mailing that includes:

- A confirmation letter with date, time, place, and directions and bus route information to the meeting location; and,
- Background information on the welfare-to-work study and focus group meeting operations and goals.
- Conducting telephone calls one day before the focus meeting to confirm attendance.

The tasks described above are not specially designed for a market consisting of target population members. Instead, this is a standard methodology that is used in consumer/product testing and focus group meetings.

Target Population Focus Group Meetings

Whether conducting one-on-one interviews or a series of focus group meetings, the purpose for gathering information is the same: To identify issues and concerns that should be addressed to facilitate the use of transportation services. In this sense, both the interview and the focus group meeting should be designed as market research efforts that are aimed at determining:

- Will consumers buy a particular product or service?
- If yes, why?
- If no, why not?

Focus group meetings are a valuable tool for gathering market/product research data and for qualitative assessment of services or products. The strength of focus group meetings in market/product research can be strengthened by considering three factors:

- 1) Grouping participants with common experiences in distinct focus group meetings.
- 2) The participants' understanding that there are no right or wrong answers and that it is only honest opinions (both positive and negative) about the product that are important to the testers.
- 3) The focus group meeting design and process is replicable.

The planners may use a number of focus group designs. One such method is the Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, and Decisional (ORID) design method. ORID has been used to conduct the focus group meetings for welfare-to-work transit studies. The design leads participants to discuss products from four critical reference points:

- Objective - Definitive and factual.
- Reflective - Emotions, associations, and feelings.
- Interpretive - Values and meanings.
- Decisional - Future resolve (to buy or not to buy).

The outline on the following page presents a model for conducting ORID focus group meetings for welfare-to-work transit studies.

JOB SEEKER FOCUS GROUP MEETING DESIGN

Context: A large number of jobs are located in the suburbs and that W-2 participants live in the inner city. Bridging the transportation gap is a critical issue in the success of the W-2 program. W-2 participants have been invited to discuss jobs, welfare reform, and transportation to help identify ways to improve transportation services between the city and places of employment.

Rational Objective: The purpose of the focus group meeting is to surface thoughts and feelings about the issues and dialogue about potential solutions.

Experiential Objective: Participants should feel comfortable about participating in an open, honest exchange of ideas and perceptions.

OPENING	OBJECTIVE (Get Facts)	REFLECTIVE (Emotions, Associations, and Feelings)	INTERPRETIVE (Values and Meaning)	DECISIONAL (Future Resolve)	CLOSING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Meeting objectives • Logistics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role of moderator - Role of observer 	<p>What is your name? Where do you live? For how long?</p> <p>Have you found employment through the W-2 Program? Have you enrolled in a training or education program?</p> <p>Where is your job or education program?</p> <p>How do you usually travel around the city? Car, bus, taxi?</p> <p>How will you travel to your job or education program?</p>	<p>What is your general reaction to the W-2 program? How do you feel about it?</p> <p>Do you feel the program has potential to succeed? Why? Why not?</p> <p>What do you see as the program's strong points? What do you see as the program's weaknesses? Is transportation going to be an issue for you?</p> <p>What kinds of experiences have you had riding the bus?</p> <p>What kinds of experiences have you had in the suburbs?</p>	<p>Discussion of barriers to work W-2 participants might face. Do you believe there are solutions to the barriers? How should they be addressed?</p> <p>How do you feel about riding the bus to work in the suburbs when you live in the city?</p> <p>What are your concerns about traveling to work? Bus fare, travel time, emergency travel needs?</p> <p>Are wages paid in the suburbs high enough to offset costs of transit?</p>	<p>Yes or no, would you ride the bus to work in a suburban location? Why or why not?</p> <p>Are there things that can be done to make riding the bus more attractive?</p> <p>Is it the responsibility of companies to help meet inner-city workers' transportation needs? What should companies do? Is it the responsibility of the government? What should government do?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note contributions of participants - why their participation was valuable and how the information will be used. • Thank participants. • Pay stipends • Adjourn.
Registration, name tags, refreshments, tape recorder, presentation handouts					
10 minutes	15 minutes	25 minutes	15 minutes	20 minutes	5 minutes

General Findings

In interviews and focus group meetings, people moving from welfare-to-work have indicated that they are very aware of the transportation-related costs they will incur pursuing jobs in suburban communities. Those costs are identified in both time (excessive travel time and inconvenience) and money. From the perspective of the job seekers, these issues could be addressed by:

1. Providing direct transit routes, without the need for transfers, between home and the job site or a central location (e.g. downtown) and the job site. It was felt that the employers should contribute to the costs of providing these routes.
2. Upwardly adjust wages paid by suburban-based employers to account for time spent traveling to/from work. In some cases, two-way travel time on the bus could account for four hours or more.

Another concern was travel home from work in the event of an emergency. Focus group members felt that, at a minimum, employers could guarantee a ride home when there is an emergency.

Evaluation of Alternatives

Understanding the facets of planning to improve access to jobs does not necessarily lead to an obvious preferred alternative. Planners should create a framework for choosing between alternatives. The criteria against which to measure alternatives depend upon the goals that each region or planning group sets in its planning process. Examples of decision criteria include the following:

- Creating specific transit links between independent systems.
- Garnering financial and operational support from local employers.
- Increasing the number of reverse commuters from specific central-city geographic areas.
- Increasing the number of transportation options to specific transit-dependent populations.
- Improving on specific productivity criteria for capital assets in the transit system.
- Creating a joint planning effort between disparate transit and paratransit providers.

Although it may be difficult to obtain data to substantiate these criteria during initial planning efforts, estimates and assumptions can serve as a baseline for future analysis and decision-making. Very few communities conduct in depth evaluations of welfare to work transportation alternatives during first, or sometimes second rounds of job access planning. Because it is difficult to predict how the target population will respond to transportation programs and services there are many unknowns. Many communities have utilized GIS to identify quantitative information as a starting point. Input from employers, childcare providers, transit providers and job developers can provide insight relative to the services they provide and how they believe the target population will respond based on their experience.

Evaluation of Costs and Benefits

One decision criteria common to most programs is cost. Measuring the costs of each alternative relative to the benefits can be a difficult and sometimes imprecise process. Cost/Benefit analysis should not, consequently, be the sole decision criteria but should inform the ultimate decision process along with other goals and decision criteria.

Ideally, cost/benefit analysis should capture the entire range of costs and benefits for each alternative that planners consider. For instance, the costs and benefits may include increased fare box revenue, decreased tax revenue to the state, and decreased costs of state or local assistance programs. The analysis should also consider the costs and benefits from multiple perspectives. One stakeholder (local transit agency, or the state department of revenue) may incur costs while benefits accrue to other stakeholders (such as the state welfare agency, transit riders, and local employers).

Cost/Benefit analysis can be a difficult and time-consuming process. Consequently, initial efforts at planning for improved job access may not include cost/benefit analysis. As the planning effort gets more detailed in subsequent efforts, planners should endeavor to understand the relationships between costs and benefits of job-access programs.

One method for creating and conducting a cost/benefits analysis (the method used in the Wisconsin example, described below) is found in Appendix B.

Examples of Regional Approach

Wisconsin

Cost/Benefit Model

The cost/benefit model examines the quantifiable costs and benefits of expanding transit opportunities to low-income job seekers. The cost of various assistance programs, and the success of Wisconsin's W-2 program in moving household into self-sufficiency, is directly linked to success in low-income households and assistance program participants finding or improving their jobs. If wages are depressed by lack of access to reasonable wage jobs, the costs to the State rise. The model, therefore, measured the directions and magnitude of changes in the State's balance sheet given changes in transit investment.

The model was designed to estimate the approximate changes in costs to the state, and to W-2 participants, as transportation options change. The model uses a host of causal relationships to estimate change given a set of changes from an approximate base case. The model thus demonstrates change in costs given changes in independent variables, rather than predicting actual costs.

Qualitative considerations and assumptions must be considered as well. For instance, the relationship between the number of job placements dependent on transit could be greatly affected by either W-2 participants' willingness to bear costs associated with increased travel times, or the willingness of employers to subsidize employees' transportation costs. The quantitative model thus cannot be used without applying the entire research model or some reasonable proxy.

State and Participant Tests

The BRW/Biko Associates quantitative model in Wisconsin estimated the fiscal effects of expanding or extending transit services in any Wisconsin urban area from two perspectives: Magnitude of savings available to the state, and effects on participants. Each urban area will have different inputs related to expected wage levels and wage differentials, numbers of cases in each job category, health care costs, child care costs, and transportation costs. The model's assumptions can be changed for each urban area in which the model is applied. The Participant and State test results are based on the causal and interactive relationships of a number of independent variables, such as assistance program benefit schedules and income tax rates, that effect state and participant costs.

Transferability

Some welfare program parameters, such as baseline caseload estimates and job placement assumptions, change for each Wisconsin county. Local economic conditions also change, such as prevailing wage rates, availability of employer health benefits, and levels of transit dependence. As these variables change, the model assumptions can similarly be changed.

Milwaukee

The Milwaukee study examined how total costs to the state changed, as the state was able to place higher numbers of W-2 participants in unsubsidized jobs. The costs examined included the following:

- Costs of subsidized jobs.
- Cost of health care.
- Cost of program administration.
- Childcare costs.
- Cost of income taxes (Earned Income Tax Credit, EITC).

What is the Baseline

The Milwaukee study was conducted before W-2 was actually implemented. The baseline caseload and cost figures, and some program parameters, used in the cost/benefit model were based on estimates produced by several agencies that had studied the planned implementation of W-2. The Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) had estimated the costs of the program to the State based on the Workforce Development (DWD) planning assumptions. As these assumptions did not consider the spatial mismatch between jobs and W2 participants, the

BRW/Biko model assumed that improved access was required in order to meet the DWD and LFB projections. The baseline was, therefore, the forecast costs assuming projections were achieved. The model measured the change in costs to the State from lowering the number of successful placements in unsubsidized jobs.

Modeling the Relationships

Using a variety of scenario analyses from the Participant perspective we can ascertain a range of savings associated with each of the following scenarios:

1. Moving from a Transitional Placement to an unsubsidized job.
2. Moving from a Community Service Job to an unsubsidized job.
3. Moving from a Trial Job to an unsubsidized job.

The savings for each of these scenarios was determined by analyzing the following savings over a range of inputs:

- Health Care savings, varying the wage of the new job and the availability of employer health care benefits.
- Child Care savings, varying the wage of the new job.
- Stipend or job subsidy savings.
- Food Stamp program savings, varying the wage of the new job.
- Net tax effect, varying the wage of the new job.

The expected cost savings associated with each of the three scenarios were then weighted relative to the number of cases forecast to match that scenario. The Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau forecasts provided these weights (this study uses the percentage of placements for new applicants in each job category as the status quo distribution of W-2 participants, and the estimated movement from each category as the change in placement).

Based on the transit deficiencies identified earlier in the report, the study assumed that half of the placements in unsubsidized jobs were dependent on transit that did not exist or was extraordinarily inconvenient or expensive (thus likely to result in loss of job). The study also assumes that without transit, these unsubsidized placements are likely to instead result in Community Service Job (CSJ) placements (50%), Trial Job (TJ) placements (20%), or in the participant dropping from the program (30%). Low-income workers are often better off taking a part-time or seasonal job than a CSJ; the combination of the tight labor market and the new federal minimum wage ensures that CSJs are generally not attractive to workers who can find part-time work. The job gap studies show that a fairly large number of part-time and seasonal positions are available in the metropolitan area. As a consequence, if full-time unsubsidized jobs are not available, the worker may choose to drop out of the program and work part-time or seasonal jobs. These workers may, however, still participate in the Childcare and Health Care components of W2.

Brown, Dane, and Wood Counties

The above method was consequently applied in three other counties in Wisconsin; Brown County, the location of Green Bay; Dane County, the location of Madison; and Wood County, the location of two small cities (Wisconsin Rapids and Marshfield). These analyses differed from the Milwaukee study in several ways:

1. The population being examined was expanded from just W2 participants to include participants in the Food Stamp program. Quantitative modeling also estimated the savings from reducing the number of people dependent on Medicaid.
2. Far fewer data were available on the transit dependence and employment barriers of the target population. In Milwaukee, an existing body of social science research provided a foundation for the quantitative analysis. In Wood, Brown, and Dane counties the study relied on more generalized statewide data and older Census data.
3. For the working poor population (Food Stamp recipients in the workforce) the crucial independent variable was an increase in wages rather than a movement from unemployment (or subsidized job) to full employment.

Because the population and independent variables changed, and because the W2 program had been working for a year, both the baseline and the data sources were somewhat different from the Milwaukee study. The baseline for the W2 population was the number of historic job placements, while the baseline costs for the Food Stamp population was historic median income of Food Stamp households (excluding households not in the labor force). Data sources included employer addresses, job counts, and job industries from data on “covered employment;” county wage surveys and job characteristic summaries compiled by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, and county historic information on Food Stamp, W2, and Medicaid caseload and participant demographic characteristics.

The analysis models the potential savings from improving this populations’ (W2 and Food Stamp recipients) access to jobs. The potential savings come from reductions in program benefits as income increases, and the tax effects of increased wages, as most of these households are eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Most of the households in this population are already earning wages.¹ These households were characterized as the “working poor,” although the study made no attempt to quantify the effect of transit investment on low-income households that did not participate in either W2 or the Food Stamp program.

Philadelphia

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), the MPO for the Philadelphia area, utilized GIS to do extensive map work as part of job access planning and identifying the unmet needs of the region. Information such as the addresses of the target population, locations of

¹The fiscal model excludes Food Stamp recipients who are disabled, elderly, and blind in order to estimate the approximate number of recipients who are in the workforce.

likely job opportunities, corporate parks, schools, existing public transportation services, childcare centers and the location of regional service centers was mapped as part of the analysis.

The region's existing network of rail, trolley and bus routes offers a high level of service to commuters traveling during peak hours. Services are designed to funnel large numbers of people to a select number of transit hubs located in downtown business districts of core cities, revealing that service does not meet the needs of the relatively low-density residential and commercial areas in suburban counties.

Also as part of the analysis, DVRPC completed a transit accessibility analysis of the region and developed separate GIS networks for the varying transit services in the area. The results were compared against 1990 demographic and employment data at the zonal level. (Population and jobs data at the Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) level is available only from the decennial Census.) Based on this information, the DVRPC calculated the accessibility of residents and jobs to existing public transit services at distances ranging from ¼ to 2 miles based the type of transit service: rail, bus or trolley service. As a result, the percentage of the population and jobs located within ¼ mile (¼ mile is considered acceptable walking distance by most commuters) was determined by mode of transit. Accessibility to transit services was also analyzed by time of day and day of the week. Because many jobs require travel outside peak hours, mid-day and evening service is critical for many new entrants to the workforce and was identified as lacking.

The identification of unmet needs in the Philadelphia region has been an on-going process using a variety of sources. For example, the Mayor of Philadelphia often receives phone calls from employers in need of employees and then informs the stakeholder group.

The DVRPC is also responsible for the evaluation of Job Access and Reverse Commute applications and the inclusion of new initiatives in their overall transportation plan. They play a primary role in coordinating the application process and fielding questions from potential applicants.

New Jersey

New Jersey planning efforts to identify the unmet needs of the target population occurred at the regional and county level. GIS was utilized to show the existing transit network, address mapping of WFNJ population, childcare centers and major employers. With help from the DVRPC, each county determined areas where fixed route service, shuttle service, vanpools, or assistance such as bus passes might be most beneficial to the target population. In each county, a lead contact and steering committee was formed to work in conjunction with a consultant provided by the State.

Each county prepared a transportation plan that includes: a transportation demand analysis, a transportation supply inventory, identification of gaps in service, and a plan to coordinate existing resources to fill the gaps identified. The plans helped to identify specific services that were incorporated into the FY 1999 Job Access and Reverse Commute proposals.

Detroit

The process of identifying unmet needs in the Detroit area was largely based on GIS analysis. A number of organizations worked together to coordinate information resources to develop a family of transportation options. The organizations involved, particularly the transit providers, the metropolitan planning organization, and the state transportation and social service agencies, recognized that transit services must be market driven, flexible, and responsible to the changing needs of the target population.

The location of the target population, jobs, childcare facilities and existing transit services were analyzed to identify areas under-served by transit. MAC and the DDOT worked extensively with local chambers of commerce and community organizations to identify and address employer transportation needs. Additionally, SMART utilized GIS to provide information to stakeholders and employers on how transportation changes might impact jobs.

As in many areas, a formal process was not undertaken to identify transportation needs; a valuable tool proved to be the sharing of information and experiences among stakeholders.

San Luis Obispo County

The identification of unmet needs in San Luis Obispo County was based primarily on GIS spatial analysis. GIS assisted the stakeholder group with identifying areas under-served by existing transportation services and the locations of potential employers. The analysis showed that 70% or more of the target population lived ¼ mile or less from an existing busline in the county, and that childcare facilities were very accessible from buslines as well.

The information also showed that existing transit services stopped at the city limits and did not provide adequate service to the airport and surrounding area. Earlier data identified the airport as a potential employer, and the number of available jobs was found to be dramatically higher than originally anticipated.

Traffic volume and traffic movement information assisted in determining where commuter routes would be most beneficial. GIS mapping identified an area highly concentrated with target population residents and no existing transit services. Although job opportunities are lacking in this area, planning efforts continue to develop fixed route, deviated route or demand response services.

A formal evaluation process was not used to select transportation alternatives in San Luis Obispo County. The unmet needs of the area were fairly easy to identify. One evaluation method considered was to count the number of individuals potentially served by each transportation alternative and compares the relative costs associated with providing the service. Planning efforts to develop alternatives for areas with highly concentrated target population residents are still in progress. A more detailed evaluation process is expected to be used as these efforts continue. Stakeholders plan to evaluate each strategy based on the anticipated cost and the estimated recovery rate from fares for each potential service alternative.

Key lessons learned as part of San Luis Obispo County's planning efforts focused on the quality of the data used in the analysis. Accurate and complete data is absolutely necessary to enable good decision-making. Confidentiality issues were also a problem in obtaining childcare provider information. Finally, coordination and a positive approach to welfare reform as a whole is important among stakeholders.

Minnesota

Each of the seven counties in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area was responsible for identifying unmet needs in their area. Anoka County focused on transporting individuals to and from one central location for mandatory training classes. The stakeholder group in Anoka County utilized GIS to determine those needs. They were able to estimate how many individuals lived on or near a busline, how many lived in a condensed area not far from a busline, and the number of individuals living in dispersed rural locations. It was not known however, how many individuals had access to a vehicle. The stakeholder group estimated the number of individuals in each area who might be transit dependent, and of those, how many would need childcare transportation.



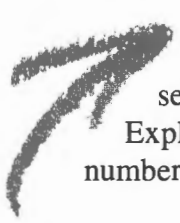
The stakeholder group determined that bus passes, demand response service, and loans to purchase and repair cars would be the most beneficial alternatives. They based the allocation of funds on the anticipated use of each type of service. The demand-response transit provider developed a cost per passenger per day amount for both individual trips and trips including a childcare stop along the way to the training center. The human services department scheduled members of the target population for mandatory training based on the maximum amount of service the demand response service could provide.

Communication between transit providers, job counselors and financial workers proved to be the most effective means to troubleshoot flaws in existing services and determine changes necessary to accommodate the greatest number of target population members.

Kentucky

Lack of readily accessible transportation statewide, particularly in rural communities, is a problem in Kentucky. The Human Service Transportation Delivery (HSTD) determined that the transportation needs of the target population could be better served by enhancing the quality of transportation services through random drug and alcohol testing of drivers and improved vehicle maintenance standards. The improvements were designed to provide better access for medical care, social services and job training. In an effort to streamline costs, a capitalization rate structure was developed for each region in the state.

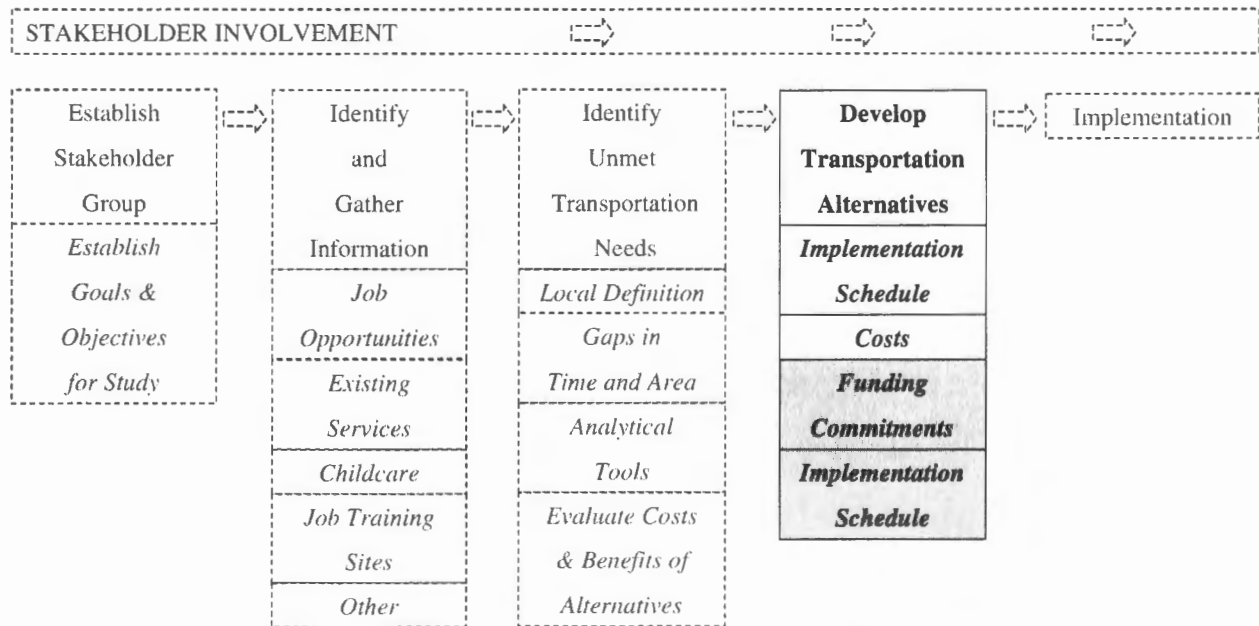
VI. TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES TO MEET NEEDS



Transportation plays a crucial role in linking the elements of job training, the development of job skills, the location of available childcare, and other critical services that enable the target population to enter into sustainable employment. Exploring a range of transportation alternatives to meet these needs enables a greater number of individuals to participate in work activities.

This chapter discusses transportation programs and services to address community transportation issues. These alternatives include fixed route enhancements, employer shuttle services, car loan programs and others that can be customized to meet community needs.

Included is an inventory of potential funding sources, categorized by federal, state, and local levels, and by private and non-profit sources. Web-site addresses for organizations offering information on welfare reform and access to job issues, case studies from other areas of the country, and funding guidelines and regulations are provided as well.



Transportation Alternatives

Transportation alternatives are categorized according to the type of assistance provided to the target population:

- Services Provided – includes job access initiatives that directly relate to the provision of a service such as transit services, job training services and job search activities.
- Support Services – includes programs that provide support to the target population to access job access initiatives such as car loan/repair programs, guaranteed ride home and existing programs redesigned to supplement job access services.
- Service Coordination – includes initiatives designed to coordinate existing and newly developed job access services. Transportation Management Associations, transportation brokers, and partnerships among non-transportation agencies are all ways to provide coordination.
- Target Population Participation/Purchases – includes programs designed to equip the target population with the necessary tools to purchase job access services such as transit passes, gas vouchers, training activities, etc.

Services Provided

Vanpooling/Ridesharing Program

Vanpool and rideshare programs allow workers with similar commute schedules to travel together. These services can be customized to meet specific transportation needs of the target population including daycare stops. Program variations and other considerations include the following:

- Rideshare in the form of carpools where a willing car owner, recipient or non-recipient, drives and passengers contribute to the cost of fuel. Driver reimbursement may also be in the form of subsidized gas vouchers.
- Non-profit agencies, private organizations or employers may operate vanpools or contribute to the operating cost.
- Offering the service to members and non-members of the target population increasing the opportunity for common origins and destinations.
- Subsidized carpools or drivers of carpools may be limited to a 6-month period or until the individual is able to purchase a car or establish alternative carpooling arrangements.
- Vanpools and rideshare programs may be the only feasible alternative in rural areas where other transportation services are not available.
- Outreach and promotion efforts are critical to reach the target population to inform them of their options.

Shared-Ride Taxis

Shared-Ride taxis operate similar to rideshare programs in that rides are shared among individuals with common origins and destinations. Private transportation companies and taxi services are often under contract to provide this service.

On a per trip basis, shared ride service may be more expensive than other alternatives. Consequently, the service may be limited to specific activities, such as job search or interviews, and limited to a certain length or time.

Fixed Route Transit Expansions

Fixed route transit service expansions can improve mobility, particularly in urban and suburban areas. The degree of necessary improvement is based on existing levels of service and the needs of each particular area.

Reverse commute service is an increasingly popular service for filling the gap between city residences and suburban employment centers. In addition to meeting the needs of employers and employees, reverse commute helps to eliminate deadhead miles on bus routes that normally provide the traditional suburb to city commute.

Extending existing routes is another option. Expanding routes to serve growing suburban employment centers, day care facilities, malls and other high demand areas expands the options for employment to the target population.

Collector routes transport people to major transit hubs and facilitate timed transfers to fixed route services. These routes can be adjusted when connecting services are running late.

Extending service hours on existing fixed routes can accommodate non-traditional work shifts, 2nd and 3rd shifts, and weekends. Targeting areas with potential to serve malls or other types of business generating ridership at night may justify added service hours.

Door-to-Door Service

Dial-a-ride service, demand response and paratransit services generally operate door-to-door or curb-to-curb services. These services primarily operate in areas where fixed route service is not available or accessible, often in suburban and rural communities or at non-regular peak periods. Rides are usually scheduled in advance and trips are shared among passengers whenever possible. Service may be limited to a specific group or population; however, making the service available to the general public may increase ridership and the likelihood of service to common origins and destinations, thereby increasing productivity.

In addition, door-to-door service may be used to provide feeder service in areas with insufficient density to support fixed route services. Daycare stops may also be scheduled.



Shuttle Service

Employers and transportation organizations may operate shuttle services. A hotel, for instance, can extend its guest shuttle service to its employees, providing rides to and from work, to/from a transit hub. In one program, absentee rates decreased tremendously among employees and the state reimbursed the employer for a portion of the cost.

Other innovative implementation strategies include utilizing the down time of school buses to operate service during specific afternoon and night shift times to employment centers.

Volunteer Driver Programs

Volunteer driver programs can be administered by a government agency, non-profit organization, faith-based or charity organization. Volunteers drive agency cars or their own vehicle and are generally reimbursed for mileage or fuel.

Some programs operate on a donation basis by accepting contributions for mileage.

Transportation to Child Care

Transportation for childcare raises complex issues of access, cost and quality. Partnerships between childcare providers (particularly those located along fixed routes or in and around transit hubs) and transportation providers may create mutual benefits that are passed on to the target population. Providing a map of childcare facilities and transit routes can assist the target population in selecting an accessible daycare. A map might also be useful for referral agencies and job placement specialists. Increases in the frequency of service, bus route extensions and additional bus stops can make it easier for parents to access child care.

Locating childcare facilities in and around transit hubs is an alternative many communities are considering in future development plans. Transit hubs are highly accessible and provide connections to the regional transit network. However, the cost of childcare facilities in these areas and the desire of parents to use them are factors to consider in pursuing this approach.

Support Services

Transportation Resource Coordinator

Transportation Resource Coordinators are responsible for helping individuals obtain reliable public, private and subsidized transportation for work-related trips. Transportation Coordinators may teach individuals how to use available transportation services, and help them determine which transportation options best meet their needs. Working in conjunction with job placement specialists and case managers, Coordinators serve as a referral for individuals who are seeking transportation assistance.

Coordinators are generally located with other services such as job training, job search, childcare, or appointments with a job placement specialist or case manager. In addition to information, coordinators can provide bus passes/tokens, route and schedule information, gas vouchers, car pool and other program information.

Cross-utilization of Vehicles

Many communities provide special transportation services for the elderly and disabled population. The vehicles used for these special transportation services may be used during off-peak hours for job access initiatives. For example, HeadStart vehicles are used only during specific times of the day, and could be used at other times for job access initiatives.

Another opportunity for cross-utilization of vehicles is school bus transportation. Members of the target population, specifically parents, may ride to job search and other related activities via school buses serving the same area. During off-peak hours, school buses can transport individuals to interviews, job training activities or a second or third shift schedule job. School buses may also serve as shuttle vehicles from transit hubs to large employment centers located in the suburbs or other areas where fixed route service is unavailable. This arrangement may pose concerns for some areas due to adults riding in the same vehicle with small children. In some instances, the school bus insurance carrier may prohibit the use of buses for non-school activities.

Communities have addressed these conflicts in the following ways:

- Individuals may ride on buses that do not transport small children and only for specific trip purposes, such as traveling to education or training facilities.
- Consent from the parents of other children riding the bus must be obtained.
- To eliminate putting the driver in a position of having to monitor the adults, members of the target population are trained to serve as bus monitors while riding.
- The administering agency has the right to refuse trips to passengers.
- The State of Ohio recently passed a law that allows school buses to be used for job access activities.

Guaranteed Ride Home Programs

Many parents fear working outside of their neighborhood without a means of transportation in case of an emergency. The fear of being stranded or unable to react quickly to children's emergencies can deter individuals from accepting a job. Guaranteed ride home programs function as an insurance policy offering rides home in crisis situations. States and job placement agencies can contract with existing TMAs or taxicab companies to provide this type of service.

One approach is to allow commuters utilizing public transportation a limited number of free bus passes or taxi vouchers to use in emergency situations. Some guaranteed ride home programs extend this type of service to those at risk of losing their job. Rides to and from work are provided on a short-term basis while their car is being repaired.

Auto Ownership, Maintenance, Repair

The personal automobile is the most practical, long-term solution for many people living or working in suburban and rural areas to access and sustain employment. A reliable automobile is essential to providing access to jobs and childcare. Agencies have implemented numerous strategies , including car purchase and car maintenance/repair loans.

Loan programs designed to enable the target population to purchase automobiles not only assists them in acquiring reliable transportation, it also helps them establish a credit history. It is important to establish guidelines and eligibility requirements as part of the program to minimize abuse and ensure the efficient use of funds.

Eligibility requirements for car purchase loans may include the following:

- Individual must be actively participating in the TANF program.
- Individual must be working a minimum number of hours per week and/or be employed for a minimum number of days/months.
- Individual or family must demonstrate a minimum amount of disposable income based on the monthly payment.
- Individual must have a valid driver's license.
- Individual must sign up for rideshare programs (in some cases).

Other considerations include access to public transportation, childcare issues, insurance status, and ability to pay bills on time.

Loans are generally pre-determined not to exceed a set dollar amount. Some programs allow the individual to supplement the cost of the vehicle, or use a vehicle they currently own as a trade-in. Loans are often free of interest or other fees and must be paid back over a period not to exceed 24 months. Payments may begin immediately or after a set period of time to allow the individual to become more financially stable. A loan committee may review each loan and serve as the final decision-maker on loan approval or denial.

Program incentives for car purchase loan programs include payment forgiveness for a certain number of months to individuals who have been continually employed throughout the terms of the loan. Pay stubs are accepted as proof of employment.

Loans to assist with repairs may be designed similar to the car loan program with the exception of shorter repayment periods. Car repair loan programs provide small loans to the target population to assist them in maintaining reliable transportation to sustain employment; loans may also assist in covering the cost of insurance. An additional benefit is that it may also help them to establish a credit history.



Guidelines and eligibility requirements can include the following:

- Individual must be actively participating in TANF programs including job search activities, completing required assessments and be in compliance with their financial advisor and job placement specialist.
- Individual must demonstrate a minimum amount of disposable income.
- Individual must provide proof of vehicle ownership and insurance verification.
- Repairs must be approved prior to applying for the loan.
- Vehicle must be needed to ensure employment and/or education plan.

Loan amounts are established at an amount that does not exceed the cost of repairs, value of the vehicle and any insurance/licensing costs. A portion of the loan may be given to the individual as a grant, making the person responsible for the remainder of the loan. Repayment can begin immediately or delayed to allow the individual to become financially stable. Payments can be returned to the program fund, creating a revolving loan program.

Individuals may select a mechanic from a list of repair shops provided by the administering agency. Partnering with repair shops willing to do the work simplifies the process, and payment for repairs can be mailed directly to the repair shop.

In some areas, local automobile dealerships have donated cars to a particular agency to use for carpools and rideshare service, or donated to individuals provided they are working and able to maintain employment. The agency may hold the lien on the vehicle during this time.

Vehicle maintenance is an important aspect of owning a car and owners should be educated on proper vehicle maintenance. Some communities require individuals who receive loans to attend training on how to own and maintain a vehicle.

Programs to purchase or repair automobiles are eligible for grants under TANF and WtW, but they are not eligible under the JARC program. JARC supports mass transportation such as carpooling, shared-ride and special paratransit services.

Bus Passes/Reimbursement

Bus passes provide a form of immediate transit subsidy. It is important that passes allow transfers to other routes and/or services. Some areas are moving toward the implementation of a universal pass enabling the passenger to transfer to and from other routes and services. Bus passes can be in the form of coupon booklets, debit cards, or a monthly pass.

Gas vouchers can be offered until the individual becomes financially stable or finds an alternative mode of transportation.

Activities such as funding transit passes, construction of childcare centers and employment support facilities are not eligible for JARC funding, but they are eligible for grants under TANF and WtW programs.

Technology

Technological advances have improved efficiencies in the provision of transportation services. Software applications, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis, Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVLs) and electronic kiosks can be used to increase the capabilities of existing and new transportation services.

Automated scheduling and dispatch software can dramatically improve the process of scheduling rides particularly for demand response or vanpool services. Most software applications are able to collect large amounts of data, enabling staff to retrieve information and evaluate performance quickly. A trip planner can enable case managers and others to plan trips via the Internet. By entering an origin and destination address, staff can quickly locate route and schedule information for their clients. Ride matching capabilities allow staff to connect participants in need of temporary or emergency transportation with volunteer drivers.

The use of GIS has significantly impacted the welfare to work planning process, particularly in identifying the unmet transportation needs of the target population. To effectively use GIS, the data must be accurate and complete. Job placement specialists and other staff can assist in obtaining data by gathering information from the target population during the interview process. Some states require that transportation needs be identified up front as part of the target population's work assessment.

Tracking the target populations' home origins and employment destinations, time of travel etc., can be extremely useful for job access planning and can be managed via a database application.

This information on travel patterns can help determine the relationship between the service area and the target population.

Service Coordination

Transportation Brokers

Transportation brokers provide coordination to maximize resources, simplify transportation service delivery, and help to access transit services and information.

Transportation brokers administer a variety of services, such as arranging vanpools, serving as a liaison between employers and transportation providers, and coordinating the delivery of services. Brokers may also offer advice to the target population and agencies on the purchase of services. They often work directly with the target population, employment counselors, and transportation service providers to address transportation needs.

Transportation Management Associations

Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) are non-profit organizations that facilitate communication between transportation providers and employers, particularly in suburban areas where transportation improvements are needed.

TMAs provide transit education and outreach to employers, participate in focus groups and offer technical assistance to job trainers and placement intermediaries. The services offered by TMAs often extend to operating vanpools, ridesharing programs, guaranteed ride home programs, and access-to-jobs services. They may also provide assistance in writing proposals and other planning activities.

Change in Service Approaches

Welfare reform has forced planners, social service agencies and community leaders to “think outside the box” when it comes to the delivery of transportation services. Traditional job access planning does not adequately address the complicated needs of the target population as they attempt to identify their place in workforce.

Welfare to work job access planning has opened the door to assess transit services from a wider, regional level. Regional planners and transit providers must question the coordination and level of service offered in the region. These questions may include the following:

- How well are services integrated in the region?
- Can connections between services easily be made? Are connections available?
- Is the fare structure user friendly or confusing to passengers?
- How well do services meet the needs of parents traveling with children?

Planners must also cross disciplines with other transportation stakeholders. Job placement agencies, social service organizations, and health care providers are all concerned about access, but are frequently excluded from traditional transit planning efforts. Planners and transit providers must consider the following:

- Do planning efforts address the perspective of employers, social service agencies, job placement agencies, and health providers?
- How can job placement agencies participate in planning and implementation of welfare-to-work transit programs?
- What information should transportation planners bring to social service, health care, childcare, and other service organizations to improve client access?

Many areas throughout the country are addressing similar issues and are beginning to establish a seamless network of transportation services. Although planning can be a difficult and complex task, the outcome leads to greater coordination and improved transit options for not only the target population but the general public as well.

Coordinating a regional fare structure is one approach to encourage additional use. Parents are easily discouraged by complex fare structures for transferring and for paying for their children. Offering no-cost transfers between services is another solution to increase coordination and simplify the transit experience.

As mentioned earlier, traditional planning efforts have evolved in recent years to include a variety of participants and innovative approaches to providing services. Coordinated land use and job access planning has become a priority for many communities. Planners and community leaders are recognizing the need for future developments to include amenities that support the needs of the target population and general public.

Examples of coordinating planning efforts include providing incentives to locate childcare facilities at transit centers and encouraging mixed uses around transit. Additional incentives include creating work opportunities in residential areas through economic development tools, providing affordable housing near transit centers and increasing the housing density in transit corridors and around transit facilities.

Some states require that counties develop a transportation plan in collaboration with their county departments of human services, regional transit authorities, community action agencies, other private non-profit and government entities.

Partnerships

Partnerships are an essential component of successful transportation initiatives. Through the coordination of stakeholder efforts, a variety of multi-agency and multi-disciplinary partnerships can develop. Although many of the organizations involved in these partnerships serve the same target population, their services have traditionally been considered unrelated.

Through the formation of multi-disciplinary partnerships, transportation providers and social service representatives can expand their knowledge of the universe of job access services available.

The use of common terminology is critical to successfully communicate and achieve cooperation among agencies and must be fully understood by all parties.

Sponsoring breakfast meetings with the local chambers of commerce, employers, transit agencies, and other organizations provides a forum for building relationships. Employers can provide information regarding work shifts, number of employees and other pertinent information to incorporate into job access plans. Employers, in turn, learn about transit services available to their employees.

Roundtable discussions can also provide job placement specialists and transportation experts an opportunity to identify transit-accessible entry-level jobs along with any necessary route and schedule enhancements.

Job placement agencies often possess valuable information on the willingness of the target population to travel to better jobs. Transit providers can, in contrast, offer information on employers that subsidize transit or provide employer-owned links to fixed route service. Coordinated efforts can improve access for the target population, and enhance the productivity of existing transportation investments.

Many service organizations have a vested interest in providing access. These agencies can participate with implementation of some aspects of programs, including marketing efforts, bridging transit and paratransit systems, and co-funding transit routes.

Employer Involvement

Changes in the welfare system have drawn attention to the significance of employer support in unsubsidized employment and work activities. As planning efforts move toward a more work-focused approach, communities begin to confront the challenge of bridging the gap between welfare reform program needs and employer needs. Traditional efforts have focused on longer-term education and training rather than building ties with employers. Helping the target population attain good job searching skills and identifying promising job leads remains an important component of services that should be provided. Actively recruiting employers to hire individuals and forming ongoing partnerships with the employer community is a promising approach as well.

Determining the best way to build a partnership between the target population and the employer begins with communication and coordination. Employers need to become better informed of the barriers the target population faces transitioning into the workforce, and job placement specialists need to know what employers seek in employees. Flexibility in this partnership is also

important, particularly for employers, as they must be willing to assume some risk when hiring individuals from the target population.

Involving a liaison to assist in developing the relationship between the welfare agency and the employer can be helpful. The Chamber of Commerce is a good example, considering the existing relationships these organizations have established within the business community.

In some cases, the Chamber of Commerce has conducted surveys of local businesses regarding the types of job skills that employers seek.

Another way to establish a link between job training, placement agencies and prospective employers is to assign an ombudsman to establish long-term relationships, marketing outreach with businesses, training staff and community and government leaders. An ombudsman is also responsible for working with businesses to identify employment opportunities and transit requirements, in addition to working with communities to incorporate transportation services into their planning process.

Inviting employers to be guest speakers at job search sessions provides an opportunity for the target population to understand what employers seek in employees. Sharing this type of information directly with the target population is often more meaningful than second hand discussions.

Marketing is an important aspect of gaining employer involvement. These efforts should be specific to the market. For example, employers will be more likely to participate in a subsidized program when the details and benefits are clearly presented; the same is true for prospective employees.

One of the benefits available to employers who participate in employer-subsidized transportation is a tax deduction. Employer expenditures on special transit pass programs for employees are tax deductible or exempt from FICA, Workers Compensation/Disability Insurance, pensions, payroll or unemployment taxes. As a result, job retention rates improve while employers show their support by investing in the success of their employees. Federal tax law allows employers to provide up to \$65 a month to subsidize an employee's transit or vanpool commute. The employer can deduct these costs as business expenses and the benefits are not taxable income to the employee. As an example, one employer joined forces with the local transit agency to provide service from inner-city neighborhoods to a job location for the late shift. Under this scenario, the employer pays 50% of operating cost while the transit agency was responsible for the remainder. Tax credits are also available to employers who hire individuals from the target population and those who provide on-site daycare for their employees.

Faith-Based Community / Private Charity Involvement

Some communities are exploring joint efforts with private charity involvement and the faith community. These organizations often have the ability to individualize their approach to the circumstances of the target population and may be less restricted than government agencies in the

delivery or provision of services. Volunteer driver services, mentoring programs and childcare are initiatives these organizations have implemented.

Other

One example of an unconventional transportation alternative is a bicycle donation program. Under these types of programs, unclaimed bicycles are picked up by local law enforcement and donated for use by members of the target population who do not have access to a vehicle or live within walking distance of a bus line. Variations in climate will dictate how applicable this program is to each area; however, it is a unique approach for utilizing existing resources.

Park and Ride Lots at Childcare Facilities

Park and ride lots located along transit routes offer commuters the option of parking their vehicle and using transit services. Allocating parking spaces for transit users at childcare facilities served by bus routes is another example to consider. This arrangement enables commuters to conveniently park their car, drop their child off at daycare and use transit for their commute.

Target Population Participation/Purchases

Job Fairs

Organizing joint job and transportation fairs provides an opportunity for the target population to learn more about transportation options and employment opportunities in one place at one time. A successful job fair will require a significant amount of coordination involving a variety of organizations such as transit agencies, employers and social service agencies. Employers should be encouraged to develop transportation plans or transportation incentives for employees.

Training/Education - the Target Population

Education and training provided to the target population should include the necessary tools to utilize available transportation services. Individuals in larger cities may be familiar with the public transit system in their neighborhood, however, the jobs they are qualified for may be located elsewhere. Similarly, individuals living in the suburbs may be unfamiliar with transportation services in their area because services provided are generally fewer and operate differently than in the city.

Publishing a “transportation guide” is one way to disseminate information. The material should serve as a “how to” guide for using transit services, reading schedules and maps, and making connections to other services. Distribution outlets could include resource centers (one-stop shop facilities), childcare facilities, job placement agencies and others who have direct links with the target population.

Members of the target population may be uncomfortable or afraid of using public transportation for the first time. Most often, a lack of understanding causes the uneasiness over how the service

operates. Some communities have established “bus ambassador” programs under which an individual is accompanied on an initial bus ride and instructed on transit stops, fares, and schedules.

Another option is to dedicate an individual to answer questions, provide information materials, schedule rides and distribute bus passes or tokens. The individual may also serve as a resource for car loan/repair program information.

Training/Education – Staff

Providing consistent staff support to the target population from the time they enter into job training programs throughout various stages of employment is essential to the success of welfare reform. Caseworkers, job trainers and others who have direct contact with the target population should be aware of available public transportation services. Professionals who understand the services can expand the options available to the individual. Similarly, staff who are able to recognize the limitations of transit services such as “unreasonable commutes” are more likely to make more effective placements.

Training should include understanding bus schedules and maps, fare structures, transfers, distinctions between different services, fare mediums and service characteristics. Staff should be able to coordinate job placement and transportation services for the target population with confidence and good judgement.

Resource Centers

Integrating services under one roof is a convenient approach to making resources accessible to the target population. A “one-stop shop” concept offers a variety of services including employment training, job searching, interviewing rooms, and areas to hold workshops for potential employers and employees. In addition to these services, some centers have included distribution of transit information, passes, case-management, income-maintenance support and on-site childcare. Kiosks providing locations of these services are helpful as well.

Initiatives should promote the goal of self-sufficiency, be sustainable over the long run and maximize the use of existing services. It is important to be aware that programs are subject to funding eligibility and guidelines.

Implementation Strategy

Welfare to work and access to jobs issues are rapidly changing with new guidelines and tight schedules. Strategies, whether at a state or local level, must remain flexible and be action-oriented. Priorities within specific strategies may need to change in response to unforeseen problems or barriers.

Many regions begin the implementation process with the goal to begin programming immediately. While some programs may be implemented quickly, it is important to develop an implementation schedule that includes short and long-term activities. In addition to the schedule, a prioritized task list should be created, and agencies assigned responsibilities for completing each task. Typically, one agency is identified as a sponsoring or administering agency for each task.

It may be necessary to develop sub-committees to carry out the detailed planning associated with long-term transportation initiatives. Goals or performance measures should be identified for each transportation alternative and include anticipated results whenever possible. Establishing this type of baseline assists in the evaluation process and provides a method for measuring results. A plan should also be developed to address how long-term initiatives can be sustained and funded, and how programs that have met their needs can be phased out.

Costs

Costs associated with each transportation alternative will vary based on the type of service provided. Determining what those costs might be is more straightforward for some services than others. As an example, determining the cost to add fixed route service in a given area can be calculated using current hourly rates of existing similar services. Based on the total number of additional service hours and vehicles necessary to provide the service and applying an hourly rate, the cost per day, month, etc. can be estimated. The same method is applicable for door-to-door, shuttle and similar services that operate at a fixed hourly cost. Costs of more specialized programs and support services can be more complicated to determine.

Conducting basic research and making comparisons of other areas that have implemented similar programs, can help to ascertain the cost of a particular service and evaluate its success.

Joint DOL/DOS/FTA December '98 Guidance

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Labor (DOL), in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), are encouraging states and communities to develop an integrated, seamless network of transportation services to assist individuals as they move from welfare to work. This guidance is intended to supplement current regulatory and statutory provisions.

Legislative changes have been made since guidance was released in May 1998; it has since been revised and reissued to clarify issues regarding the definition of "assistance" under TANF, data reporting, and appropriate cost principles. Additional guidance information can be found at the FTA web-site (<http://www.fta.dot.gov/wtw/uoft.htm>).

Performance Monitoring

As part of job access planning, stakeholders should consider ways to monitor programs and services they develop and implement. Monitoring involves oversight of day-to-day operations and determination of overall effectiveness. The bottom line question is, “Is the program/service achieving the goal it was designed to achieve?” Developing strategies to gather information to answer that question should be included as part of the planning effort. One example may be a survey or similar instrument that addresses the following:

- How has the transportation service helped you with travel to work?
- How well does the transportation service meet your needs? Does it go where and when you need it?
- Are you satisfied with the service? Is it on time? Reliable? Convenient?
- Are you able to access a better job? Has your salary increased as a result of the service? Or were you previously employed at all?
- If you were not previously employed, did the service help you get a job?

Performance monitoring also helps identify whether new service or changes in service has actually improved the delivery of services in terms of people served, total route miles traveled, and cost of service.

Funding Sources

The identification of potential funding sources for providing transportation alternatives can be complex and burdensome for some planners. The following is an inventory of available funding sources. The sources are categorized by funding source (federal, state, local, private, and non-profit). The federal funding sources are subcategorized by the funding program’s applicability to job access (Most Applicable, Somewhat Applicable, and Less Applicable).

Federal Funds – Most Applicable

Below are the three primary sources of currently available federal funding for welfare-to-work transportation.

Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (Access to Jobs) Grant Program: The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) authorizes the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide \$150 million in competitive grants to support the development of transportation services for low income individuals to jobs and job-related activities. However, in FY 2000 Congress provided \$75 million the TEA-21 guaranteed level.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) authorizes the U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services to provide TANF grants to the States. This is an annual \$16.4 billion block grant program.

Welfare-to-Work (WtW) Grants: The Balance Budget Act of 1997 authorizes the U.S. Department of Labor to provide WtW grants to States and local communities to create additional job opportunities for the hardest-to-employ recipients of TANF. This is a \$3 billion (\$1.5 billion in FY98 and \$1.5 billion in FY99) competitive grant program. Funds must be used to help move eligible individuals into jobs. The states are recipients of the grants while local Private Industry Councils (PICs) administer the grants.

The Federal Transit Administration, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Labor recently issued guidance on the use of TANF funds and Welfare-to-Work funds for transportation needs. The joint guidance notes several allowable uses:

- Contracting for shuttles, buses and carpools.
- Purchasing vans, shuttles and minibuses.
- Purchasing rider slots, passes or vouchers.
- Facilitating the donation and repairs of older vehicles.
- Providing loans to eligible individuals for lease or purchase of vehicles.
- One time or short-term payments for automobile repairs and insurance.

FTA Access to Jobs grants may be used for:

- Capital and operating costs.
- Promoting the use of transit by workers with non-traditional work schedules.
- Promoting the use of vouchers for recipients.
- Promoting the use of employer-provided transportation.
- Reverse commute transportation.
- Subsidizing the purchase or lease of vehicles or services.

The following information highlights many of the currently available federal funding sources for welfare-to-work transportation.

Federal Funds – Possible Applicability

These funding sources could be used for job access transportation programs, but they are not as clearly linked to access programs as those in the first category. Transportation programs may be competing with non-transportation programs for these funds or the funding agencies may have limited ability to divert these funds from existing programs. The following sources, furthermore, are already being used by MPOs or transit organizations for other programs. Planners should consider pursuing partnerships with agencies already receiving these funds.

Intermediary Relending Program (IRP): IRP is a program of revolving loans that finance businesses and community development projects in rural communities and towns with less than

25,000 population. Nonprofits, public bodies, Indian tribes, and cooperatives are eligible. Transportation is among the eligible uses of borrowed funds. Funding Level: \$371.5 million.

Community Transportation Development Fund (CTDF): CTDF can assist rural communities in improving or expanding local transit services, purchasing vehicles, building facilities and promoting economic development. Available Fund: \$2.1 million.

Business and Industrial Guaranteed Loan Program: The Business and Industrial Loan program of direct and guaranteed loans is designed to create and save rural jobs and to improve the economic and environmental climates of rural communities under 50,000 population. This may include financing for transportation-related facilities, vehicle acquisition or other infrastructure investments. Any legally organized entity is eligible. Funding level: \$738.2 million.

Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG): RBEG supports rural economic and community development projects, including transportation facilities, infrastructure improvements, and the capital costs of transportation services. Funding level: \$41 million.

Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants: Grants are targeted to certain purposes such as community development, medical care, educational technology, job training, business incubators and technical assistance, and can be used for transportation activities that fit with those purposes. Funding level: \$32.3 million.

Rural Empower Zones/Enterprise Communities: The Rural EZ/EC program is an initiative that is designed to help distressed areas improve themselves through a comprehensive, coordinated approach integrating local initiatives with federal support.

Vocational Rehabilitation Grants: Funds are provided to state rehabilitation agencies on a formula basis to provide a full range of rehabilitative services to eligible individuals with disabilities.

Centers for Independent Living: This program provides support to local nonprofit centers for independent living, enabling them to provide training, counseling, advocacy and supportive services to individuals with significant disabilities. Transportation services are provided through this program. Funding level: \$42.8 million.

Bridges to Work: Demonstration program to connect inner-city residents with suburban employment opportunities by providing job placement, transportation services, and other support services. This program is on going in five cities.

Community Development Block Grants: Some communities have used CDBG funds to assist in the construction of transportation facilities, operating expenses and vehicle acquisition for community transportation services. Funding level: \$4.6 billion.

Community Services Block Grant: Under this program, states and Indian tribes receive funding to provide a broad range of social services for low income persons. Transportation services are provided by many of these local programs. Funding level: \$490.6 million.

Welfare to Work: Eighty percent of the funding in the welfare to work grants will fund supportive services and economic development efforts that will enable residents of public housing developments to become self-sufficient, including employment training, counseling, transportation and child care. Public housing authorities are eligible applicants. Funding level: \$31 million.

Medicaid: Medicaid is a jointly-funded, Federal-State health insurance program for certain low-income and needy people that varies considerably from State to State, as well as within each State. States have some discretion in determining which groups their Medicaid programs will cover and the financial criteria for Medicaid eligibility. To be eligible for Federal funds, States are required to provide Medicaid coverage for most individuals who receive Federally assisted income maintenance payments, as well as for related groups not receiving cash payments.

Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS): Leads Federal efforts to treat mental illnesses by promoting mental health and by preventing the development or worsening of mental illness when possible. CMHS works with Federal agencies and private sector organizations whose programs and policies enhance mental health services delivery and advance policy development.

Administration on Aging (AoA): AoA supports a nationwide aging network, providing services to the elderly, especially to enable them to remain independent. AoA supports "meals on wheels," helps provide transportation and at-home services, supports ombudsman services for elderly, and provides policy leadership on aging issues.

Federal Funds –Limited Applicability

Following are funding sources that could leverage transportation programs for improving access, but only under particular kinds of efforts and in partnership with certain agencies. Application for use of these funds is useful only when an existing agency receiving the funds agrees to partner in a project.

Even Start: Transportation services may be included if necessary to ensure participation in the adult literacy component of this program. Funding level: \$101 million.

Education for Homeless Children and Youth: Funds from this program are used to overcome all identified barriers to homeless children's participation in public education, and may be used to provide transportation to homeless children not participating in appropriate public education programs. Funding level: \$23 million.

Social Services Block Grants: Funds may be used for transportation projects that improve the delivery and effectiveness of human services programs.

Substance Abuse and Mental Treatment for Rural and Remote Persons: The program supports six project sites, each of which integrates substance abuse treatment, health and social services, and related services including transportation.

Supportive Housing (Homeless) Demonstration Program: Transportation to link supportive housing residents with other necessary services may be funded.

Urban Empowerment Zones Enterprise Communities: To be designated an urban EZ/EC, an area had to submit a strategic plan for revitalization, which could incorporate strategies for addressing transportation needs and services.

Tenant Opportunities Program: Funding is allowed for transportation if public and Indian housing resident organizations are involved in job training. Funding level: \$5 million.

Trade Adjustment Assistance: This is primarily a program of temporary benefits to workers whose employment has been adversely affected by increased imports. It also provides benefits for job training and necessary related services, specifically including transportation to training programs. Funding level: \$8.5 million.

Employment Training Research and Demonstration Programs: Transportation services that are part of these projects will be supported. Funding level: \$10.2 million.

Highway Planning and Construction: The program of federal aid for highways has many components, most of which can only be used for highway construction and rehabilitation projects. However, funding is available to Metropolitan Planning Organizations and states for planning activities including those addressing welfare to work. Funding for other related activities such as ridesharing programs are also available. Funding level: \$19.7 billion.

FTA Section 5309 Capital Investment Program: This program provides capital assistance for new rail systems, modernization of existing rail systems, and for new and replacement buses and facilities. Funding level: FY 2000 - \$2.5 billion.

FTA Section 5303 Metropolitan Planning Grants: This program provides formula funding for transportation planning activities in metropolitan areas.

FTA Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program: This program provides funding to areas with population of 50,000 or greater. Funds may be used to support either transit capital, planning, or operating expenses, although there is a statutory maximum of available operating assistance. Funding level: FY 2000 - \$2.8 billion.

FTA Section 5311 Non-urbanized Area Formula Program and the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP): This program provides formula funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in areas of less than 50,000 population. The Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) provides formula funding to states for rural transit training and technical assistance. Funding level: FY 2000 - \$193.6 million, \$5.2 million for RTAP.

National Planning and Research Program: This program provides support for public transit research, demonstrations and special projects that are in the national interest, such as advanced technology, transit finance initiatives, transit accessibility, human resource training and development and information initiatives including the RTAP National Transit Resource Center. Funding level: FY 2000 - \$29 million.

State Planning and Research Program: This program provides formula funding to states to carry out public transportation planning, research, demonstration and technical assistance activities. Funding level: FY 2000 - 10.4 million.

State Funds

State funding sources will vary from state to state. Listed below are some general sources of funds that are common to most states.

Legislatures: State Legislatures can appropriate state money for transportation.

Departments of Human Services: State departments of human services can allocate federal TANF dollars and state maintenance-of-effort (MOE) dollars for transportation initiatives.

Public, Public-Non-Profit, and Public-Private Partnerships: States can utilize existing vehicles that are not public transit vehicles for senior citizens, people with disabilities, Head Start programs, paratransit vehicles, and public schools. TANF funds can be used to expand existing services run by other agencies, thereby increasing the availability of service to both TANF and non-TANF clients.

Local Funds

Similar to state funding, local funds are varied. Local sources of funds are generally smaller amounts than federal or state sources, but local planners may have greater control over how the dollars are spent. Listed below are some examples of local programs and local funding that could leverage other sources of funds.

Guaranteed Ride Home Program: Through this program, some transit agencies and private employers offer a guaranteed ride home to employees faced with home emergencies or illness.

Ridesharing/Vanpooling Program: Through this program, states, metropolitan planning organizations, and employers can organize carpools or vanpools among the existing workforce to assist new workers in getting to work.

Counties: Grants to counties can be used for the start-up of pilot projects and for initiating contracts with current transit systems.

Private Funds

Private and employer-based funding is often linked to governmental tax benefits or collaborative efforts between businesses and government. Listed below are examples of resources that may be available to planners.

Commuter Choice Program (Transit Benefit Program): This program is designed to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and conserve energy by encouraging employees to commute by means other than single occupancy vehicles. The employer may provide up to \$65 in benefits per month tax free to those employees who commute to work by transit or vanpool. They can also provide up to \$175 per month tax free in employee parking benefits.

Employers: There are several ways employers subsidize transportation for the target population. In the past, they have purchased bus passes, provided weekend services and off-hour bus services, and subsidized bus routes.

Communities: The U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocates resources to community programs that are traditionally focused on housing and support services. Transportation is included in support services and this money could be used to transport recipients of HUD-funded programs to jobs.

Commuterbucks Program: This is a vanpool voucher program run by VPSI, Inc., a national company, that simplifies the administrative burden for employers. Employers purchase vouchers for employees to use towards VPSI service fares.

Non-Profit Funds

A number of non-profit agencies and foundations provide funding or implementation assistance for specific missions, geographic areas, or assistance to specific populations. Non-profit organizations will vary by locality. Some examples are listed below.

The McKnight Foundation: This foundation provides grants for access-to-jobs programs.

Volunteer and Faith-Based Community: The Charitable Choice provision in PRWORA allows TANF funds to be paid to charities, religious groups and other private organizations to provide transportation services. Such groups can use these dollars to leverage other funds.

Internet Information and Resources

Listed below are a sampling of web sites of interest to planners that address transit dependency, welfare reform, or questions of access to jobs and services. The list is far from comprehensive, representing only a sampling of sites. These sites do include a number of links to other related sites, and thus provide a start for planners looking for information, case studies, grants, or discussion on access-related issues.

Federal Transit Administration (<http://www.fta.dot.gov/wtw/>)

This site offers information on access-to-jobs programs, competitive grants, studies on transit needs and solutions, and welfare to work transportation initiatives and guidelines. The site also has a number of links to other sites.

Community Transportation Association of America

(<http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/atj/joblinks/pjt-contents.shtml>)

CTAA has information on grant programs and funding for access-to-jobs programs, and information on issues facing transit systems in the area of welfare reform and reverse commute. The website includes assessments of pilot programs across the nation, conference proceedings, and links to other web sites.

American Public Transportation Association (<http://www.apta.com/>)

The APTA site has links to government, university, and other institutional transit sites. APTA has information on grant programs, the National Transit Database, and conference proceedings.

National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices

(<http://www.nga.org/CBP/Activities/WelfareReform.asp>)

The Center for Best Practices is a 501(c) 3 corporation that is governed by a board of four Governors who report to the National Governors Association Executive Committee. This site offers information on welfare reform, transportation issues, and access-to-jobs funding.

Welfare Information Network (<http://www.welfareinfo.org/transport.htm>)

This site includes an enormous bibliography of studies relating to transportation and welfare reform. The site also has summaries of federal welfare legislation, a catalog of welfare-related web sites, a calendar of welfare related events, and links to program information, policy analysis, legislative information, and "best practices."

The Pew Center on the States (<http://www.stateline.org/issue.cfm?IssueID=123>)

This site, funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, offers a detailed state by state summary of welfare reform programs in each state in the nation.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) (<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/news/welfare>)

The ACF site provides information and policy on the use of TANF and Welfare-to-Work funds for transportation. It also provides statistics, nationally and state-by-state, on welfare caseloads and funding levels.

University Sites – Many universities and colleges maintain sites pertaining to transit and transportation research. Listed below are several examples.

University Transportation Centers - <http://utc.dot.gov/>

University of South Florida, CUTR <http://www.cutr.eng.usf.edu/index.html>

Rutgers University, National Transit Institute - <http://policy.rutgers.edu/nti/>

University of Minnesota – Center for Transportation Studies - <http://www1.umn.edu/cts/>

Examples of Regional Approaches

Wisconsin Initiatives

The following Welfare to Work initiatives developed in Wisconsin were based upon analyses of spatial relationships between target population residences, employer locations and existing transit services:

- Expanded Service Hours
Specific Milwaukee County Transit routes were expanded to provide early morning, late night, and weekend service.
- Route Extensions
Extended Milwaukee County Transit routes to provide central city residents access to job opportunities in the downtown business district and in a suburban industrial park.
- Shuttle Service
Added shuttle service connecting central city bus routes to business and industrial parks in Milwaukee County; implemented shuttle service in adjacent County to provide connection for Milwaukee County residents to suburban employers. Shuttle service was co-sponsored by employers and by the adjacent County.
- Employer Coordination
Milwaukee County Transit worked with a private company to implement limited stop express service between central Milwaukee and businesses within and around Milwaukee County. Service is limited to one trip per shift, seven days a week, with limited stops. The employer pays for a portion of the service.



Philadelphia Initiatives

Greater Philadelphia Works (GPW) initiatives included a \$1.3 million media campaign to increase awareness of transportation programs among employers and the target population. The campaign included printed advertising, radio, television and billboards with messages that targeted the interest of employers and the target population. A phone number or “hotline” was temporarily set up as a response mechanism for individuals to call and learn more about GPW programs.

Other initiatives include:

- Dramatic Improvements in Public Transit to Improve Job Access
The City of Philadelphia and Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) worked together to improve transportation services to major employment centers including the Airport Activity Center and express buses to UPS.
- Transitional transit subsidies - SEPTA Pass Program
In an effort to promote job retention and self-sufficiency, GPW provides transit passes as a supplement to special transportation allowances offered by the Department of Public Welfare. TANF recipients involved in job search or training activities initially receive allowances to assist with their transportation needs, however, upon receiving their first paycheck the allowance ends. Recipients who get a job and are working at least 20 hours a week, are eligible for four weeks (spread out over two months) of additional transit subsidies.
- Emergency Ride Home
Operated by the Delaware County and Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Associations (TMAs), the “Emergency Ride Home” program offers parents a ride home from work in the event of a medical or family emergency.
- Transit Information Centers
Transit Information Centers, located in each of the seven Regional Service Centers throughout the city, offer in-house resources to assist with job search and placement activities. In addition to SEPTA timetables and systems maps, on-site job placement specialists and employment advisors have customized maps showing suburban transit routes, major suburban industrial parks and other major employment centers.
- Transportation / Jobs Roundtables
Coordinated by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), job placement specialists and transportation experts meet monthly to identify transit-accessible entry-level jobs. The group also serves as a link to SEPTA assisting in identifying ways to improve job access through route and schedule modifications.

As part of the Job Access and Reverse Commute program, Southeast Pennsylvania received \$1.3 million in funding that along with the local match totaled \$2.6 million. The funding will support approximately eleven programs, over half are augmentations of existing SEPTA routes. Other programs include van-based projects operated by non-profit organizations and designed to serve the population in areas offering job development or retention services.

New Jersey Initiatives

Planning efforts in New Jersey involved regional coordination and coordination at the county level. Each county was responsible for developing a Community Transportation Plan to identify gaps in existing service and coordinate existing services to better meet the transportation needs of the area.

Examples of initiatives identified in the Community Transportation Plans include the following:

- Employer shuttle services.
- Transit pass and voucher programs.
- Priority on information sharing and marketing.
- Vanpools and carpools in highly populated areas.
- New fixed route shuttle services.
- Technology utilizing transportation trip planning capabilities.
- Fixed route service expansion.

Examples of initiatives developed as a result of regional coordination include the following:

- Local Demonstration Projects

New Jersey has funded two county demonstration projects to serve as models for other counties. One project integrates job and job-training trips with existing transit services for people with disabilities and the elderly. The second project provides a feeder service operating as a shuttle from home to transit hubs or from transit hubs to work locations.



- NJ Transit WorkPass Program

The WorkPass program enables participants who have access to public transportation to receive monthly passes for bus or train travel. The passes may be used for any travel purpose. NJ Transit sponsors the program and also offers training for county WFNJ staff in purchasing passes, understanding bus schedules, determining fares and evaluating transit options.

- Get a Job, Get a Ride!
As an extension of the WorkPass program, “Get a Job, Get a Ride!” offers an additional month of free transportation to newly employed WFNJ participants.
- Transit Use Training Video
NJDOT, NJ Transit and NJDHS educate individuals on using public transportation in New Jersey through a videotape. The video explains how to board a bus or train, how to read a schedule, understand fares and other information in both Spanish and English.
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
GIS is used as a tool to identify where participants live in relation to job locations, child-care facilities and public transportation. Data is represented geographically on a map enabling planners to use the information to determine where additional transit services may be needed in a specific area.

Detroit Initiatives

The two major transit operators in the Detroit area (the Suburban Mobility Authority on Regional Transit – SMART and the Detroit Department of Transportation – DDOT) are working in collaboration with private corporations, non-profit human service agencies, chambers of commerce and government agencies. This collaboration has designed several types of services to assist individuals with moving from welfare to work. These services include:

Suburban Mobility Authority on Regional Transit (SMART)

- Job Express
Provides reverse commute in the morning and evening hours from the center city of Detroit to jobs in the suburbs.
- Park and Ride
Connects Detroit with the suburban areas where new park and ride lots are located.
- Suburb to Suburb Routes
Network of routes operate throughout the day between suburbs.
- Flex Routes
Service operates along an industrial corridor dropping off and picking up passengers at work sites.
- Get a Job – Get a Ride
Newly hired employees are eligible for a free one-month bus pass.

- Buses to Work
Collaborative planning effort made up of local chambers of commerce and businesses bringing employers together to assist in directing new SMART services.
- SMART JOBLINE
Free service 7 days a week 24 hours a day for job recruiter and individuals to access job openings.

Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT)

- Flexed to Fixed Route
Participants can reserve rides for themselves and their children to be taken to work and daycare; transports children to after school activities without requiring a parent to accompany them.
- Interface with Other Transportation Providers
Works cooperatively with other transit providers (public and private) to provide efficient and easy transfers.



- Offers 20 and 24-hour per day routes in addition to extensive service throughout Detroit.

In addition to the transit agencies, the metropolitan planning organization, SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, helped form a consortium of non-profit organizations and public agencies as well as human service agencies and employers. Several of the newly created programs are described below:

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)

- Extended Service Hours
Enabled transit providers to extend several routes service hours providing service to individuals working evening and weekend shifts in addition to more suburban locations.
- Office of Mobility Management
Coordinates transportation for the target population to get to work.
- Taxi Coupons
Distributed to the target population for work related trips.

- TransitLink
Van service provides subscription service to and from daycare and training facilities, linkages to other routes, and late night transportation.
- Technology
Transit routes and daycare facilities were plotted on maps using Geographic Information Systems (GIS).
- Regional Task Force
Working cooperatively with transit providers, human service agencies, faith-based groups, private van services, taxi companies, educational service providers and job placement specialists, SEMCOG developed a transportation to work task force.
- Technical Assistance
Provides technical assistance for grant writing, data analysis, demographic analysis and GIS.
- Liaison
SEMCOG frequently acts as a liaison between transportation funders and implementing agencies.

City of Detroit, Department of Employment and Training

- Mobility Management
A Mobility Management Office was created and funded. This office coordinates transportation for the target population. Transportation services include bus routing, private van service, van service for children, developing subscription service, and marketing to new employers.
- Emergency Ride
Provides emergency rides to and from work.
- Car Ownership Program
Works with used car dealerships, banks, and the Family Independence Agency to secure funds and insurance to help the target population purchase reliable used cars.
- Commuter Benefit Program
Developed promotional campaign directed at employers to use federal tax credits to help underwrite transit costs of employees.
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
Used GIS to develop a series of maps showing where clients live, where childcare and employment sites are located. Used maps to plan subscription van service.

Another agency playing an innovative role is the Metropolitan Affairs Coalition (MAC), a regional coalition of business, labor and government formed in 1958 to address public policy issues affecting the economic vitality of the region. MAC is a private non-profit civic organization housed within the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), the Detroit area MPO. MAC's efforts geared toward transportation and employment include:

Metropolitan Affairs Coalition (MAC)

- TransitChoice
A vision focused on restructuring public transportation services in Greater Detroit through the use of technology, significantly increasing community-based transportation and combining major transportation functions at the regional level.
- EZ Ride
EZ Ride is a transportation system designed to coordinate transportation services provided by community-based organizations, human service agencies, health care providers and employment related organizations, through an automated scheduling and dispatch system. EZ Ride has been created to serve Detroit's Empowerment Zone.
- SmartMatch
SmartMatch is a job placement resource using GIS to match employment corridors well served by public transportation with job seekers. SmartMatch is a cooperative effort with SMART and the Southfield Career Center.
- Empowerment through Car Ownership Program
The program focuses on educating job seekers on issues such as insurance, car purchasing and car maintenance, making car ownership a more realistic option for individuals. The program is also designed to assist in purchasing a car by offering grants, low-interest loans and money saving techniques.

San Luis Obispo Initiatives

Initiatives in the San Luis Obispo County area range from short-term and fairly low cost alternatives to long-term and more expensive programs. Because data showed more than 70% of the target population lived within ¼ mile of a busline, a number of programs offer financial support for individuals to utilize transit services. The promotion and education of transit service is also important not only for members of the target populations, but job placement specialists, caseworkers and employers as well. Initiatives developed for the San Luis Obispo County area include the following:

Short-Term/Low Cost

- Regional Transportation Guide – SLOCOG and the Regional Rideshare Program Coordinator develop a "how to" guide explaining transit routes, schedules and services.

- Trip Planner Database Enhancements – The Regional Rideshare Program Coordinator and the County Department of Social Services (DSS) caseworkers provide a city-to-city trip planner via the Internet.
- Guaranteed Ride Program – The County DSS and Ride-On Transportation work together to provide guaranteed rides to and from work to former CalWORKs participants in jeopardy of losing their jobs due to a temporary lack of transportation.
- Minor Changes in Transit Services – Transit agencies work together to identify transit improvement that could be easily implemented including evening and weekends service, a collector service to malls and major destinations, and increased service to high demand areas.
- Other initiatives include training for caseworkers and participants on transit services, continued promotion of employer transportation demand management programs, and unclaimed bicycle donations.

Mid-Term

- Universal Transit Pass – SLOCOG implements a debit card that deducts appropriate fare amounts when swiped through the farebox. The pass also provides seamless transfers between services.
- Origin/Destination Data – SLOCOG in cooperation with the County DSS creates a process to track home-origins and employment destinations of participants. The data is incorporated into the County's Unmet Needs Process.
- Shuttle Services – Transit operators throughout the County and Ride-On add service to provide feeder service to fixed route transfer points and other common destinations.
- Community Work Unit – The County DSS assigns teams of CalWORKs participants to a single job location in which transportation to work, child-care and school is coordinated and provided by a van.
- Other initiatives include car loan, repair, and maintenance programs.

Long-Term

- One-Stop Shop – The PIC develops a process enabling participants to receive job training, job leads, transit information and child-care at a single location, while meeting with their case manager.

- Land Use and Transportation Coordination – SLOCOG, transit agencies and the cities coordinate efforts to eliminate barriers to walking and using transit caused by development patterns and design.
- Childcare Transportation – SLOCOG works with public agencies to eliminate barriers to providing transportation to childcare.
- School Transportation Services – SLOCOG works with public agencies to conduct research to eliminate barriers to providing child care transportation.
- Reserving Park-and-Ride Spaces – SLOCOG and local agencies worked together to reserve parking spaces at childcare centers served by transit.

Minnesota Initiatives

Welfare to work transportation planning efforts focus primarily on the seven-county metropolitan area in Minnesota. Each county was responsible for development and implementation of transportation initiatives. Initiatives in the Twin Cities Metropolitan area include the following:

- Employment Service-Provided Transportation
The Saint Paul Rehabilitation Center and Wilder Foundation have developed relationships with employers in suburban areas not served by fixed route. These organizations have acquired used vans to transport the target population to jobs from the Rehabilitation Center. Most of the individuals walk to the center or take a short bus ride; second shift clients are taken directly home after work.



- Reverse Commute
Local fixed route providers operate reverse commute service between downtown Minneapolis to the southwest suburbs. Service operating during the day has been popular, however, securing adequate ridership to support service accommodating second and third shift workers is difficult. These transportation providers have been working with employers to implement subsidized transit pass programs and attend job fairs.

- Demand Responsive
A shared ride taxi service offers discounted trips within the City of Minneapolis. The cost is \$3 for the first four miles and \$1 for each additional mile. A similar service, available to low-income individuals with special needs, operates in three



metropolitan counties offering rides at a fare of \$4 per person.

Anoka County Human Services contracted with the demand response provider in the county to provide door-to-door transportation service for a flat fee per day based on clients' trip origins and whether they required a daycare stop.

- Donated Cars
St. Croix Valley Christians in Action offers free vehicles that have been donated and repaired by volunteers. The cost of insurance and auto parts is paid by the Washington County Workforce Center. Recipients of the free cars must prove they attended a six-session financial planning class and be matched with a mentor that assists them in their budgeting.
- Improved Fixed Route Transit
The metropolitan transportation provider has added "night owl" service to its existing routes to accommodate second and third shift worker schedules. Many transit operators in the region have implemented new transit hub facilities with waiting areas and space for vehicle transfers. Plans include co-location of daycare and job services at transit hubs.
- Employer-provided Transportation
Several employers have become active in providing van service to their employees. Some employers require passengers to come to a centralized collection point while others provide door-to-door service. The employer may use the vans for business purposes at other times.
- Interim Transportation
The proposed program suggests that a fleet of cars owned by the counties be loaned to MFIP clients while their own vehicles are being repaired or they are applying for the car purchase loan program. The cars must be used for work or emergency purposes only.
- Commuter Services
New vanpool services for journey to work trips are provided by Metro Commuter Services (MCS), a division of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Funded by the MPO, MCS matches riders with carpools in coordination with human service agencies that do not provide transit services.

Kentucky Initiatives

Human Service Transportation Delivery (HSTD) Program

The goal of the program is to operate 16 transportation regions statewide, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with one single broker or a broker/provider for each region. Twelve regions are operating at this time. Brokers coordinate and subcontract transportation in addition to accessing the eligibility data of the target population.

Each transportation provider is paid a flat rate for each member of the target population residing within the designated service area, whether they use the service or not. The provider is responsible for guaranteeing transportation to all individuals receiving public assistance and/or Medicaid.

Appendix A

Overview of Welfare Reform

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OVERVIEW OF WELFARE REFORM

In August 1996, President Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, creating a new era in social welfare policy. Principal among the reforms was elimination of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, replaced with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). The act provides states with annual block grants and wide latitude in program development and implementation. While all the states have work requirements, programs vary on time limits, amount of cash assistance and the relationship of work requirements to other programs, such as Medicaid and Food Stamps.

Before and after the law's passage, many debated its potential effects and outcomes. Proponents claim that the changes instituted by the act will be sweeping and positive. They envision more welfare families taking charge of their futures by holding jobs and improving their lives, while states will see drastic reductions in the welfare rolls and, eventually, reduced public spending on welfare programs. Opponents and advocates claim the social safety net has been stripped away and the effects will be overwhelmingly negative—increased poverty, destabilization of families and homelessness. Both proponents and opponents acknowledge that the following issues must be resolved to achieve welfare reform goals:

- The potential job gap, or the difference between the number of entry-level jobs and the number of household heads seeking jobs;
- The potential spatial mismatch, or the difference between the homes of job seekers and the location of employers with entry-level jobs (coupled with high rates of transit-dependency among welfare-dependent families);
- The potential living-wage gap, or the difference between wages paid for entry-level jobs and the wages necessary to lift a family out of poverty and out of eligibility for means-tested assistance.

Regardless of potential barriers to success, the number of people on welfare nationwide has dropped by nearly one-third since the law was enacted in 1996, and by more than 40 percent since 1993. The reduction has been attributed both to continuing rapid economic expansion, reducing families' need for welfare, and the elimination of the entitlement component of AFDC, limiting the welfare incentive and providing a counter incentive to seek employment. Table 1 on the following page provides a summary of the changes in the number of welfare recipients between 1993 and 1998.

As the table illustrates, the number of welfare recipients has declined in all 50 states between 1993 and 1998. In two states, Wisconsin and Idaho, the reduction has been greater than 80 percent. Although the number of welfare cases is declining, increased subsidies for child care, transportation and job training will keep spending at current levels.

Table 1

State	Welfare Recipients, end of 1993	Welfare Recipients, as of Sept. 1998	% Change in Recipients, 1993 to 1998	Rank by Total Recipients 1993 and 1998		Rank by % Change, 1993 to 1998
Alaska	34,951	28,121	-20%	42	41	47
Alabama	141,746	52,076	-63	28	30	8
Arkansas	73,982	31,412	-58	35	40	13
Arizona	194,119	99,792	-49	22	22	28
California	2,415,121	1,908,534	-21	1	1	46
Colorado	123,308	46,312	-62	29	31	9
Connecticut	160,102	118,066	-26	25	18	43
Delaware	27,652	14,013	-49	47	47	29
Florida	701,842	246,191	-65	5	8	6
Georgia	402,228	172,065	-57	9	11	14
Hawaii	54,511	46,001	-16	39	32	49
Iowa	100,943	62,836	-38	32	25	37
Idaho	21,116	3,285	-84	48	50	3
Illinois	685,508	449,466	-34	7	3	40
Indiana	209,882	117,437	-44	20	19	33
Kansas	87,525	33,447	-62	34	39	10
Kentucky	227,879	112,676	-51	18	20	22
Louisiana	263,338	121,772	-54	15	17	20
Massachusetts	332,044	166,179	-50	11	12	26
Maryland	221,338	108,636	-51	19	21	23
Maine	67,836	37,673	-54	36	35	34
Michigan	686,356	308,817	-55	6	7	18
Minnesota	191,526	141,440	-26	23	15	44
Missouri	259,039	139,475	-46	16	16	32
Mississippi	174,093	45,009	-74	24	33	4
Montana	34,848	19,561	-44	44	44	35
North Carolina	331,633	162,282	-51	12	13	24
North Dakota	18,774	8,227	-56	50	49	15
Nebraska	48,055	36,187	-25	41	36	45
New Hampshire	28,972	14,429	-50	45	46	27
New Jersey	349,902	182,193	-48	10	10	30
New Mexico	94,836	78,176	-18	33	24	48
Nevada	34,943	23,353	-33	43	43	41

Table 1 (Continued)

State	Welfare Recipients, end of 1993	Welfare Recipients as of Sept. 1998	% Change in Recipients, 1993 to 1998	Rank by Total Recipients 1993 and 1998		Rank by % Change, 1993 to 1998
New York	1,179,522	862,162	-27	2	2	42
Ohio	720,476	319,912	-56	4	6	16
Oklahoma	146,454	58,044	-60	27	26	12
Oregon	117,656	44,235	-62	31	34	11
Pennsylvania	604,701	345,952	-43	8	5	36
Rhode Island	61,116	54,125	-11	38	27	50
South Carolina	151,026	52,280	-65	26	29	7
South Dakota	20,254	9,120	-55	49	48	19
Tennessee	320,709	148,532	-54	13	14	21
Texas	785,271	346,232	-56	3	4	17
Utah	53,172	27,992	-47	40	42	31
Virginia	194,212	94,431	-51	21	23	25
Vermont	28,961	18,804	-35	46	45	39
Washington	286,258	184,584	-36	14	9	38
Wisconsin	241,098	34,031	-86	17	38	2
West Virginia	119,916	34,995	-71	30	37	5
Wyoming	18,271	1,821	-90	51	51	1

Source: Pew Center on the States, www.stateline.org (web-site).

Federal Welfare Reform: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

Most welfare reform efforts stem from national welfare reform legislation. We will first review the changes to national policy and programs, then present four examples of state welfare reform efforts.

The Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) is the cash-grant component of welfare reform and the main feature of the 1996 federal Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. The 1996 federal welfare reform act significantly changes the way the federal government provides cash assistance to states and families. Most importantly, it replaces the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) cash grant program as an entitlement based on income level and family size, and requires all recipients to work as a condition of receiving assistance. Secondly, it is a work-first program that promotes employment over education and job training.

Because public assistance is no longer an entitlement, federal funds are provided annually as block grants to the states; funding does not vary depending on the number of families in need of assistance. The federal welfare reform bill provides for a total of \$16.38 billion in block grants for fiscal years 1997 to 2002.

Annual block grant levels for each state are generally based on the combination of 1994 federal expenditures on AFDC benefits and administration, Emergency Assistance, and the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training Program (JOBS). States may receive supplemental grant amounts of 2.5 percent if they have high population growth and/or low grant amounts per low-income person.

The primary purpose of TANF is “to provide assistance to needy families with children so they can be cared for in their own home, and to reduce dependency by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.” The TANF block grant can be used in any “manner reasonably calculated to accomplish the purposes of the TANF.” States are in charge of creating their own welfare-to-work programs, eligibility and benefit levels. The following is an overview of the federal TANF program.

States can use TANF funds to provide transit or other transportation assistance, although few states have aggressively pursued this option. A guidance paper detailing the options available to state planners for using TANF funds to support transportation initiatives was released by the U.S. Department of Labor in December of 1998 (Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 10-98).

Minimum work requirements: One of the primary features of federal welfare reform is the requirement that those who receive assistance must work. States must meet the following work participation rates for “all families” receiving cash grants and who are non-exempt from work requirements. The term “all families” refers to all families headed by an adult (one or two-parent families) or a minor parent head of household receiving cash assistance under a state welfare program. States that do not meet these participation requirements face reductions in their federal block grants:

- 1997 - 25 percent of all families, 20 hours
- 1998 - 30 percent of all families, 20 hours
- 1999 - 35 percent of all families, 25 hours
- 2000 - 40 percent of all families, 30 hours
- 2001 - 45 percent of all families, 30 hours
- 2002 & beyond - 50 percent of all families, 30 hours

Participation rates are higher for families with two-parents. They are as follows:

- 1997 - 75 percent of two-parent families, 35 hours
- 1998 - 75 percent of two-parent families, 35 hours
- 1999 & beyond - 90 percent of two-parent families, 35 hours

States have set different work requirements for participation in TANF and related programs. Some states follow the federal legislation, while others have increased the required hours of participation in an approved activity (see the following).

Allowable work activities to meet the above work participation requirements: The emphasis of welfare reform is on full-time unsubsidized employment. However, additional activities qualify as work or work-related to promote job readiness. States may qualify the following as work activities for the first 20 hours of work (i.e., minimal number of hours required) for “all families” and the first 30 hours for “two-parent families.”

- Subsidized private and public sector employment;
- Work experience;
- On-the-job training;
- Job search and job readiness assistance for up to six weeks;
- Community service programs;
- Vocational education for up to 12 months, with restrictions;
- Job-skills training directly related to employment;
- Remedial education (e.g., high school diploma) directly related to employment; and,
- Provision of childcare assistance to an individual who is participating in community service.

Hours in excess of the required 20 hours of work for all families (and 30 hours for two-parent families) may be counted when an individual participates in:

- Job search and job readiness assistance in excess of the specified limits (i.e., six weeks);
- Job skills training directly related to employment;
- Education directly related to employment in the case of a participant who has not received a high school diploma or high school equivalency; and,
- Satisfactory attendance at secondary school, or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalency, in the case of a participant who has not completed secondary school or received a high school certificate.

Special rules and exemptions: While most families are expected to work, states may establish special rules and exemptions for those with special hardships. These include:

- Single parents with children under the age of one;
- A teen parent who is attending secondary school;
- Persons with disabilities; and,
- Families who cannot find child care.

Additional children: States may deny assistance to additional children born while the parent is receiving welfare assistance.

Limitations and penalties: Not more than 20 percent of all families may count toward the work participation rate by attending vocational education.

- Education and training activities will *generally not* count toward meeting the first 20 hours of work participation for “all families” (with the exception of teen parents) or the first 30 hours for “two-parent families” (states differ in interpretations of educational or training activities that meet minimal work participation requirements);
- A state may reduce or terminate grant assistance to families who fail to comply with work participation requirements. The exception is for families who are unable to work for lack of finding child care;
- States will be penalized by a reduction of five percent in their TANF block grant the first year they fail to meet work participation rates. Penalties increase by two percent a year up to 21 percent. Exceptions may be made for states in recession or for which “reasonable cause” has been established.

Key prohibitions: Central to welfare reform is what it does not permit. Prohibitions include:

- No assistance of any form past five years (60 months). A state, however, may exempt up to 20 percent of its average caseload from the five-year clock for reasons of “hardship.”
- No assistance to legal non-citizens, with some exceptions as described below under “Immigrant Provisions.”
- Unmarried teen parents may not receive assistance unless they are in school for at least 12 hours a week and living at home or in an approved adult-supervised housing arrangement.
- Grants must be reduced by a minimum of 25 percent if an adult fails to cooperate in establishing paternity or establishing or modifying a support order.
- No assistance can be provided to anyone convicted of a drug felony. States may modify this prohibition through state law.
- TANF funds must not be used for medical services, except for pre-pregnancy planning.

Maintenance of Effort: States must meet an 80 percent Maintenance of Effort (MOE) to receive their full block grant allocations, meaning they cannot reduce their overall welfare assistance levels below 80 percent of current expenditures. The MOE will be reduced to 75 percent for states that meet the work participation requirement.

Contingency Fund: \$2 billion is available in federal matching funds for the period 1997 - 2001 for states experiencing an economic downturn. This is defined by an unemployment rate of at least 6.5 percent and/or if the eligible number of food stamp recipients for the most recent three months is 10 percent greater than the monthly average number of recipients in 1994 or 1995 (whichever is lower) in the corresponding three-month period. An additional **Rainy Day Fund** of \$1.7 billion is available as a revolving loan. Maximum loans of 10 percent of a state’s block grant amount can be requested for up to three years.

Performance Bonuses: These are awarded to states meeting the goals of the program by 2002. A \$20 million **Illegitimacy Reduction Bonus Fund** will be awarded to the states with the greatest success in reducing out-of-wedlock births.

State administrative rules:

- States must submit plans every two years;
- States are required to expend their own funds to replace reductions in their block grants from any penalties;
- States must submit quarterly reports regarding case record information on families receiving assistance; and,
- Native American tribes may receive and administer block grants directly.

Immigrant Provisions: All immigrants who reside in the United States without legal status are ineligible to receive any federal assistance, with the exception of medical emergency assistance. In general, legal immigrants (i.e., those who reside in the United States legally, but do not have citizenship) are no longer eligible for federal TANF, Food Stamps, Medical Assistance or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits until they become citizens, with the following exceptions:

- Those with official refugee or asylum status;
- Those who have lived and worked in the U.S. with 40 qualifying quarters (10 years) of work;
- Veterans or active duty military personnel.

Immigrants arriving after August 22, 1996, are no longer eligible for federally funded means tested programs with the following exceptions:

- Emergency medical assistance.
- School lunch assistance.
- Disaster relief.
- Immunizations.
- Foster care and adoption assistance.
- Higher education assistance.
- Head Start.
- Job Training Partnership Act assistance.

Changes in SSI for legal non-citizen: Before welfare reform, all U.S. residents and citizens were eligible to receive SSI if they qualified based on age and disability. Most legal non-citizens who were receiving SSI benefits *on* August 22, 1996, can keep their SSI benefits, and those not receiving SSI benefits remain eligible to receive benefits. Most legal non-citizens arriving *after* August 22, 1996, are ineligible to receive SSI for their *first* seven years in the country. States have the option of providing state benefits to legal non-citizens who lose federal benefits.

Examples of State Implementation Plans

Table 2 on the following page provides information on some of the major aspects of state TANF programs. Please see the notes following the table for brief explanations of the underlined items in the table.

State plans vary widely on details. For example, families reach the maximum for assistance between 1996 and late 2002. Most states require TANF recipients to begin work or to start looking for a job immediately. Two-thirds of the states follow the federal guidelines of 60 months as the lifetime limit on receiving assistance.

All states offer transitional childcare; while most limit it, fourteen states have no set time limits for families with income below federal poverty limits. Some states require co-payments for childcare based on income, while others limit eligibility based on participation in TANF (with the transitional period).

Historically, medical assistance is by far the most costly of any assistance program. The majority of the states limit transitional medical assistance to 12 months, although some working poor families are eligible for Medicaid. Moving a family from welfare to work, can, in some states, save the state substantial medical assistance costs. In other states, cost savings are dependent on moving the family into higher wage jobs or into jobs with medical benefits.

The amounts of monthly cash assistance under TANF range from a low of \$120 in Mississippi to a high of \$1,025 in Alaska. The public savings attributable to moving a family from welfare to work varies tremendously by state.

The section following Table 2 provides detailed descriptions of the implementation plans for four states: Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri and Pennsylvania.

Table 2

State	Month When First Families Reach Time Limits	Maximum Time Before Starting Work (months)	Lifetime Limit for Cash Assistance (months)	Transitional Child Care Available (months)	Transitional Medicaid Available (months)	Transitional Medicaid Available (months)
Alaska	July 2002	24	60	12	12	\$1,025
Alabama	Nov. 2001	Immediate	60	12	12	164
Arkansas	Aug. 2000	Immediate	24	36	12	204
Arizona	Nov. 1997	Individual	60	24	24	347
California	July 1999	18 and 24	18	24	12	565 and 538
Colorado	July 2002	24	60	No limits	12	421
Connecticut	Oct. 1997	Immediate	21	No limits	24	536 to 636
Delaware	Oct. 1999	Immediate	48	24	24	338
Florida	Feb. 1996	Immediate	48	24	12	303
Georgia	Jan. 2001	Immediate	48	12	12	208
Hawaii	July 2002	24	60	No limit	12	712
Iowa	Individual	Immediate	Individual	24	12	426
Idaho	July 1999	Immediate	24	No limit	12	276
Illinois	July 1999	24	Unlimited	No limit	12	377
Indiana	May 1997	Immediate	60 and 24	12	12	288
Kansas	Oct. 2001	Immediate	60	12	12	429
Kentucky	Oct. 2001	6	60	No limit	12	262
Louisiana	Jan. 1999	24	24 of 60	12	12	190
Massachusetts	Dec. 1998	60 days	24 of 60	12	12	579
Maryland	Dec. 2001	Immediate	60	12	12	388
Maine	Nov. 2001	24	60	Child is 13	12	468
Michigan	No limit	60 days	None	24	12	Varies
Minnesota	July 2001	6	60	12	12	532
Missouri	July 2000	24	60	No limit	12	292
Mississippi	Oct. 2001	24	60	12	12	120
Montana	Feb. 2002	Immediate	60	Immediate	12	450
North Carolina	July 1998	Immediate	24 of 60	12	12	272
North Dakota	July 2002	24	60	12	12	440
Nebraska	Nov. 1997	Immediate	24 of 48	24	24	364
New Hampshire	Oct. 2001	26 weeks	60	No limit	12	550
New Jersey	Feb. 2002	24	60	24	24	424
New Mexico	July 2002	60 days	60	No limit	12	389
Nevada	Dec. 1998	24	24, off 12	12	12	348
New York	Dec. 2001	24	60	12	12	Varies

Table 2 (Continued)

State	Month When First Families Reach Time Limits	Maximum Time Before Starting Work (months)	Lifetime Limit for Cash Assistance (months)	Transitional Child Care Available (months)	Transitional Medicaid Available (months)	Transitional Medicaid Available (months)
Ohio	Oct. 2000	24	36	12	12	341
Oklahoma	Oct. 2001	Immediate	60	12	12	292
Oregon	Aug. 1998	Immediate	24 of 84	No limit	12	460
Pennsylvania	March 2002	Immediate	60	12	12	421
Rhode Island	March 2002	45 days	60	No limit	18	554
South Carolina	Oct. 1998	24	24 of 120	24	24	200
South Dakota	Dec. 2001	2 months	60	12	12	Varies
Tennessee	April 1998	Immediate	18, 3 off	18	18	185
Texas	June 1997	Immediate	Depends	12	18	188
Utah	Jan. 2000	Immediate	36	No limit	24	426
Virginia	July 1997	Immediate	24 of 60	12	12	354
Vermont	No limit	15 and 30	No limit	No limit	36	639
Washington	July 2002	Immediate	60	12	12	546
Wisconsin	Oct. 2001	Immediate	60	Yes	Yes	Varies
West Virginia	Jan. 2002	24	60	12	12	Varies
Wyoming	Jan. 2002	Immediate	60	No limit	12	340

Source: Pew Center on the States, www.stateline.org (web-site)

Table 2 Notes

Maximum Time Before Starting Work

- Iowa: Individually determined.
- Arizona: Individually determined.
- California: 18 months for new applicants; 24 months for recipients as of 1/11/98.
- Delaware: Immediate if determined able and for two-parent households. Workfare for single-parent households after 24 months.
- Massachusetts: 60 months for non-exempt with school-age children.
- New Hampshire: 26 weeks of job search, followed by 26 weeks of work activities.
- South Dakota: Community service.
- Vermont: 15 months; 30 months for single parents.

Lifetime Limit for Cash Assistance

- Arizona: 60; Adult household members limited to 24 months out of 60 lifetime.
- Florida: Two tiers: 1) 24 out of 60 for a total of 48 lifetime; 2) 36 out of 72 for a total of 48 months lifetime.
- Iowa: Determined case-by-case.
- Illinois: Unlimited if family has earned income and works at least 20 hours per week. 24 months for families with no child under 13 and no earnings; 60 months for all other families.
- Indiana: 60 months; 24 months for adults-only.
- Louisiana: 24 out of 60 months; 60 months lifetime.

- Michigan: None. Will use state-only funds for those eligible and not self-sufficient after 60 months.
- North Carolina: 24 out of 60 months; 60 months lifetime.
- Nevada: 24 months, then off 12 months; 60 lifetime.
- Oregon: 24 out of 84 months.
- South Carolina: 24 out of 120 months; 60 lifetime.
- Tennessee: 18 months, then off 3 months; 60 lifetime.
- Texas: three tiers (12, 24 and 36 months) depending on employability of head of household.
- Virginia: 24 out of 60 months; 60 months lifetime.

Transitional Child Care Available

- Colorado, Idaho, Kentucky, Missouri, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, and Wyoming: No limit for families below 200 percent of federal poverty level.
- Connecticut: No limit for families below 200 percent of federal poverty level; sliding-scale fee.
- Hawaii: No limit; sliding-scale fee.
- Illinois: No limit for families below 200 percent of federal poverty level; Co-pay for all with earned income.
- Maine: Until youngest is 13 or family loses eligibility.
- Montana: Sliding-scale fee immediately.
- New Hampshire: No limit for families below 170 percent of federal poverty level.
- Wisconsin: Yes, number of months not yet specified.

Transitional Medicaid Available

- Connecticut: 24 months, no income limit.
- New Jersey: 24 months, if employed; 4 months with increased child or spousal support.
- Rhode Island: Adults: 18 months. No time limit for children under 25 percent of the federal poverty limit:
- Wisconsin: Yes. Income eligibility regardless of TANF status.
- Monthly Cash Assistance
- California: \$565 in Region I; \$538 in Region II.
- Connecticut: A: \$636; B: \$543; C: \$536.
- Illinois: Figure shown is for Group I (Chicago area). Two other groups are lower amounts.
- Michigan: Detroit: \$459. Varies for different parts of the state.
- New Mexico: \$389. \$100 more for families not living in subsidized housing.
- New York: \$577 New York; \$703 Suffolk.
- South Dakota: \$430 independent living; \$300 shared living.
- Wisconsin: \$673 family in community service; \$628 family in transition.
- West Virginia: \$253; 10 percent more for married couple.

ILLINOIS' WELFARE REFORM PLAN

Major welfare reforms in Illinois began with Earnfare in 1992. This program was followed by Fresh Start and Work Pays in 1993, Work and Responsibility in 1995, and Work First in 1996. These past programs provided the State with a start towards welfare reform and helped ease the transition from AFDC to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. The TANF program is the title of Illinois' new welfare reform program that took effect after President Clinton signed into law the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

Illinois' TANF program essentially mirrors the federal program. The state ends AFDC as an entitlement, limits the number of years a client can receive welfare benefits, and places emphasis on moving clients from welfare and into jobs. The federal changes were implemented in Illinois on July 1, 1997.

Illinois' current welfare reform program consists of several initiatives to assist individuals with support services. These are primarily aimed at helping former recipients of AFDC find and maintain employment. TANF, which provides families with monthly cash grants and medical care, is the center of all initiatives.

Basic Program Components

The following key principles and goals of Illinois' TANF program are outlined in the TANF State Plan Summary:

- Accessibility to the TANF program is transitional;
- Recipients of TANF assistance must work;
- Recipients of TANF assistance must become self-sufficient;
- TANF assistance will be denied to clients who are convicted of Class X or Class 1 drug-related felonies or who do not cooperate with child support, paternity establishment and employment activities;
- TANF grants remain at the same level when another child is born.

The TANF program is administered by the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS). TANF provides financial assistance to families with one or more dependent children. Most families receiving TANF are also eligible for food stamps and medical assistance.

Most TANF families are headed by single mothers. Married couples living together and expecting their first child may also be eligible for TANF assistance.

Adults age 18 and older and their children are limited to 60 months of TANF assistance in their lifetimes. Earnings up to an average of at least 20 hours per week that are budgeted for work do not count towards the limit.

The number of eligible family members and the area of the state where the family lives determine the size of the TANF grant. However, the TANF grant is not increased if a child is born more than 10 months after the family begins to receive TANF. Newborns, however, are included in the medical and food stamps programs.

Unmarried parents under age 18 are required to live with a parent or legal guardian in order to receive TANF. Unmarried parents under age 18, who are without a high school diploma or GED, are required to enroll in school or a GED program.

TANF parents are required to see that their children (grades 1 through 8) maintain regular school attendance.

Specific Initiatives and Programs

TANF initiatives and programs that have been implemented to address these principles and goals are discussed below.

- The *Targeted Work Initiative* (TWI) is available to families with no children under age 13. These families are limited to 24 months of cash assistance without employment. Some clients will be required to perform work activities before receiving their assistance payment. TWI clients who do not have a job after 12 months and clients who quit their jobs are entered in the *Work First* program. The client is assigned to employers who have contracted with the Department of Human Services. The employer will distribute assistance through a paycheck only after the client has performed the required work.
- A work stipend of \$20 per month will be given to *Work First* clients to help them cover additional costs (transportation for example).
- Clients with children under age 13 who get a job receive *Work Pays* benefits. Their grant is reduced by \$1 for every \$3 earned. Receipt of the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit by working parents does not affect the grant. To promote child support income and employment, the TANF program will disregard \$2 of every \$3 of excess child support distributed by the child support agency to a family with earnings.
- Job-ready clients whose youngest child is age five through 12 must participate in the *Get A Job initiative*. This initiative requires an intensive job search for the first six months of assistance.

Clients must agree to cooperate in developing and signing a Responsibility and Services Plan that outlines a plan for self-sufficiency. Clients receiving TANF may own one car and have up to \$3,000 in assets to encourage them to save money.

Illinois provides a Welfare to Work Tax Credit worth up to \$8,500 for employers who hire long-term TANF recipients between January 1, 1998 and May 1, 1999.

Work Participation Requirements

At a minimum, the State of Illinois must demonstrate Maintenance of Effort (MOE) by following federal work participation requirements:

- A single parent must participate in a work activity for at least 20 hours per week in 1998. By 1999, single parents must increase their weekly work participation to 25 hours, and by 2000, they must work at least 30 hours per week.
- For two-parent families, both parents are required to work a combined total of 35 hours per week.

All recipients must attend an orientation and assessment with a Department of Human Services worker. During the assessment, the recipient must create a personalized plan (Responsibility and Services Plan). The plan will define steps the individual must follow to gain employment as quickly as possible. Failure to follow the plan could result in reduction or total elimination of cash assistance.

Individuals who cannot find a job or have not worked or finished high school, may be placed in one of the following programs:

- Adult basic education.
- English as a second language.
- GED classes.
- Vocational training.
- A work program.
- A degree program if the individual is working at least 20 hours per week or the program can be completed within one year.

TANF Grant Levels

TANF cash grants in Cook County, a Group I location, are listed below. Group I cash grants are the highest in the state. The size of the cash grant is dependent on geographic location within the state (Groups I, II, and III) and the number of eligible family members.

Group	Family Size	Monthly Grant
I	1	\$212
	2	\$278
	3	\$377
	4	\$414
	5	\$485
	6	\$545
	7	\$574
	8+	\$604

The average cash grant statewide is \$314. Approximately 200,000 families receive a monthly TANF grant. Approximately 580,000 persons receive a monthly TANF grant, with 70 percent (406,000) of those being children.

More than 37 percent of TANF families (74,000) have just one child; 30 percent (60,000) have two children; and 17 percent (34,000) have three children. Families with four or more children represent about 16 percent (32,000) of TANF families.

More than 63 percent of the TANF cases (365,400 cases) include a child under age six. The average family stays on TANF about 2.5 years.

Child Care Assistance

In July 1997, Illinois implemented a new, income-based childcare system for working families. The program combines parent co-payments and available state and federal dollars to serve all working families whose income is below 50 percent of the state's median income. This program is available to TANF clients, as long as they are working or in an education or training program.

Medical Assistance

Medical assistance (Medicaid) was not impacted by the federal welfare-reform legislation, and income eligible persons, whether enrolled in the TANF program or not, are able to access health care services.

However, failure to cooperate or comply with TANF rules and regulations and conditions in the client-specific Responsibility and Services Plan can result in a denial of medical services. TANF rules require mothers to cooperate with Child Support Enforcement.

Housing Assistance

Housing assistance is not affected by the federal welfare reform legislation. Housing subsidies are available to eligible persons on a first come/first serve basis.

Food Stamps

Food stamp assistance is linked to personal responsibility and work requirements of the federal welfare reform legislation. The level of food stamp assistance is tied to: a) household income and expenses; b) number of persons in the household living and eating together; and c) amount of available liquid assets.

In order to receive food stamp assistance, a person who is age 18 to 49 must meet the work requirement unless he/she is physically, medically, or mentally unable to work. The work requirement is a minimum of 80 hours per month or earned gross wages of \$412.

If the work requirement is not met, an individual can only receive food stamp assistance for three months in a 36-month period.

Exemptions

People who are not able to work for physical, medical, or mental reasons are eligible for General Assistance. General Assistance is administered by the Department of Human Services and consists of two programs:

- Transitional Assistance -- for adults with no dependent children. The monthly grant is \$100 with limited medical coverage.
- Family and Children Assistance -- for families with children who need financial assistance but who are not eligible for TANF. Both adult family members and children under age 18 are eligible for Medicaid services. The Family and Children cash grant is determined by the number of eligible household members and the area of the state in which the family lives. Maximum grant levels are listed below and are the same as the TANF grant amounts identified above.

Family Size	Monthly Grant
1	\$165
2	\$278
3	\$377
4	\$414
5	\$485
6	\$545

Sanctions and Penalties

The TANF program allows for sanctions and penalties. Clients will be sanctioned if they do not follow their Responsibility and Services Plan. The first time a client is sanctioned, the cash grant will be cut in half. The grant will be restored to its full level based on immediate cooperation and agreement to comply with conditions in the Plan.

Failure to cooperate within three months after the cash grant has been cut in half will result in elimination of all cash assistance until the client complies with the conditions set forth in the plan.

If the agreement is broken again, the cash grant will be withheld for three months. The client will be eligible for the fourth month if he or she cooperates with conditions in the plan.

Three areas of cooperation are key to remaining eligible for TANF assistance: 1) participate in the minimum required work, education, or training program; 2) ensure that dependent children (grades 1 through 8) attend school regularly; and 3) identify and help locate absent parents, establish paternity, and obtain support payments. Failure to cooperate with the Child Support Enforcement program will result in a denial of medical assistance.

Eligibility and Residency Requirements

A family receiving TANF or AFDC assistance from another State who has moved to Illinois within the preceding 12 months, will have assistance capped at the previous state rate during the first 12 months of Illinois residence.

To be eligible for TANF one must be an Illinois state resident. Convicted felons, parole violators, and those who refuse to work or avoid child support obligations are not eligible for TANF assistance.

Benefits for Legal Non-Citizens

Legal non-citizens are eligible for TANF and General Assistance, except for those who fall under the following eligibility restrictions:

- Refugees, asylees, an alien whose deportation is being withheld, an alien granted conditional entry prior to April 1980.
- Cuban and Haitian entrants.
- Legal permanent residents who entered the country on or after August 22, 1996 are not eligible for the first five years of residence. Aliens who are paroled into the country are not eligible for at least one year.

Characteristics of Families Receiving Cash Assistance in Cook County and Chicago

Caseload Numbers

Within the City of Chicago, the number of TANF/AFDC cases has decreased since 1995. The table on the following page summarizes the decreases in cases and the percentage from year to year. Illinois saw significant caseload decreases between 1996 and 1997. Almost 15 percent fewer families received assistance in 1997, compared to 1996. During the same period, 13.9 percent fewer adult females and 14.9 percent fewer single persons received assistance.

The table also shows that while the decreases in caseloads were not as dramatic between 1997 and 1998, they still show that significant numbers of people are leaving cash assistance programs.

Annual Change in Caseloads and Participants

	As of June, 1995		As of June, 1996		As of June, 1997		As of June, 1998	
	Caseload	Annual Percent Change*	Caseload	Annual Percent Change	Caseload	Annual Percent Change*	Caseload	Annual Percent Change
Estimated Number of Families	129,490	N/A	123,944	-4.3%	105,420	-14.9%	95,478	-9.4%
Estimated Number of Persons	380,557	N/A	363,548	-4.5%	313,175	-13.9%	288,381	-7.9%
Estimated Number of Adult Females	105,250	N/A	97,232	-7.6%	83,693	-13.9%	80,364	-4.0%
Estimated Number of Single-Persons	125,386	N/A	120,342	-4.0%	102,416	-14.9%	91,614	-10.5%

Source: Illinois Bureau of Research and Analysis; May 1998

*Percent change from previous year or reporting period

Median Time on Assistance

Statistics from the Illinois Bureau of Research and Analysis showed that the median time on assistance (TANF or AFDC) in Cook County increased since 1995:

- As of June 1995 -- 35.4 months
- As of June 1996 -- 35.4 months
- As of June 1997 -- 39.0 months
- As of March 1998 -- 40.2 months

Educational Attainment and Work Experience

The Illinois Department of Human Services Employer Clearinghouse reported that on average, nearly 50 percent of welfare to work clients have earned at least a high school diploma or GED.

More than 60 percent of the welfare to work clients have had previous work experience.

MINNESOTA'S WELFARE REFORM PLAN

Minnesota's welfare reform program is called MFIP-S (Minnesota Family Investment Plan-Statewide). MFIP began as a pilot program in 1994 as a comprehensive reform of public assistance programs for families receiving cash grants. The pilot streamlined the application for a variety of public assistance programs, including AFDC, Family General Assistance, Food Stamps and Medical Assistance and provided work incentives. An evaluation of the pilot program 18 months after implementation showed that:

- 52 percent of the long-term MFIP participants were working, nearly 40 percent more than the people working in a corresponding control group.
- Poverty decreased by 14 percent among these working families.

While MFIP has shown early success, to date it has been no more successful in keeping long-term recipients off assistance than AFDC. Moreover, these impacts are evaluated in the short term and in a prosperous economic environment. How MFIP will succeed at increasing employment and job retention in the long term remains to be seen.

Basic Program Components

MFIP replaces AFDC and Family General Assistance (FGA), the two cash grant programs to families with children. MFIP combines cash grants, food stamps, Medical Assistance eligibility, education and training and child care assistance into one MFIP grant, which varies by family size and earnings. Grant amounts are reduced as earnings increase and end once earnings reach 120 percent of the federal poverty level.

Families who need only the food assistance while they work may receive it longer than five years and may continue to receive Medical Assistance and child care assistance. A new Diversionary Assistance Program provides a one-time grant for a period of up to four months to families who do not want ongoing cash assistance.

The emphasis is on work first, although short-term (12 months or less) education and training opportunities are available based on the discretion of Employment Service providers. Educational opportunities are prioritized for those who do not have a high school degree or need English as a Second Language. Also, individuals participating in STRIDE (state JTPA) programs as of March 1, 1997, may be allowed to finish the program for a period of no longer than two years.

The priorities of work and education/training activities are:

- Immediate full-time employment;
- Immediate part-time employment leading to full-time work;
- Combination of training (or social services) and employment;
- Short-term (less than 1 year) training leading toward full-time work;
- Longer term training leading to full-time work; and,
- Combination of social services and training leading to full-time work.

Minnesota counties are responsible for developing and administering MFIP implementation plans.

Primary Goals of MFIP

MFIP has 4 main goals:

- 1) To make work financially rewarding;
- 2) To remove childcare and health care insurance barriers to employment;
- 3) To reduce long-term dependency on public assistance; and,
- 4) To move individuals into work as quickly as possible.

Work Participation Requirements

Minnesota must meet federal work participation requirements. Failure to do so results in a 5 percent loss of the state's block grant the first year. The penalty grows each year up to 21 percent.

Phase-in Process

Key dates:

- *July 1, 1997* - 60-month time limit begins, residency requirements begin.
- *January 1, 1998* - All current cash grant cases begin to be converted to MFIP over a 3-month transition period and all new cash grant applicants must apply for MFIP.
- *July 1, 1998* - Statewide MFIP assists all eligible families.

Key steps in the process of enrolling in MFIP and seeking employment

All AFDC participants must attend an orientation provided by Hennepin County to begin the conversion process. Orientations began in January of 1998.

Each participant selects an Employment Service Provider. The Employment Service Provider is responsible for helping the participant find employment, transportation, childcare, and other resources.

Each participant develops an Employment Plan, which may be a mix of employment, education and training, although the emphasis is on work. Most participants are provided with a minimal level of soft skills training. Post secondary education activities are generally limited to one year, with a second year possible for some.

Participants have eight weeks to find employment and must devote at least 30 hours per week to searching for employment. Those who cannot find employment receive a second assessment and are generally provided with additional short-term educational and training opportunities to improve skill levels. Once completed, participants have an additional eight weeks to find employment. Employment Service Providers follow-up with participants for 180 days to ensure they remain employed.

MFIP participants receive assistance from a variety of community supports through McKnight Foundation funded 'networks of supports' for families making a transition from welfare to work.

Special programs for those who are not job ready

An estimated 20 to 35 percent of welfare participants have serious personal and family obstacles to successful employment.

Some flexibility is built into MFIP to provide additional assistance to MFIP participants who face special barriers to employment, including lack of education or work history, mental health problems, substance abuse or domestic violence. Most importantly, if a participant is unable to find work during the first eight-week job search process, additional education, training and special programs are made available.

Minnesota relies on a wide range of private nonprofit agencies and publicly funded programs to provide services to those who are not job ready. Up to 20 percent of MFIP cases may be applied to the federally defined "hardship" category.

Education and Training

Beyond immediate soft-skills training or high school diploma education, education and training programs are generally not encouraged as part of an MFIP participant's employment plan. However, legal advocates are pushing MFIP participants and Employment Service providers to consider education and training as a means to increase job wage potential. Permissible education and training are as follows:

- Teen parents without a high school education must attend secondary school.
- Post-secondary training must be 12 months or less. If a participant is permitted to attend for longer than 12 months, the participant must repay the cost of the training to the State.

In order to qualify for paid education or training activities (beyond basic soft-skills training) at the initial assessment stage, a participant must demonstrate that the training/education meets the following guidelines:

- It is necessary to get a job;
- The training/education is less than 6 months;
- The resulting job will result in significantly higher pay; and,
- The training/education activity is part of a forty-hour workweek (combination of work and training/education).

Qualifying for paid education and training at the second assessment is easier if the MFIP participant is unsuccessful in finding employment during the first eight-week job search. Still the emphasis will be on short-term training and educational activities.

Time Limits

Recipients may receive federal assistance for a maximum time of five years, starting July 1997.

MFIP Grant Levels

The goal of MFIP is to bring a family's income above the poverty level before eliminating cash grant assistance. Employed participants can continue to collect a partial cash grant along with wages until they reach a total income of at least 120 percent of the federal poverty level (or hit the five-year limit). The earnings needed to rise above 120 percent of the poverty level vary by family size. The following is a schedule of cash grant benefits (combined cash and food stamps) relative to family size and wages:

Family size of two:

- Earnings (\$0.00) + MFIP grant (\$609) = \$609
- Earnings (\$500) + MFIP grant (\$350) = \$850
- Earnings (\$925) + MFIP grant (\$78) = \$1,003
- Maximum wage at 40 hrs/wk before losing benefits = \$5.99

Family size of three:

- Earnings (\$0.00) + MFIP grant (\$763) = \$763
- Earnings (\$500) + MFIP grant (\$519) = \$1,019
- Earnings (\$1,100) + MFIP grant (\$135) = \$1,235
- Maximum wage at 40 hrs/wk before losing benefits = \$7.53

Family size of four:

- Earnings (\$0.00) + MFIP grant (\$903) = \$903
- Earnings (\$500) + MFIP grant (\$673) = \$1,173
- Earnings (\$1,100) + MFIP grant (\$289) = \$1,389
- Maximum wage at 40 hrs/wk before losing benefits = \$8.92

For families living in publicly subsidized housing, the food portion of their MFIP grant will be reduced by \$30 (beginning January 1998) and \$100 will be counted against their income portion of their grants (beginning July 1999).

Child-Care Assistance

State funding for childcare subsidies has significantly increased (by \$93 million in the 1997/98 biennium) so that all families moving from welfare to work have access to affordable childcare. MFIP participants receive full child care subsidies while they remain eligible for a cash grant and will receive one year of additional child care subsidies based on a sliding fee scale after they no longer receive a cash grant. Co-payments begin at 75 percent of federal poverty level.

Minnesota now allows subsidies to be used for unlicensed as well as licensed home care.

Medical Assistance

Unlike some other states, Medical Assistance (MA) is packaged as part of a participant's MFIP assistance. MA will also be provided for one year after no longer qualifying for a cash grant.

If a family is no longer eligible for MA, Minnesota Care will provide health insurance to income eligible non-insured families on a sliding fee scale basis. It is estimated that Minnesota Care has reduced single-parent family welfare use by 6 percent and two-parent family use by 18 percent (Minnesota Planning, 1997). Moving families from welfare to work thus reduces not only cash grant and administrative costs, but costs associated with medical assistance.

Housing Assistance

Housing assistance is also linked to MFIP: \$100 of any cash assistance is counted toward the incomes of families receiving public housing subsidies. (Implementation of this deduction has been delayed until July 1999.)

No major housing initiatives have been developed as a result of welfare reform.

Food Stamps

Food Stamp eligibility is also linked with MFIP. The average grant for eligible families is \$65 a month per person. Adults not eligible for MFIP can only receive food stamps for three months within a three-year period unless working a minimum 20 hours a week.

A household's gross income must be at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level to qualify for food assistance.

Exemptions

An MFIP participant may be exempt from work rules if he/she is:

- The parent of a new born (up to one year);
- 60 years or older;
- Ill or disabled;
- Experiencing crises such as domestic abuse.

Asset limits

A first time MFIP participant may own up to \$2,000 in personal property and a current AFDC participant, converting to MFIP, may own up to \$5,000 in personal property. A participant may own a vehicle worth \$7,500.

Penalties and Sanctions

Sanctions begin within one month for failure to cooperate with work requirements (including initial orientations and job search activities).

The participant's grant is reduced 10 percent the first month of noncompliance and 30 percent beginning the second month. The participant's rent will also be paid directly beginning the second month.

Residency Requirements

There will be no benefits for new residents during their first 30 days in Minnesota, with some exceptions for hardship and for migrant workers who have worked in Minnesota in the previous 12 months. For the next 11 months, new residents receive their prior state's benefit levels (if lower than Minnesota's). Benefits are paid to vendors for rent and utilities.

Minnesota may adjust MFIP grant payments downward for all participants if the cost of providing assistance to new residents exceeds the amount previously projected.

Benefits for Legal Non-citizens

Federal welfare reform laws disallow TANF grants, food stamps, and other federal assistance to most legal non-citizens. Minnesota, however, is providing state funding to continue cash grants, food stamps and General Assistance to immigrants who no longer qualify for federal assistance. The provision of state assistance is available through July 1, 1999. The next legislative session will decide whether or not to continue assistance. The following assistance is currently available:

- Families with children are eligible for full MFIP grants, food assistance and Medical Assistance. Like other eligible families, they will also receive childcare and supportive services. MFIP grants and food assistance are funded by the state of Minnesota. There is one important caveat regarding the eligibility of this population who arrived in the country after December 19, 1997, the date sponsor deeming became effective. Sponsor deeming requires

that new immigrants have “Affidavits of Support,” a legal document that makes the sponsor’s income count toward the income of an immigrant applying for financial assistance. This means that few applicants may actually qualify for assistance. For the moment, however, most immigrant families with children who are legally residing in Minnesota are continuing to receive and are eligible to receive assistance.

- Most immigrants receiving assistance will be encouraged to work as opposed to going to school even if they do not speak English well. English as a Second Language (ESL) however, is available for immigrants and may be included as part of one’s employment plan. All immigrants receiving assistance will be strongly encouraged to gain citizenship status.
- As permitted by federal law, Cubans, Haitians, refugees and asylees are eligible for MFIP (including the federal portion of the grant) during their first five years in the country even if they have arrived before the enactment date August 22, 1996) of the federal welfare reform law. Beyond their first five years in the country, these groups will remain eligible for MFIP if they are subject to the five-year TANF eligibility. Minnesota must cover the cost of the extended eligibility.
- State-funded food stamps will be available to all legal immigrants who were cut off from the federal food stamp program. Low-income elderly, disabled and working poor immigrants began to receive food stamps on July 1, 1998.
- As permitted by state law, qualified non-citizens who are elderly, blind or disabled will continue to receive federally funded Supplemental Security Income (SSI) if they were receiving this assistance on August 22, 1996. Qualified non-citizens that have resided in the country before August 22, 1996, but not receiving SSI, are eligible to receive assistance without time limitations. Elderly and disabled legal non-citizens, who are ineligible for SSI because they arrived in the country after August 22, 1996, will be eligible to receive \$203/month under Minnesota General Assistance. This aid totals to \$3,480 per year, compared to \$4,536 under SSI.

Child Support Collection Efforts

Families no longer receive the \$50 pass-through they were receiving when an absent parent paid child support directly to the county. Child support payments go to reimburse the welfare system, unless the amount is sufficient to remove the family from welfare.

Like other states, Minnesota has significantly increased efforts to collect child support.

Characteristics of Families Receiving Cash Assistance in Hennepin County and Minneapolis

Caseload Numbers

For the purposes of this report, the following statistics focus on families receiving cash assistance. In December of 1997, there were a total of 15,277 cash grant cases in Hennepin County; 11,559 (76 percent) of which lived in Minneapolis. The neighborhoods with the largest concentrations are in northeast and central sections of Minneapolis.

The number of cash grant cases generally increased during the 1980s and first half of the 1990s; however significant declines in caseloads began in 1995 and continued in 1996 and 1997. Hennepin County follows the national trend in cash grant caseloads, with a decline of seven percent in 1995, 11 percent in 1996 and 18 percent in the first half of 1996.

The total Hennepin County caseload was:

- 19,055 in December 1995;
- 17,803 in December 1996; and;
- 15,277 in December 1997.

These numbers reflect declines of seven percent from 1995 to 1996 and another 16.5 percent from 1996 to 1997.

Similar declines occurred in Minneapolis. The total Minneapolis caseload was:

- 13,837 in December 1995,
- 13,315 in December 1996, and
- 11,599 in December 1997.

These numbers reflect declines of four percent from 1995 to 1996 and an additional 15 percent from 1996 to 1997.

Basic Demographic Characteristics

The following statistics are current as of December 1997, and represent Hennepin County families (cases) receiving cash grants.

- 95 percent of participants are female;
- The average age of participants is 31 years;
- 35 percent of participants do not have a high school degree;
- The average number of children is two;
- 12 percent of participants have a first language other than English, with the largest groups being Somali (3.6 percent) and Hmong (3.4 percent);

- Most adults (64 percent) receiving cash grant assistance have never been married, 25 percent are married, and 9 percent are divorced
- The vast majority of people receiving cash grant assistance were not employed prior to full implementation of MFIP: 38 percent of MFIP participants and 13 percent of AFDC participants were employed as of February, 1998.

Characteristics of Families Receiving Cash Assistance in Ramsey County and St. Paul

Caseload Numbers

In February 1998, Ramsey County distributed cash grants to 9,326 individuals. Of these, 754 (81 percent) lived in St. Paul.

Between January of 1996 and 1997, cash grant recipients declined by 9.7 percent, with most of the decline occurring in suburban Ramsey County. Over a longer period, from 1994 to 1997, the quarterly case average declined from 11,335 to 9,322 or nearly 22 percent.

Basic Demographic Characteristics

Approximately 25 percent of the population receiving cash assistance in St. Paul is Asian, primarily Hmong, who arrived in the United States as refugees without formal education. A recent study conducted by Ramsey County concluded that the single most important factor contributing to long-term dependence on public assistance is lack of education. Families headed by adults without an education tend to have more children, fewer cars and fewer job skills than the average family on assistance.

The following statistics represent Ramsey County families (not individuals) receiving cash grant assistance from November 1996. They are not expected to be significantly different from current caseload characteristics.

- 83 percent of adult participants were female;
- The largest age group receiving cash grant assistance was 22-29 (37 percent), followed by 30-39 (35 percent). Fourteen percent were under the age of 22 and another 14 percent were aged 40 or older;
- 48 percent of participants did not have a high school degree and 12 percent had no formal school experience, which is attributed to the high percentage of recipients who are refugees without formal education;
- The average number of children was 2.4 for all families and 3.18 for Asian families;
- 30 percent of adult participants were either Asian (25 percent) or Latino (5 percent);
- 80 percent of participants were single parents;
- 75 percent of participants did not own a car;
- 18 percent of all families and 31 percent of those with no formal education (primarily Southeast Asian) lived in subsidized housing;

- 6 percent of all families and 20 percent of Southeast Asian families receiving AFDC also received SSI.

The median time span for families on AFDC was 40 to 59 months, almost twice as high as the state median. This is attributable to the large share of Southeast Asian immigrants receiving assistance.

The vast majority of people receiving cash grant assistance were not employed prior to full implementation of MFIP; 16 percent of cash grant recipients were employed as of November 1996.

Participants are likely to remain on assistance longer if they have a low education level, do not own a car, have larger families or are a refugee without any formal education (Ramsey County Welfare Reform Source Book, 1998).

MISSOURI'S WELFARE REFORM PLAN

The title of Missouri's welfare reform program is the Temporary Assistance (TA) program. TA includes many programs, all aimed at a comprehensive effort to build a strong family and work system by emphasizing responsibility and accountability. The program addresses what the state of Missouri has identified as the fundamental causes of welfare dependency:

- Lack of family support;
- Lack of job skills and work habits; and
- Intergenerational cycle of welfare reliance.

The state of Missouri initiated its own welfare reform measures three years before President Clinton signed into law the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The measures were run as pilot initiatives, beginning in 1993. The focus of the initiatives were on Preventing, Reducing, and Ending Dependency, and since their initiation over 97,299 people, formerly on the welfare roll, have left the system.

One program, 21st Century Community (Jackson County) has employed over 700 welfare recipients; approximately 240 of them are working in newly created jobs. Benefits are paid directly to the employer to supplement the wages of the recipient. Over 100 employers in Kansas City participate.

Specific Initiatives and Programs

Specific initiatives and programs fall under the following:

- Prevent Dependency programs include:
 - Pre-Kindergarten Program -- no goals specifically created as a result of welfare reform;
 - Early Childhood Care and Education -- no goals specifically created as a result of welfare reform;
 - Educare -- adult education and training program for child care workers. Aimed primarily at family and childcare providers.
 - Caring Communities – citizen-driven, school-based and school- linked services.
 - Quest -- available in some Missouri counties; a program for school aged children whose parents are on cash assistance. Emphasis on personal skills building.

- Reduce Dependency programs include:
 - FUTURES -- has evolved into a case management system for the truly hard to serve. Households receiving TANF grants must sign and meet requirements. State of Missouri defines compliance.
 - Parent's Fair Share -- child support enforcement program.
 - Self-Sufficiency Pacts -- a component of LINC's use of Work First and FUTURES programs. Participation in pacts is mandatory for receiving cash assistance.
 - Child Support Services/Paternity Establishment -- a requirement for receiving cash assistance.
 - Medicaid Waiver Expansion (CHIPS) – extended in Missouri to cover families earning up to 300 percent of federal poverty guidelines. For families between 225 and 300 percent, there are premiums and co-pays set to comparable premiums and co-pays of State of Missouri employees (on average).

- End Dependency programs in Jackson County include:

- Wage Supplementation -- programs supplementing salaries, particularly for newly created positions for employees who leave TANF assistance.

- 21st Century Communities program -- for Jackson County only; open to certain zip codes (percent of population in need), guarantees fully paid child care, provides for other training and materials needs (vouchers for transportation, appropriate work wardrobe, hard and soft training). Program lasts for 48 months.
- 12-Month Wage Supplementation -- available statewide. Provides childcare based on a sliding fee scale, job training and other materials needs.
- Direct Job Placement (Work First) -- practice of directing all able-bodied cash assistance applicants into a job search while their cash assistance application is pending approval.
- One-Stop Service Centers -- the Full Employment Council (the Jackson County Private Industry Council), as well as a number of other PICs and some counties, have implemented the "one-stop shop" model to enable clients to address issues and receive assistance at one centralized location.

Work Participation Requirements

Missouri's Maintenance of Effort (MOE) mirrors federal legislation.

Work Participation Rates for All Families:

- FY 1997 -- 25%
- FY 1998 -- 30%
- FY 1999 -- 35%
- FY 2000 -- 40%
- FY 2001 -- 45%
- FY 2002 and beyond -- 50%

Work Participation Rates for Two-Parent Families:

- FY 1997 -- 75%
- FY 1998 -- 75%
- FY 1999 and beyond -- 90%

TANF Grant Levels

Cash grants are affected by household size. Grant levels are determined by the number of children in the household, not by family location. Cash grants are affected by the amount of household income earned. For the first four months a former recipient is employed, the state disregards \$30 plus 30 percent of earnings for cash assistance eligibility. Starting the fifth month, \$30 is disregarded. This does not result in a dollar-to-dollar cash reduction.

Child Care Assistance

State childcare costs are linked to employing welfare recipients, and to improving the wage levels of low-income workers. Applicants for cash assistance entering Work First are immediately eligible for complete reimbursement of childcare costs. Once a recipient is employed, childcare assistance is provided on a sliding fee scale based on family income and size.

Medical Assistance

Medical assistance is not linked to participation in TANF programs. The CHIPs program in Missouri extends Medicaid coverage to all children and many adults in families up to 300 percent of federal poverty guidelines. Medical assistance can be withheld in Missouri if an applicant refuses to name a child's father.

Housing Assistance

Housing assistance and welfare reform are not bundled.

Food Stamps

Food stamp allocation in Missouri is based on total household composition. Moving a family from welfare to work does not affect Food Stamp benefits until wage levels exceed eligibility levels.

Exemptions

Recipients with children younger than one year of age can claim an exemption. However, recipients are entitled to only 12 months of exemption. Physicians may grant exemptions for physical and mental health problems.

Penalties and Sanctions

Penalties and sanctions are as follows:

- 1st non-compliance; head of household removed from grant until in compliance.
- 2nd non-compliance; head of household removed from grant for a minimum of three months or until compliance.
- 3rd non-compliance; head of household removed from grant for a minimum of six months or until compliance.

Residency Requirements

There is no waiting period in Missouri to receive benefits. All state residents are eligible for the same level of benefit.

Benefits for Legal Non-citizens

Legal immigrants are treated as state citizens and are entitled to participate in the TANF program.

Child Support

A child support enforcement officer is stationed at every DFS office. Complying with the support enforcement process is a requirement of participation in the cash assistance program.

Characteristics of Families Receiving Cash Assistance in Jackson County and Kansas City

The progress of the TANF program in Jackson County (the Kansas City) area for the January 1998 to May 1998 period is summarized as follows:

- The total TANF population was decreased from 29,975 to 27,061, by 2,914 persons.
- The number of adults participating in the TANF program was decreased from 8,581 to 7,693, by 888 persons.
- Individuals placed in their first job totaled 351, and, of these, 322 found full wage work.
- Individuals who were placed in a job (first, second, third, etc.) totaled 442. Of these, 401 individuals were placed in full wage jobs.
- Of the 401 people who have been placed in a job, 377 are still employed. Of these, 351 are employed in full wage positions.
- From the data, it is estimated that within a five-month period, 25 percent of people placed in a first-time job will leave the job and need to be placed in a second, third, or fourth job.

PENNSYLVANIA'S WELFARE REFORM PLAN

Pennsylvania's welfare reform program is called Pennsylvania TANF, after the name of the federal welfare reform program. Unlike programs reviewed above, Pennsylvania did not start a welfare reform program prior to March 3, 1997, the first day the federal law went into affect. The following is an overview of Pennsylvania's plan.

Basic Program Components

TANF grants replace AFDC cash grants. Food stamps, Medical Assistance and other forms of assistance are provided separately.

A key feature of Pennsylvania's program is the Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR), a written agreement that outlines the steps that must be taken by a participant to achieve self-sufficiency. It also includes basic personal and parental responsibilities that are important to the physical and mental well being of the participant's family (e.g. receiving prenatal care and periodic health screenings; taking a substance abuse assessment and participating in drug treatment). Lastly, it includes penalties if participants fail to comply with the plan. Nearly all individuals are required to complete an AMR.

TANF participants must enroll in the Road to Economic Self Sufficiency through Employment and Training (RESET) unless they qualify for any of the exemptions.

While Pennsylvania's TANF is primarily a work-first program, special incentives are available to encourage education as a means of moving permanently off public assistance:

- Participants under age 18 who have not completed high school must return to school or pursue a GED.
- To support ongoing education, student financial assistance is excluded as income when determining an individual's cash grant.
- Participants may establish "individual development accounts" to save for education expenses.

Primary goals of TANF

- Pennsylvania's TANF has six main goals:
 - ✓ To promote personal responsibility;
 - ✓ Move welfare recipients into jobs;
 - ✓ Provide work incentives;
 - ✓ Break the cycle of dependency through education;
 - ✓ Strengthen families and support children;
 - ✓ Simplify program administration.

Work participation requirements

Pennsylvania must meet federal work participation requirements. A decrease in welfare caseloads has prompted the federal government to reduce its work participation requirement from 25 percent to 17 percent. Clients must work at least 20 hours per week in the first year.

Phase-in process

Key dates:

- *March 3, 1997* - 60-month time limit began for current AFDC recipients; 24-month work participation time limits began.

Key steps in the process of enrolling in TANF and seeking employment:

Beginning March 3, 1997, all current AFDC participants must re-determine their eligibility for assistance and begin an 8-week independent job search at their next scheduled eligibility re-determination meeting with their caseworker. Each must complete an AMR at this time.

New individuals applying for TANF on or after March 3, 1997 must complete an AMR and begin an independent eight-week job search. During the first 24 months on TANF, all participants not working a minimum of 20 hours a week must conduct an independent job search for a minimum of eight weeks. If employment is not found, participants are required to participate in other work-related activities in the AMR, including job readiness training, continued job search, work experience, on-the-job training, community service or an approved job training program.

During the first 12 months, more extensive education may qualify as a work activity, including vocational education, ESL or other job skills training. An education plan can continue beyond 12 months as long as the participant is working at least 20 hours.

After 24 months, all participants must either be working or participating in a qualified and approved work-related activity to qualify for continued cash assistance.

Special programs for those who are not job ready

Increased funding (\$22 million dollars) has been made available to increase welfare job training and readiness programs, transportation and other supports. Special educational incentives are built into the program for those who may not be job ready. These are described above in the Basic Program Components section.

Time limits

The five-year time limit for TANF begins upon redetermination of eligibility after March 3, 1997, for those currently receiving assistance and upon application for new families receiving assistance.

The 24-month time limit also begins at the same time for people to meet work participation requirements, or sanctions set in.

TANF Grant Levels

TANF cash grant levels are the same as the former AFDC cash grant levels and vary by county. AFDC grants are approximately 37 percent of the federal poverty level (62 percent when adding in food stamps).

However, the earned income exclusion will allow families to earn more while still receiving assistance. A full 50 percent of a participant's earned income and childcare assistance will be "disregarded" when determining their eligibility for cash assistance.

Cash grant levels vary by family size, but not by income. A family must meet maximum income eligibility requirements. Cash grant levels for residents of Philadelphia, taking into account the 50 percent income and childcare assistance exclusion, are as follows:

- Family size of 1: \$205/month
- Family size of 2: \$316/month
- Family size of 3: \$403/month
- Family size of 4: \$497/month
- Family size of 5: \$589/month
- Family size of 6: \$670/month

With the earned income exclusion, a single parent with two young children may receive a total of cash grant and earned income of \$14,000/year before being ineligible for assistance, compared to \$10,308 under the old AFDC rules.

Child Care Assistance

Childcare subsidies are \$200/month for children under age two and \$175 for children over age two.

Medical Assistance

All TANF participants are eligible for Medical Assistance above and beyond the TANF grant.

Food Stamps

Food stamp assistance is provided to TANF participants above and beyond their TANF grant and varies by income level and family size. The average monthly food stamp benefits for a three-person household is \$240.

As allowed under federal law, adults not eligible for TANF cash assistance can receive food stamps for three months within a three year period unless working a minimum 20 hours a week. State funded food assistance programs have not been developed to cover legal non-citizens and others excluded from the federal Food Stamp program.

Exemptions

A TANF participant may be exempt from work rules if he/she is:

- The parent of a new born (up to one year);
- The parent of children under age six with no available child care;
- Ill or disabled; or,
- Under age 18.

The state reserves the right to exclude up to 20 percent of its average monthly caseload from the 60-month time limit due to hardships.

Asset limits

A TANF participant may own a car of any value. The value is not considered when calculating cash benefit levels.

Penalties & Sanctions

- Participants who refuse to complete an AMR are ineligible for cash assistance.
- During the first 24 months on assistance, individuals refusing to work or perform a qualifying work activity will be ineligible to receive cash assistance (medical assistance continues) for 30 days for the first offense; 60 days for the second offense and permanently ineligible after a third offense. Children will remain eligible for the first 24 months even though a parent is sanctioned (i.e., the cash grant level would be reduced based on a smaller family size count). After the first 24 months, however, the entire family is subject to the sanctions.
- Individuals who voluntarily reduce their hours of work without good cause will have their cash grant reduced by the dollar value of the lost earnings.
- Anyone who does not accept an offer of employment will be ineligible for cash assistance.
- Individuals failing to cooperate with child support obligations will be ineligible for cash assistance or the grant will be reduced by 25 percent, whichever is higher.
- Anyone committing a welfare-related fraud is disqualified from all forms of assistance.
- An individual convicted of possession or use of drugs is ineligible for assistance until he or she has satisfied the penalty imposed by the court.

Residency Requirements

For the first 12 months residing in Pennsylvania, new residents receive their prior state's benefit levels, if lower than Pennsylvania's benefits.

General Assistance Eligibility

General Assistance is a cash grant available for certain eligible people who do not qualify for TANF assistance, specifically:

- Adults with physical or mental disabilities that prevent them from working;
- Two-parent families with children under age 13 who do not qualify for TANF;
- Children under age 18 who do not live with a relative;
- People in abuse situations for a period of nine months;
- People in drug treatment for a period of nine months; or,
- Adults caring for children not their own where no one else is available.

Benefits for legal non-citizens

Pennsylvania is following the new federal policies regarding benefits for immigrants and refugees:

- Legal non-citizens who are qualified refugees or asylees are eligible for TANF and food stamps during the first five years in the country.
- As permitted by federal law, legal non-citizens arriving to the U.S. prior to August 22, 1996, are eligible for Pennsylvania TANF. Those arriving after this date are *not* eligible for assistance.

Child Support Collection Efforts

To be eligible for cash assistance, individuals must fully cooperate with child support workers to identify an absent parent, establish paternity and establish a court order for child support. There is no longer a \$50 child support pass-through.

Characteristics of Families Receiving Cash Assistance in Philadelphia County and Pennsylvania

Caseload Numbers

In February 1998, there were a total of 199,191 cases (457,696 individuals or 3.7 percent of the overall population) receiving cash grant assistance under Pennsylvania's TANF program. Of these cases, 94,482 (47 percent of the state's total) resided in Philadelphia County. Similar to the national trend, the cash grant caseload has declined over the past two years. Statewide, caseload numbers declined by 16 percent from February of 1996 to February of 1997 and another 20 percent from February of 1997 to February of 1998.

In Philadelphia County, the caseload declined less slowly, but still significantly—by 10 percent from 1996 to 1997 and 11 percent from 1997 to 1998.

Basic Demographic Profile

The following statistics are current as of February 1998.

- The largest age group of adults receiving cash grant assistance is 26-45 (60 percent). Fifteen percent are under the age of 22 and another three percent are aged 46 or older.
- Less than 20 percent of Pennsylvania's cash grant recipients live in subsidized housing.
- Approximately 14 percent of Pennsylvania's families receiving cash grant assistance have a mother tongue other than English; 11.4 percent are Latino and 2.4 percent are Asian.

Appendix B

Cost / Benefit Analysis

Cost/Benefit Analysis

Ideally, cost/benefit analysis should capture the entire range of costs and benefits for each alternative considered. For instance, the costs and benefits may include increased farebox revenue, decreased tax revenue, and decreased costs of state or local assistance programs. The analysis should also consider the costs and benefits from multiple perspectives; one stakeholder (local transit agency or state department of revenue), may incur while benefits accrue to more than one stakeholder (such as the state welfare agency, transit riders, and local employers).

Issues that planners can address through cost/benefit analysis are discussed below. The discussion in this appendix is intended to shed light on processes and issues in evaluating costs and benefits. Different cost/benefit methodologies may prove to be more helpful in other situations.

Benefits of Transit to Welfare Reform Efforts and Other Assistance Programs

The following steps are used to measure the benefits of access-to-jobs programs:

1. Establish what is to be measured. The benefits of access-to-jobs programs can be measured by assistance program expenditures, net revenues to the state, job creation or other economic growth measure, or net benefit to the target population (for instance, moving households out of poverty). Clearly identifying the benefit to be measured allows the independent variables to be modeled.
2. Establish a baseline. If an access-to-jobs program is expected to meet specific goals, from what point will the progress of the program be measured? Baselines can be projected by assistance program expenditures in a business-as-usual future (with existing levels of transportation access) or by historic household incomes for the target population.
3. Identify data sources. Census data, U.S. Department of Labor wage surveys, economic development agencies, and social service agency data can all provide information on household incomes of the target population. State and Federal wage data provides information on how wages may change given changes in type of job or industry of employment. Private Industry Councils (PICs), Chambers of Commerce, and non-profit organizations serving particular constituencies are also good data sources.
4. Model the relationships between the dependent and independent variables. Using either causal or statistical models, identify how a change in the independent variable (for instance, welfare-to-work household income) affects the dependent variable (for instance, welfare-to-work program expenditures).

What is to be measured

To measure the benefit of access-to-jobs programs, a consideration must be made as to how an increase in transportation access to geographic areas of job growth affects the labor market and the local economy. Access-to-jobs programs can help meet goals for welfare reform, and improve economic conditions for low-income households in a number of ways, including the following:

- Allow jobs to be filled that are currently not being filled.
- Increase the wages and benefits of inner city residents by increasing access to higher-paying jobs located outside existing transit networks. The multiplier effect of greater disposable income translates into increasing inner city investment and distributes the affluence of suburban economic growth over a wider area.

The first two benefits are based on the concept of bringing a piece of the expanding economic pie to those not currently benefiting from the expansion. The third scenario examines the redistributive elements of creating access to jobs. Programs will increase the ability of inner city residents to compete for jobs with those who already have access to jobs. The third scenario is dynamic, and generally beyond the scope of access-to-jobs planning efforts.

Establishing a Baseline

Estimating the effects of transit investment requires establishment of a baseline. An example is job placement projections for the target population (welfare-to-work participants, low-income households). Such projections may not consider adequate transportation as a condition of meeting projections. Filling gaps in transportation access will thus allow the projections to be met.

Identify Data Sources

Access-to-jobs programs modify household income by moving people into higher wage jobs or jobs with upward mobility. Census data, Department of Labor wage surveys, economic development agencies, and social service agency data provide information on household incomes. State and Federal wage data provides information on how wages may change given changes in type of job or industry of employment.

Access-to-jobs programs increase the rate of economic growth in geographic areas or industries suffering labor shortages. Private Industry Councils (PICs), Chambers of Commerce, and state and local economic development agencies maintain information on labor shortages and rates of growth in particular industries. Anecdotal information, such as qualitative surveys, can shape the data to allow modeling of causal relationships.

Model Relationships between Variables

A statistical or econometric model measures statistical relationships in historic data, then forecasts changes based on estimated changes. Historic changes in household income could be statistically linked to levels of transit dependence and distance of job centers from low-income neighborhoods. A causal model sets an equation that defines the dependent variable, then forecasts changes in the variable as the inputs in the formula change. A balance sheet, for instance, shows how as one set of inputs change, the resulting balance changes. Transit expenditures by the state affects the amount of tax revenue generated by transit-dependent households and amount of assistance payments made to transit-dependent households.

Limitations of the Quantitative Analysis

The benefits of welfare reform are described in terms of matching participants with job openings, not in terms of expanding the economic pie (although the two are not mutually exclusive). In order to be consistent with the assumptions underlying the welfare reform, this study examines primarily the latter scenario. Before proceeding with the analysis, however, several potential limitations on this analysis must be noted. First, a number of “job gap” studies cast doubt on the proposition that entry-level jobs are not being filled. Second, questions have been raised regarding the ability of welfare reform measures to access the available jobs and link job seekers with employers. Third, the net effect of welfare reform on local wages and benefit levels is uncertain. Finally, the projections do not explicitly consider the transit limitations on linking jobs with job seekers.

This study focuses on the fourth of these limitations. The first three limitations address the underlying premises of welfare reform, and cannot be mitigated through transit measures. This study examines the changes in job placement and caseload costs if the transit system is not improved. In order to meet the job placement projections, the existing transit system must be supplemented, expanded, or extended. If the system is not improved, the number of subsidized placements will increase over projected levels, with commensurate increases in cost to the welfare system.

