

# Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan for



## Peoples Transit 2013

*Incorporating MAP-21 requirements for  
Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities (5310)*

**People's Transit**  
Mr. Ron Baumgart  
120 Wyoming Street SW, Huron, SD 57350  
**Tel: (605) 945-2360**  
**E-mail: [rct@midconetwork.com](mailto:rct@midconetwork.com)**





WRLDCO Consulting and Associates 25162 Black Horse Lane Laguna Hills, CA 92653  
Tel.: (714) 227-7068 E-mail: [waltdiangson@gmail.com](mailto:waltdiangson@gmail.com)

November 15, 2013

Reference: Huron People Transit Coordination Plan

Dear Mr. Baumgart:

On behalf of both WRLDCO, I am pleased to submit this final draft of People's Transit Community Transportation Coordination Plan for your consideration and review. The plan herein is responsive to the scope established by People's Transit's RFP for a coordinated transportation plan.

I look forward to your review and final comments.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "W. Diangson", is written over a faint, light-colored circular stamp.

Walter R. Diangson  
Principal

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PURPOSE

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), reauthorizing surface transportation programs through fiscal year 2014. Federal transit law, as amended by MAP-21, requires that projects selected for funding under the Section 5310, program be “included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” and that the plan be “developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public.

The plan is meant to establish goals, criteria and strategies for delivering efficient, coordinated services to elderly, underemployed or otherwise financially disadvantaged persons and persons with disabilities. This Plan, the *Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan for Peoples Transit*, is intended to meet those requirements for the City of Huron and Beadle County in South Dakota.

### Project Acceptance

This human service coordination plan that is required by FTA under the 5310 funding program was developed as a result of input from the general public, human service organization and the People’s Transit Board of Directors. It was approved by the People’s Transits board of directors on December 6, 2013 at a regularly scheduled board meeting. This plan composes and prioritizes all the issues that were expressed during the research and discovery phase of the plan development.

A copy of the minutes from that board meeting showing board approval are attached in Appendix E of this report.



## REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

Federal guidelines require the plan (project) to include the following elements and are included in this Plan:

1. An assessment of available services that identifies current providers (public, private, and nonprofit);
2. An assessment of transportation needs for persons with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes;
3. Strategies and/or activities to address the identified gaps and achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
4. Relative priorities for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies/activities identified.

A summary of the findings include the following:

- The biggest needs seem to surround themselves around issues that can best be served with a formalized mobility management focus, e.g. helping individuals explore their traveling options, understanding People's Transit policies and improved operating and customer service communications;
- People's Transit is the primary public service transportation provider in Huron and Beadle County. There is a taxi service called *Heidi's Haulers* and a limousine service called *Black Tie Limousines, Tuxedos & Tanning*.
- Even though People's Transit drives its funding primarily from state and federal support, the community perceives People's Transit as a public community service and not solely as a private non-profit service operating under its own authority.
- There appears to be some opportunities for increased coordination in the region with other community public transit services in the various surrounding counties.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

The goal of transit coordination is to enhance transportation access by minimizing duplication of services and facilitating the most appropriate and cost-effective transportation possible with available resources. The purpose of human services public transit coordination is to improve transportation services for persons with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with low incomes by ensuring that communities maximize the use of transportation resources, which are funded through public and private sources.

A Local Human Services Transit Coordination plan is a federal requirement under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). Federal regulations state that projects eligible for funding under the Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310), programs must advance strategies identified in a Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan. This planning process fulfills federal requirements by engaging transportation providers, social services agencies, and members of the public in identifying strategies for regional transportation coordination.

Beyond fulfilling federal requirements, this planning process is aimed at encouraging representatives of diverse organizations to join together in articulating specific projects that could advance coordination strategies in Huron and Beadle County. Through public outreach activities, various stakeholders and users, People's Transit board members had the opportunity to brainstorm service improvements and coordination ideas and to refine these ideas in a collaborative setting. The final project list reflects input of a broad range of regional and local stakeholders and provides a 5-year blueprint for future coordination efforts in Huron and Beadle County.

A locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, seniors, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation.

The goal of the 2013 People's Transit Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan (project) is to identify coordination strategies that will improve transportation services ability to serve the unique needs of the elderly, persons with disabilities, and persons with low incomes. This planning process combines a needs assessment with public outreach tools to identify strategies for improved human services transit coordination in Huron and Beadle County.

This report is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter is the introduction to the report stating the report's purpose and the organization of the report. Chapter Two discusses the methodology and approach to the study. Chapter Three looks at the history, agency goals and the board. Next, Chapter Four identifies other transit providers and Huron and a larger region of neighboring transit organizations. Chapter Five reviews community demographics. Chapter Six gives an overview of People's Transit services, ridership characteristics, and frequent destinations. Chapter 7 reviews the needs assessment via input from interviews and public

meeting and Chapter 8 identifies the proposed strategies resulting from the public input meetings and interviews.

As noted in the Introduction, the MAP-21 legislation established a modified FTA Section 5310 Program that consolidates the previous New Freedom and Elderly and Disabled Programs. The purpose of the Section 5310 Program is to enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services. Section 5310 Program recipients must continue to certify that projects selected are included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. The plan must undergo a development and approval process that includes seniors and people with disabilities, transportation providers, among others, and is coordinated to the maximum extent possible with transportation services assisted by other federal departments and agencies.

## CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

This updated coordination plan is the result of extensive research in the communities of Huron and other small communities in and around the county. Personal interviews with agency leaders, community organizations, People's Transit board of directors and regional economic development agencies make up the major source of information for this project. Other data and information supporting this project were derived from the US Census, the local Office of Economic Development's Housing Study and State DOT. The needs assessment will be derived by comparison of per capita rides by People's transit versus the average for the whole state.

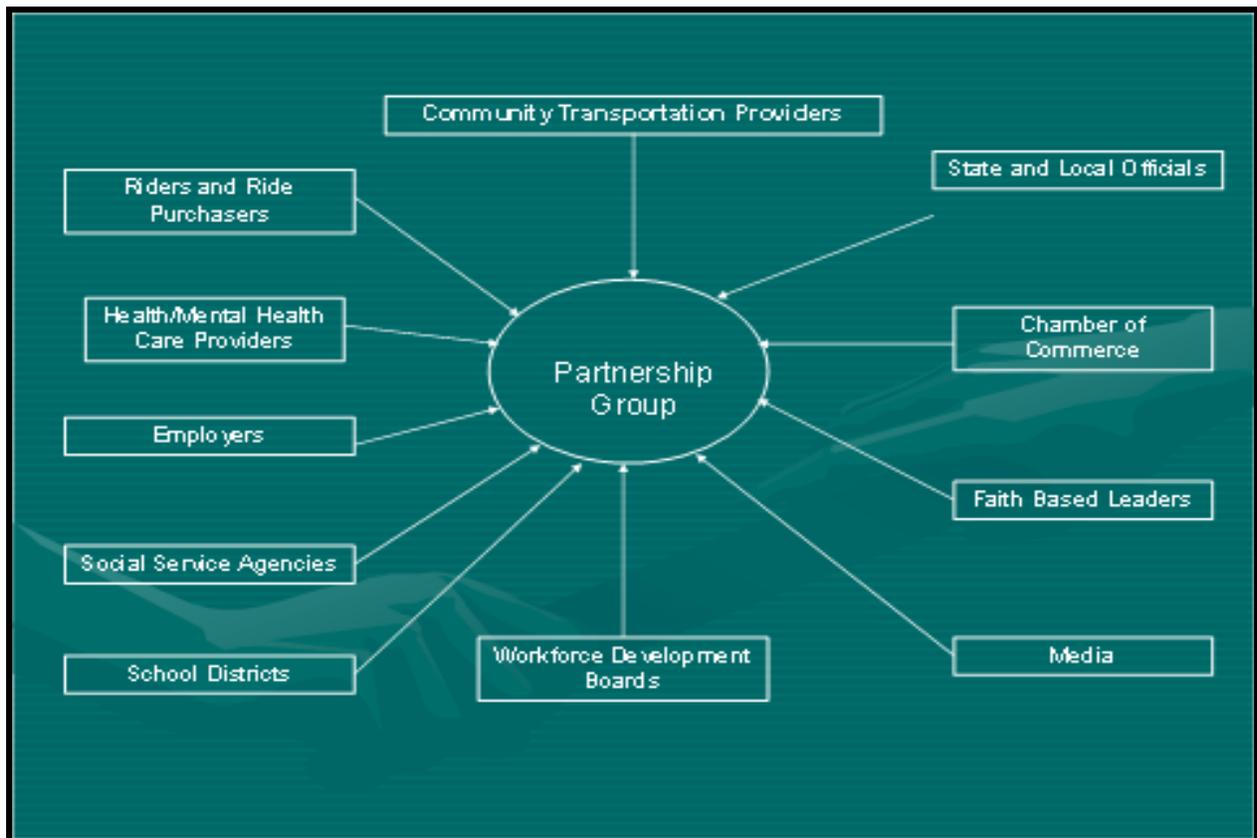


Figure 1: Illustration of Entities Included in People's Transit's Coordinated Transportation Study, including local schools and economic development organizations.

Consultants attended a regional economic Stronger Economies Together (SET) meeting in Huron in early August, 2013. The SET is composed of various economic-focused organizations in the region concerned with county-wide economic matters and transportation. A great deal of interest was expressed in passenger transportation issues at the August meeting, i.e. public transit availability and access for the rural areas surrounding Huron. Representatives from the SET participated later in the public coordination meeting held in Huron.

An open public coordination input meeting was held in Huron September 9, 2013 at People's Transit, where the public was invited to participate. Refer to Appendices A & B for public notice information relating to the public meeting. Those that attended the public forum included persons with disabilities; low income; senior citizens; human and social service agencies, governmental agencies and riders of People's Transit. The meeting was both informational on the proposed coordination plan and an opportunity to participate in a brain storming session for discovering service coordination with other providers and improved mobility management coordination at the service level for the community.

The information from the feedback from these sources has been compiled and analyzed in the search for the best and most efficient People's Transit strategies.

The next chapter will be an overview of the history and current services of People's Transit.

## CHAPTER THREE: OVERVIEW OF PEOPLE'S TRANSIT

### HISTORY

People's Transit of Huron, South Dakota, has served as the community's local public transit system since 1973. Prior to the formation of People's Transit as a private-non-profit corporation, local community transportation was provided by People's Transit's predecessor, the Huron Area Senior Center (HASC). HASC's primary focus was transportation arising out of the human service program needs of the senior center, such as nutrition, socialization adult case management and similar Older American Act funded programs. In addition, the HASC transportation service provided only limited public transit service with its human service transportation focused on the local senior center.



Following the formation of the People's Transit Board of Directors, People's Transit adopted a mission statement that proclaimed that the agency would "Put Pride in Motion" by providing transportation to senior citizens, disabled individuals and the general public. This mission encompasses the recognition that limited community transportation resources can be leveraged towards additional service by promoting a coordinated approach to providing public transportation services to established contracts for committed and reliable service. This element of coordination has been established among individual consumers, nonprofit social service agencies, youth transportation and non-profit/civic organizations.

Over time People's Transit evolved into what it is today. A community service that highly valued by many in the community including the youth, people with disabilities, seniors, low income, working commuters, the large number of immigrants referred to as the Karen and Hispanic populations and other members of the general public.

### Goals and Objectives

People's Transit is a demand response service, which means all rides need reservations to be made no later than the day before the ride is needed. As an agency, People's Transit strives to accomplish these goals for the community it exists in:

- Provide needed transportation to elderly, disabled and general public.

- Promote a coordinated approach in providing public transportation services to individual consumers, non-profit social service agencies, schools, and civic organizations.
- Participate in public transportation planning and encourage the further development of public transportation services in South Dakota.

People’s Transit is governed by a policy making board of directors who hire the manager or contracting agency to run the business. The following is a list of the current board of directors:

<b>Board member</b>	<b>Position/title*</b>
Rhonda Hanson	President
Kim Smith	Vice-President
Dave Wright	Secretary/Treasure
Kelly Christopherson	Member
Ted Haug	Member
Charlotte D. Henley	Member
Brad Letcher	Member

Table 1: People's Transit Current Board of Directors



People’s Transit has contracts with a large number of public and private agencies and facilities in the Huron area, verifying a significant amount of coordination already in existence in the community. The following is a list of those agencies:

**Pre-Schools**

- Christian Learning Center
- Holy Trinity Pre-school
- James Valley Christian Pre-school
- Kindernook Pre-school
- Nordby Center for Recreation
- YWCA Pre-school

**Churches**

- American Lutheran Church
- Assembly of God Church
- First Methodist Church
- Huron Christian Church

Mt Olivet Church of Huron  
Mt. Calvary Pre-school  
Our Saviors Church  
Riverview Methodist Church

**Healthcare Facilities**

Horizon Health Care  
SunQuest Healthcare Center  
Huron Regional Medical Center

**Senior Living**

Country View Estates  
Foster Grandparents  
StoneyBrook Suites  
SunQuest Village  
Violet Tschetter Memorial Home

**Miscellaneous**

M & M Daycare  
Pro PT

Over the years, People's Transit has grown to be a very well respected and needed public service in the community. It has been expressed that many individuals and agencies have grown to depend on it for their mobility needs.

## CHAPTER FOUR: TRANSIT & OTHER COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

People's Transit is the primary source of general public transportation in the area. The service is available in the greater Huron area. People's Transit operates 7 days a week providing local as well as limited regional services in the area. Other neighboring transit systems include Wheels and Meals operated in Miller, SD; Inter-Lakes Community Action in Madison; Palace Transit in Mitchell, SD; Spink County Public Transit in Redfield, SD; Sanborn Community Transit in Woonsocket, SD; and Brookings area transit authority in Brookings, SD.



Brookings



Redfield



Mitchell

There is no fixed route or rail service in the area. However there is an inter-city connection with Jefferson Bus Lines. Whenever there are passengers going away or coming to Huron, People's Transit travels to Mitchell to connect with Jefferson Bus lines.

Those groups within Huron that have local human service transportation programs include:

- The Center for Independent Living in Huron with 20 vehicles;
- The Christian Learning Center Pre-School has one older and unreliable school bus;
- The Sunquest Health Center has one older vehicle; and
- The local Department Veteran's Affairs (DAV) office has a van.



Prior to the submission of this plan, there was a taxi service in Huron known as Heidi's Hauling (<http://heidishauling.com>). The service was generally available twenty-four hours a day from Monday to Sunday. The in-town posted rate was \$6.00 per person. The out of town rates were \$1.50 a mile and only charged one way. As an example, a trip to Mitchell cost \$75; a trip to Sioux Falls was \$180.

As mentioned above, there is a Department of Veterans Affairs' van available in Huron for veterans traveling to the Sioux Falls VA Hospital. The service relies on other local veterans who volunteer as drivers. However, the van is not lift-equipped and not convenient for veterans confined to wheelchairs.

## CHAPTER FIVE: COMMUNITY SERVICE AREA AND DEMOGRAPHICS

### PEOPLE'S TRANSIT SERVICE AREA

People's Transit service area includes Huron and of Beadle County. Presently most of the service is in the city of Huron. Below is a map showing Huron centrally located in the county and the other small communities located within the county and surrounding area. About 98 percent of the total rides given by People's Transit is given to resident of the City of Huron.



Figure 2: People's Transit Service Area – City of Huron and Beadle County

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 1,265 square miles of which 1,259 square miles is land and 6 square miles (0.48%) is water. AS is shown in the map above, there are 4 major highways serving Beadle County, they are US highways 14 and 281; and South Dakota highways 28 and 37.

### COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

As of 2011, the Huron population stood at 12,607. The population growth since year 2000 amounted to a gain of six percent (+6.0%). The City of Huron lies within Beadle County in the central-eastern part of the State of South Dakota.



Figure 3: City of Huron Urban Area

In July 2011, Beadle County had a county population of 17,550 (70% urban, 30% rural). Huron roughly accounted for 71.8% of the county population. With 70% of the county's population in the Huron urbanized area, it follows that the current People's Transit ridership within City of Huron is 98% of total annual ridership

While the overall population growth is steady, but relatively slow, the rate of growth among seniors is projected to grow in line with national trends as "America continues to gray." That is those 65 and older will grow 4.25 times greater as a group than the overall population composed of those under age 65.

The Huron population had a statistically evenly split of males and females. As of 2011, the male population stood at 6,233 (49.4%) and a female population of 6,374 (50.6%). The median resident age at the time was 39.8 years versus a state median age of 40.7 years.

In terms of the local economy, Huron's estimated median household income in 2009 was \$39,934 (it was \$29,097 in 2000 = 37.2% increase), where the state's median household income equaled \$45,043 in 2009. The estimated per capita income in Huron for 2009 amounted to \$23,892. As measured in March of 2012, the cost of living index in Beadle County was a low 80.1 as compared to the U.S. average.

According to the latest census data, the industries providing employment in the sectors of education, health and social services was about 23.7%, while manufacturing accounted for 12.7% of all employment. The type of workers by payee was (1) 73% private wage or salary; (2) 14% government; (3) 12% self-employed, not incorporated; 1% unpaid family work.

## CHAPTER 6: PEOPLE'S TRANSIT SERVICES

Today People's Transit is a demand response service, which requires a potential rider ~~needs~~ to pre-register for service and to call at least the day before to schedule a ride. People's Transit operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm; Saturday from 8:00 am to 7:30 pm; and on Sunday from 8:00 am to 1:30 pm. People's Transit was established to serve Huron and surrounding communities. The fleet inventory includes a variety of 23 vehicles including accessible buses and vans to better serve its customers.

Like most other public transit systems around the country, People's Transit's service is state and federally subsidized. For this reason, they can provide passenger trips for an individual fare that is much lower than the actual fully-burdened cost of performing that one-way trip. The fare structure for in-town rides is as follows:

- Student fares are: \$2.00 per trip;
- Senior fares are: Donation per trip;
- General Public fares are: \$2.75 per trip; and
- Fare Cards are: \$27.50 for a 10 punch ticket or \$55.00 for a 20 punch fare card.

Personal care attendants (PCAs) or escorts are persons who are directly involved in the assistance of their attendee and do not pay for their rides. (In accordance with ADA, PCAs cannot be required to directly assist in the transportation of those they care for.) Any other person riding with the passenger will be considered a guest and will be required to pay the full fare.

All People's Transit trips are scheduled with a 15 minute pick-up window. This means a vehicle is considered "on-time" when it arrives either 15 minutes before, or 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time. Example: if your pick-up time is 9:00 am, the bus could arrive between 8:45 and 9:15 and be considered on -time.

People's Transit also provides medical out-of-town trips to larger medical facilities in Sioux Falls and Aberdeen. Many of these trips are paid for by Medicaid and its provisions for medical-related transportation. People's Transit is a certified Medicaid provider.

People's Transit also serves as a transportation link for Jefferson Bus Lines and its regional system. Passengers looking to travel anywhere in the country via intercity bus service may either call People's Transit's scheduling and dispatch center to book Jefferson Bus Line service to make a connection or look up on the internet (<http://www.jeffersonlines.com>) to schedule a ride traveling from their home to a desired destination around the country.

People's Transit follows the federal guidelines regarding non-competition with private industry. Therefore, all rides must be scheduled at least a day in advance so as not to compete with the local taxi in Huron called Heidi's Haulers. People's Transit utilizes computer-assisted scheduling and dispatch software to improve efficiencies in scheduling and tracking all rides. The night

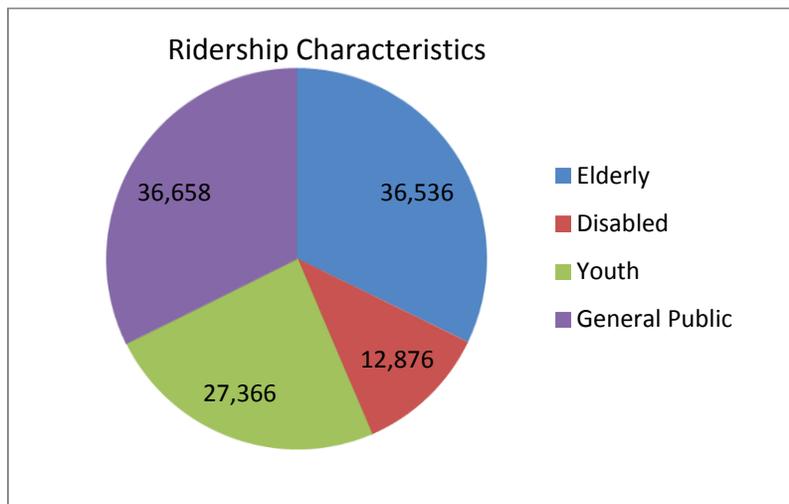
before rides are dispatched out, the computer system develops the routes, which improves the overall effectiveness of the service. All vehicles are equipped with two-way communications for constant location monitoring and operation effectiveness.

People’s Transit is a nonprofit organization operating with a seven (7) member board of directors. The board is a policy board and addresses all policies and budget matters regarding People's Transit. This policy board also hires the Executive Director or contracts with a management firm, who then is charged with carrying out the wishes/duties of the board of directors. Currently the board has entered into a contract with River Cities Public Transit of Pierre to manage the operation. Mr. Ron Baumgart, Executive Director of River Cities Public Transit, and his support staff are managing the day-to-day operations in Huron.

People’s Transit provides rides to anyone from the general public who calls and schedules a ride in advance. The following is the system’s ridership characteristics reported for 2012:

**Table 2: Ridership Characteristics**

Elderly.....	36,536 (32.2%)
Disabled.....	12,876 (11.4%)
Youth.....	27,366 (24.1%)
General Public.....	<u>36,658 (32.3%)</u>
Total.....	113,436



**Figure 4: Size of Each Ridership Characteristic Group**

As illustrated in Figure 4, disabled passengers do not account for a high per cent of ridership but a great deal of emphasis is placed on providing them with good service.

Every rider on People’s Transit fits into one of the above categories. The elderly and the general public are about the same size in terms of ridership. However some passengers may fit into more than one category. For example, a senior citizen who is also disabled can fit into two categories.

Another useful planning statistic is Trip Purpose or Ride Type. The following are Trip Purpose or Ride Type the statistics for 2012

Table 3: Trip Purpose/Ride Type

Education	18,332 (24.5%)
Employment	17,746 (23.7%)
Medical	15,994 (21.4%)
Social/Recreational:	14,312 (19.1%)
Shopping	5,235 (7.0%)
Other	2,801 (3.7%)
Nutrition	<u>489 (0.6%)</u>
Total Recorded	74,909

As indicated above, the top three trip purposes are for education, employment and medical. Social and recreational trips are not far behind at 14,312 (or 19.1%) for the year 2012. The chart below shows the percentages for the various trips purposes and the top four ranges from 19 to just over 24 percent for each.

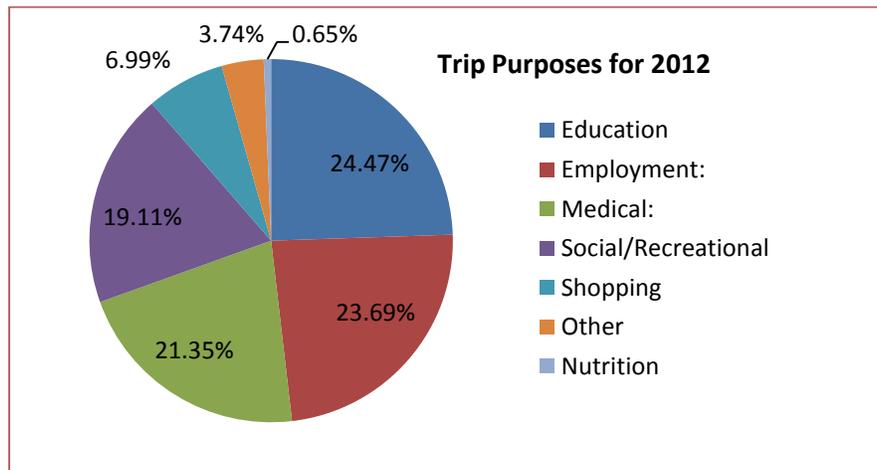


Figure 5: Percent of trips by purpose

The following chart shows the many locations around Huron that are the most frequent destinations for People’s Transit passengers. This information is based on a one month sample during the school year. The Center for Independence is the most frequented destination; and

there are more trips for local shopping, primarily to the Huron K-Mart and Wal-Mart. Many of the destinations seem to center around the life of senior citizens and people with disabilities.

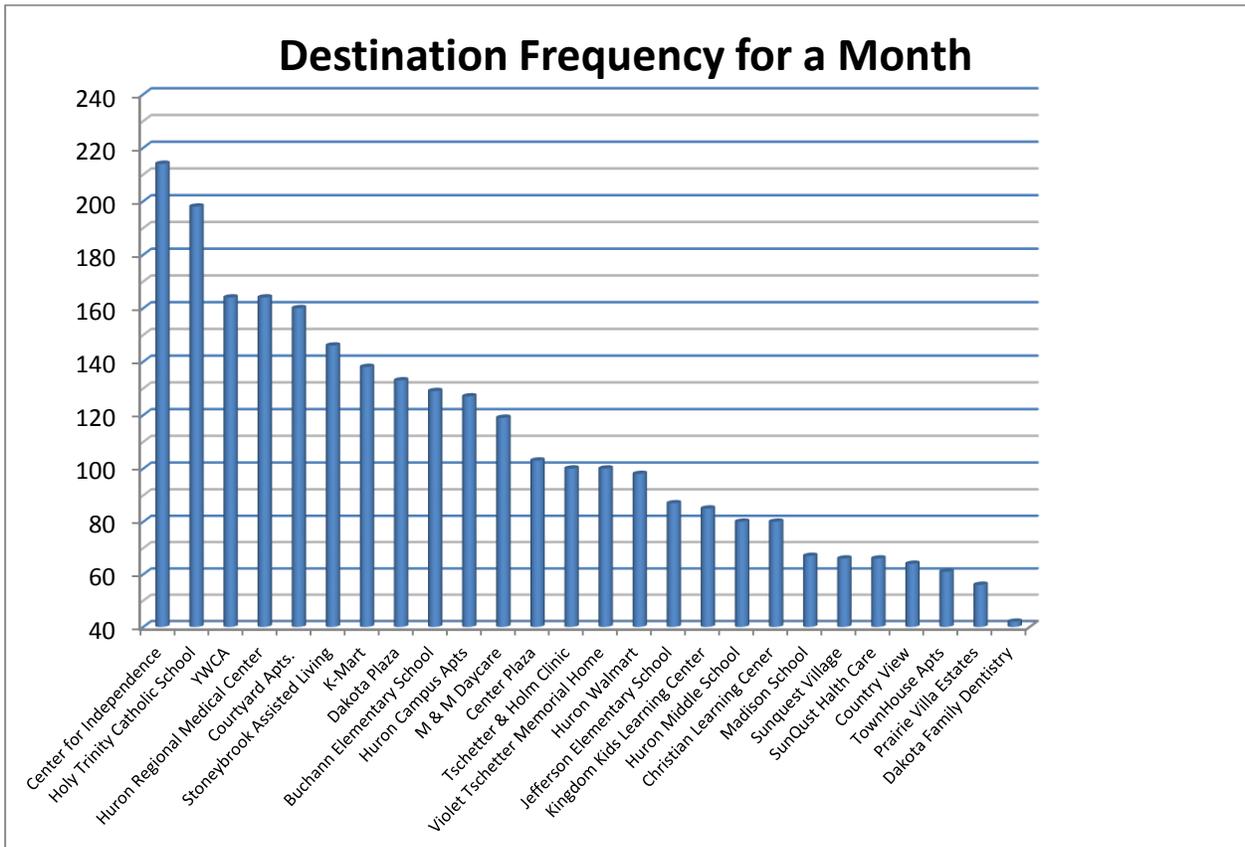


Figure 6: Major Destinations

## CHAPTER SEVEN: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Rather than the use of a written or telephone community-wide survey, the consultants elected to use a personal interview method to determine the level of unmet transportation need in the community. The approach was approved by the People's Transit board. Personal Interview surveys are recommended when the desired sample consists of respondents in a very specific target population. Interviewers then have the ability to extensively probe respondents on their impressions of a service or product, as well as, observe individual or group behavior. This method allows for the exchange of material and/or information between respondent and interviewer.\*

\* <http://knowledge-base.supersurvey.com/in-person-vs-web-surveys.htm>

### ASSESSMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICE LEVEL OF SENIORS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND LOW INCOME

To evaluate the transportation needs in Beadle County, a comparison was made against statewide data. The population for Beadle County in South Dakota is 17,398 as of the 2010 census. Of that population, 17 percent or 2,957 residents were over the age of 65; while 24.5 percent or 4,262 were under the age of 18. As was noted in a previous chapter, there were 36,536 senior passenger trips in 2012\*. That works out to 12.35 trips per capita per year for residents of Beadle County. For the same year, there were 418,358 senior trips provided statewide and the statewide senior population is 119,684; and that works out to 3.49 trips per capita for the state of South Dakota. Therefore, by comparison People's Transit is doing very well.

The same analysis can be made for youth trips in Beadle County versus the statistics of South Dakota. In Huron County, there are 4,262 youths in the general population; and there were 19,994 passenger-trips provided or approximately 4.69 trips per capita. At the state level, there are 199,474 youth that were provided with 479,143 trips or approximately 2.4 trips per capita. Again, looks very good for Beadle County.

There is data for statewide and regional county populations over age of 5 that are disabled. The statewide number of people with a disability in South Dakota is 100,340. This state data reflects that statewide the disabled population is 10.3 percent of the whole population\*\*. This yields a ride figure of 3.88 rides per capita. The same source reports 14.9 percent of the population for thirteen counties surrounding and including Beadle County. According the Quick Fact in the US census, there is a 17,398 population in Beadle count, including a 7.8 percent ~~are~~ under the age of 5. This leaves 16,041 of population over 5 years old and therefore 14.9 percent who claim a disability. This then relates to 2,390 disabled living in Beadle County. This yields a ratio per capita of 8.95 or over double the state wide ratio.

Figure 3, the chart below captures these comparisons for easy comparison of the numbers. This seems to indicate that the residents on average in Beadle county are using transit services and receiving more rides per capita than the state as a whole.

\* <http://www.sddot.com/transportation/transit/docs/FY12StatReport.pdf>

\*\* [http://www.disabilityplanningdata.com/site/state\\_population\\_table.php?state=southdakota](http://www.disabilityplanningdata.com/site/state_population_table.php?state=southdakota)

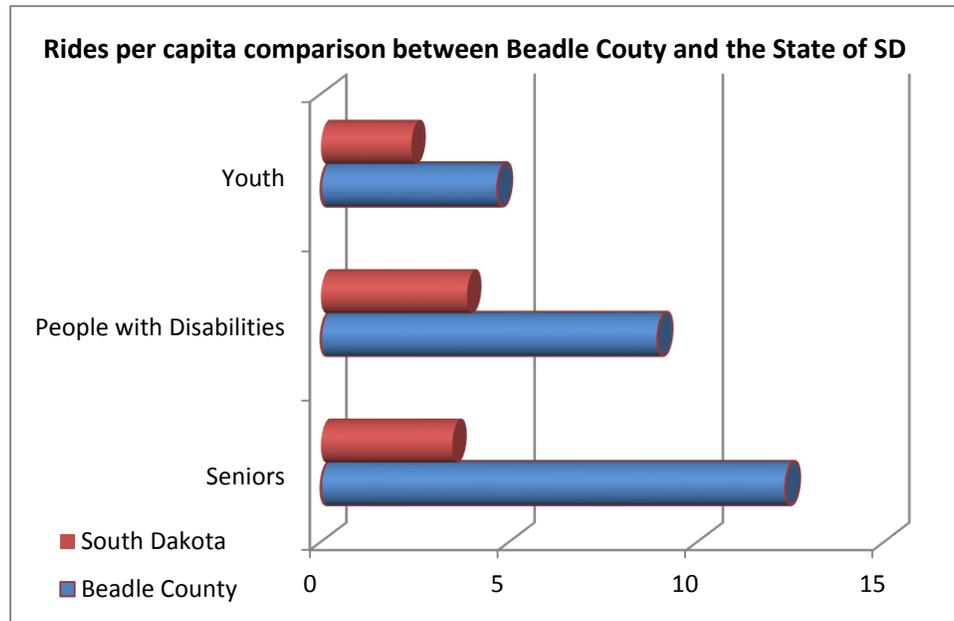


Figure 6: Per Capita Transit Ridership

## PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

During the week of July 15<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> the consultants were in Huron conducting interviews with many agencies and user groups that use People’s Transit. During the course of three days, the consultants met individually with each People’s Transit board member and attended a board meeting to review the preliminary findings. Generally, everyone who was interviewed was very complimentary of the transit service and said the community would be at a big loss without it. The local individuals that were interviewed are listed in Table 4, below.

One complaint that was shared by various interviewees was the inability to receive same day service from People’s Transit. The South Dakota DOT has established a statewide policy stating that transit systems cannot provide same-day in communities that have taxi service; as that is viewed as direct competition with the local taxi company. As of this report, there is some doubt that the existing local taxi company remains in operation since their vehicle fleet has been reposed by the lender.

Another concern was along the lines of personal services. Sometimes residents in nursing homes may not see or be told that the bus is in front of the building waiting for them. Then after 5 minutes, the bus will leave the facility; and the potential passenger doesn't get a ride. Transit service is ruled by an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guideline that says the bus needs to wait 5 minutes for a passenger. This is known as dwell time. If a passenger does not board or is visibly on the way to the bus within the dwell time, the ride is logged as a no-show. People's Transit buses are on a schedule and when a bus has to wait too long for one passenger, it causes the bus to be late for a number of other passengers that area scheduled to be picked up by that bus. The remedy for this situation is more of a communication issue than a coordination issue. The solution for this problem varies from nursing home to nursing home due to the structure of the building, location of parking lots or roads that serve the facilities. Rides for senior citizens or people with disabilities that are pre-scheduled are almost never denied, because People's Transit is not running that close to full capacity. If they call and schedule a ride in advance, that person will receive that ride.

The other issue noted is the large Karen population, which creates a communication barrier with transit management and drivers. The Karen's are mostly from the Southeast Asia country of Thailand and they are coming to Huron with very little understanding of the English language. They come to the community with very little belongings looking for work at Dakota Provisions. There is significant transportation needs for these new arrivals to the community. Nevertheless, with employment comes income; and many of these immigrants are now been able to purchase cars and homes.

The table below lists the individuals that were interviewed as part of the development process in discovering unmet needs and other coordination ideas

**Table 4: Local Individuals Interviewed for the Plan**

<b>Individual</b>	<b>Represented Agency</b>
Kelly Christopherson	PT Board member
Dave Wright	PT Board member
Tom Hansen	Beadle County Commissioner
Joyce Borah	Christian Learning Center
Rhonda Hanson	PT Board member
Charlotte D. Hanley	PT Board Member
Trisha Parkhard	Country View Estates
Kayla	YWCA Pre-school
Ken Linblad	Veterans Service Office, Beadle Cty
Stephanie Purintun	StoneyBrook Suites
Paul Aylward	Huron City Mayor
Gail Robeson	Huron Regional Medical Center
Brad Letcher	PT Board Member
Ted Haug	PT Board Member

Kim Smith	PT Board Member
Jessica Spensor	Violet Tschetter Memorial Home
Peggy Woolridge/Erica McLaughlin	Huron Chamber of Commerce
Rick Benson	Beadle County Commissioner
Michelle Schoefelder	Holy Trinity Pre-school
Kenneth Rutledge & Mark Heuston	Dakota Provisions

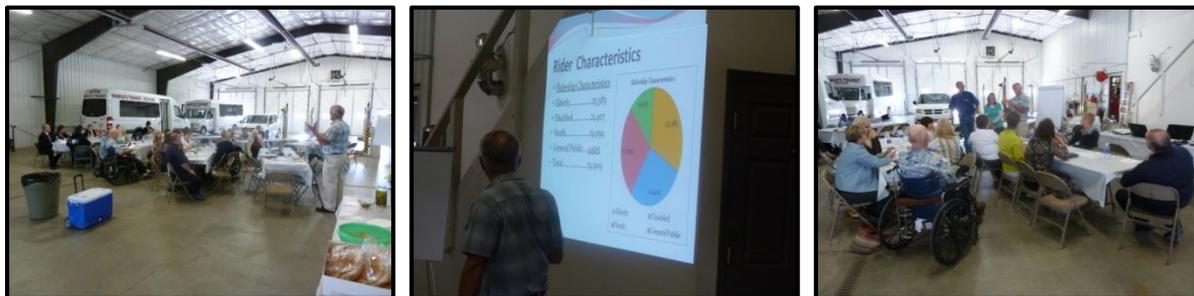
**Table 4: Interview Participants**

**PUBLIC INPUT MEETING**

A coordinated transportation public meeting was held in Huron on October 9, 2013 to receive public participation input into the coordinated transportation plan and to discuss the benefits and challenges for People’s Transit in Huron. The participants are listed below in Table 4, which includes several public and non-profit agencies, users and regional public transit service providers.

As indicated in Table 5, a number of actual People's Transit users were in attendance. They mentioned that their purpose in attendance was to express their support for the service and its continuation. In fact, one of those in attendance expressed his personal support and appreciation by making a large donation to People’s Transit solidifying his support.

Appendix A includes a copy of the meeting announcement flyer that was posted around town and sent directly to several agencies and individuals. Included in Appendix B is an article about the People’s Transit operation printed in “The Plainsman” a local newspaper. This article was a part of the promotion campaign for encouraging the public to attend. Appendix C is the actual sign-in sheet for the public meeting.



**Huron Coordinated Transportation Public Meeting, October 9, 2013**

**Table 5: The groups represented at the public meeting included:**

- Beadle and Spink Enterprise Community (BASEC)
- Brookings Area Transit Authority (BATA)
- Courtyard Senior Residence
- DeSmet Development Corporation
- Huron Schools

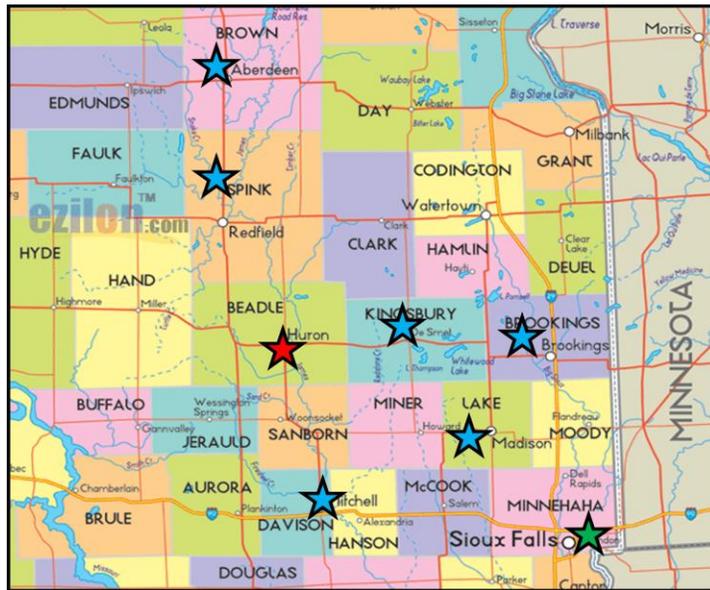
Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota, Refugee and Immigration Services  
Palace Transit  
Riders and supporters  
South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation  
South Dakota Towns and Townships  
Spink County Transit  
Sun Quest Healthcare Center  
United Way Heartland Region Preschool Partnership  
Violet Tschetter Memorial Home



Huron Coordinated Transportation Public Meeting, October 9, 2013

**The major** contributions made by the public included the following items:

- There is large community support for People’s Transit by both user’s of the service and local agencies;
- The senior population within the City of Huron and Beadle County will continue to grow, as well as, the potential demand for transit service;
- There is a lack of information about the community transportation service provided by People’s Transit among outlying communities and county residents outside of Huron;
- Increase public information and marketing of People’s Transit service within the Huron urban area and the outlying communities of Beadle County;
- There is great potential for coordinating with other public transit services in surrounding counties of east South Dakota, including but not limited to Brookings Area Transit Authority (Brookings); Palace Transit (Mitchell); Sioux Area Metro (Sioux Falls); and Spink County Public Transit (Redfield);
- Seek coordinated veterans transportation with the Veteran’s Administration Office of Huron by providing the option of People’s Transit’s shuttle to Mitchell and the link with Jefferson Lines service to Sioux Falls;
- Continue support and coordination of community transportation service with the center for Independence;
- Continue to reach out to the Karen community to meet their transportation needs;
- Continue to utilize local taxi cab service for select trips;
- Improve system efficiency for People’s Transit with mobility management techniques; and
- Continue to keep vehicles in a state of good repair for safety and efficiency reasons.



**Figure 7: Public Transit Services within the Eastern Region**

## CHAPTER 8: ALTERNATIVE AND PRIORITIZED MODELS AND STRATEGIES

The major recommendation of this project can be summed up in the adoption by People's Transit of a mobility management strategy to local and regional transit service for Huron and Beadle County. In its simplest definition, mobility management considers a customer's entire trip and not only by the parameters of a single local transportation service. Both internal and regional passenger trips define the transit needs of the community and its immediate environs.

### PROPOSED STRATEGIES



While there are very few other community transportation service providers in Beadle County and the City of Huron for People's Transit to coordinate direct service delivery with, there remain numerous opportunities to attain coordinated transportation through mobility management and other strategies. The recommended strategies are outlined below in an action oriented format.

#### **Mobility Management** (See Appendix D)(Prioritized by the Board of Directors-12/6/2013)

- 1) Develop and implement an expanded public relations, public information and marketing efforts for People's Transit service, including to outlying communities and towns in Beadle County.
- 2) Prepare and continue to provide People's Transit service brochures, fact sheets, marketing flyers, a rider's guide in English, Spanish and Karen, information packets for contract agencies and potential funding sponsors.
- 3) Provide the Daily Plainsman newspaper with additional materials and/or draft articles on People's Transit service for additional outreach to existing and potential riders.
- 4) Make presentations about People's Transit to local service organizations and agencies for support and funding opportunities.
- 5) Continue and actively participate in the Dakota Transit Association (DTA) to develop and maintain professional network.
- 6) Continued efforts to identify and define unmet or underserved transit needs among immigrant communities, employers and social service organizations.
- 7) Continue referrals to transit users on any available transportation options, including regional services.
- 8) Develop an on-site transportation coordination support program for major destinations:

- a. Improve customer service and system efficiency by providing service training to a designated on-site transportation specialist or coordinator with major contracted agencies.
- b. Include training about People's Transit service, such as:
  - i. Travel rule and requirements
  - ii. Travel tips
  - iii. Travel opportunities
  - iv. Direct contact customer service for improved response to missed-trips, no-shows, scheduled pick-ups and drops
  - v. Emergency procedures and communications
  - vi. Provision of a detailed rider's guide for reference

9) Designate a lead dispatcher as a customer service coordinator.

**Transportation Coordination (Prioritized by the Board of Directors via email; completed 12/20/2013)**

1. Existing contract coordinated transportation:
  - a. Continue providing coordination and transit with Huron contracted agencies and the limited service providers within Huron. Include improving communications and customer service with the local contracted agencies.
  - b. Improve upon coordination with the Huron Office of Veterans Administration in the transport of local veterans to the VA facilities in Sioux Falls with their volunteer drivers. Explore the feasibility of offering defensive driving training to the volunteer drivers, as well as, passenger assistance and wheelchair securement training. Examine providing the VA service with reservation and trip scheduling services and coordination with other regional transit systems. Share back-up and emergency resources if feasible.
  - c. Continue to work with the local taxi service on selected trips and back-up services.
  - d. Continue to support applications for FTA Section 5310 capital requests by local human service agencies.
  - e. Investigate employer-sponsored People's Transit route-deviation bus routes, such as service to the food processing plants in the county (e.g. Dakota Provisions) or vanpool ride-sharing for group work trips and migrant farm labor trips.
2. Continue open dialogue with several community organizations interested in transportation, including but not limited to the Heartland Region of United Way, Huron Chamber of Commerce, BASEC, parochial pre- schools, the City of Huron, Beadle County, major employers, the VA, and the various contracted agencies.
3. Offer planning and coordination support to other private-non-profit human and social service organizations interested in the provision of community transportation in Beadle County as they might develop.

4. Regional Community Coordinated Transportation:
  - a. Enhance service coordination with other services in the greater region to and from major medical and governmental services nodes, such as Sioux Falls and Aberdeen. Establish coordinated trip reservations, dispatching, land line communications and shared-trips to such nodes.
  - b. Work-out mutual assistance agreements with other transit services in the region for emergencies, road calls and radio transmission back-up. In the event of any minor or major emergency, the coordinating regional providers can call upon the local operator for access to their support systems.
  - c. Coordinate with the major service node destination operators, Sioux Area Metro and Aberdeen Ride-Line, to allow extend service within their communities for Huron riders to travel throughout their service areas on the local system, whether by coordinated schedules, fares, discounts or travel information.
  - d. Examine other potential major service node service travel options beyond Huron and Beadle County.
5. Given that the current taxi service has gone out of business and should no other taxi service be established in Huron, People's Transit should examine the feasibility of providing same-day on-demand transportation to the general public and as back-up to the regular POT1 service.



Original Concept

### People's Transit Overall Service

- Continue to make regular service performance reports to the Board of Directors of People's Transit and include coordination and mobility management efforts along with the monthly and to-date performance and cost metrics.
- Make similar reports as informational items to Heartland Region of United Way, the City of Huron and Beadle County, especially on ridership pertaining to their constituents and citizens to illustrate the potential need for community transportation.
- Continue to monitor, identify and seek to resolve system operating parameters and issues that pose barriers to effective use of People's Transit service, such as the funding of some return trips that are medical in nature.
- Investigate a volunteer transportation service component for People's Transit beyond that provided by the local VA office. Utilize the People's Transit's volunteer component in the format of a mileage reimbursement

program to meet more specialized needs for frail elderly and severely disabled riders who require escort through-the-door service and/or companion assistance.

- Continue to maintain safety as the first priority of People's Transit by implementing the safety requirements of MAP-21 in conjunction with employees, customers, agencies and the general public. Implement safety communications and education programs for customers, personal care attendants and caregivers.
- Continue to seek federal grant matching funds to promote mobility management, transportation coordination and overall service efficiency and effectiveness.
- Continue to participate in Section 5310 capital, operating and maintenance funding according to a People's Transit capital plan in compliance with the "state of good repair" provisions of MAP-21.
- Continue to utilize scheduling and dispatching software to increase our efficiency of services, employees, equipment and disposable goods. The software companies we use have annual usage and maintenance fees. People's Transit will pursue federal and state grant opportunities to fund this, as well as fundraise locally to plan for payment of these expenses.

## **FUNDING STRATEGIES**

People's Transit currently relies largely on funding under the Department of Transportation, including 5309, 5310 and 5311 programs and state funding. This plan focuses on utilization of 5310 funds from Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities grant program, FTA Section 5310. Farebox revenue consists of paid fares. Revenue from service contracts and donations are leveraged as matching funds towards the Section 5310 grant.

People's Transit is in need of generating additional matching funds to better utilize opportunities for access to federal transit grants. People's Transit's management should actively continue to seek both local matching funds and federal grants. The funding strategies that should be considered by People's Transit are as follows:

- **MAP-21 and State Funds:**
  - Continue to seek particular FTA programs, including capital, operating, safety-security, state-of-good repair and planning.
  - Continue to explore possible grant programs from the State of South Dakota in such grants as workforce development, rural health and community development.

- Matching Federal Funds:
  - Continue to maintain and develop new service contracts that generate matching funds;
  - Continue to seek additional contract opportunities with other local human service agencies that receive United Way funding assistance and any new community developments, such as the potential for senior and disabled charters exempted from the FTA Charter Rules with the various non-contracted human services organizations that are listed in Table 6.
  - Seek both city and county funding participation, while demonstrating the community transportation needs and the unmet transportation needs in the Beadle County, as well as, the economic benefit that People's Transit provides to the area;
  - Examine the feasibility of selling advertising in the form of logos and wraps on People's Transit vehicles;
  - Seek support for city and county funding from the Huron Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Huron Development Corporation, the DeSmet Development Corporation, major employers and similar groups with a local economic interest; and
  - Work closely with United Way of the Heartland Region, a current funding partner of People's Transit, to identify and support efforts for national foundation grants, perhaps to help reach outlying communities and towns in Beadle County or increase service for medical trips to Sioux Falls or Aberdeen.
  
- Non-Governmental Funding:
  - Approach and make presentations to local service organizations and clubs for funding in terms of service contracts to purchase blocks of rider tickets or passes to the needy or to resolve certain return trip issues. Include the following organizations:
    - Huron Noon Lions
    - Eyeopener Lions Club of Huron
    - Knights of Columbus
    - Fair City Sertoma Club
    - MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers)
    - Kiwanis Club of Huron
    - Huron Rotary Club
    - American Legion Post 7
    - James Valley Shrine Club
  - Consider a “recommended donation amount” for senior riders; and
  - Investigate the feasibility of a planned giving program to support both matching fund efforts and direct application in People's Transit service.

Table 6: United Way Heartland Region Service Partners

Central Prairie American Red Cross  
Beadle County Humane Society  
Boy Scouts Of America  
Community Counseling  
Cornerstones Career Learning Center  
Girl Scouts-Dakota Horizons  
Huron Area Senior Center  
Hospice  
Huron Advocacy Program  
Nordby Center  
The Salvation Army  
Hope Therapeutic Riding Center  
YWCA  
Beadle County Dive Team  
Huron Wellness Team  
Lutheran Social Services  
CCCS/Refugee Immigration  
Huron Adult Day Services  
Huron Habitat for Humanity  
Huron Community Campus  
Jan Manolis Safe Center  
Huron Hockey Assoc.  
Delta Dental Bus/Kiwanis Partnership  
Day of Caring  
Dolly Parton Imagination Library  
Huron Backpack Program  
Beadle County Volunteer Program  
James Valley Housing  
Money Management  
Munce's Math Nights  
Preschool Partnership  
SD State Fair  
Huron Youth Leadership Council  
Volunteers In Education  
Huron Backpack Program  
Foster Grandparent Program



## Appendix A



# People's Transit

## *Putting People in Motion*



**We're having a public forum for coordination  
and you're invited.**

**Where:** At People's Transit building, located at:  
120 Wyoming Avenue SW in Huron

**When:** Wednesday, October 9, 2013

**Time:** 11:30 am till 1:30 pm  
BBQs, chips and beverages will be served

**Purpose:** This is your opportunity to come and share you're  
thoughts and feelings about the services transit is  
accomplishing in your community.

**Your input can make a difference!**



## Appendix B

### **“People’s Transit to host forum today; set goals”**

**The Daily Plainsman**

By Shannon Marvel, October 7, 2013

For those within the Huron community that are unable to drive themselves from point A to point B, People's Transit is there to get them to their destination. From the elderly who need transportation to medical appointments to youths who need a ride to swimming lessons, all benefit from the public transportation system. The key to the success of public transportation is the working relationship between different organizations within the community, ensuring that all destinations are met efficiently and timely. "Transportation coordination provides more rides to more consumers through cooperation, communication, and sharing resources," said Gary Hegland, a consultant for River Cities Public Transit.

"The idea is that various agencies work together to provide the best possible service for the least cost by sharing resources. We're looking for ideas on how agencies might work together better to more effectively serve the resident of Huron and Beadle County."

In an effort to accomplish these goals, People's Transit will be holding a public forum on Wednesday, October 9, for coordination where the public is invited to share their thoughts and feelings on the service while enjoying BBQs, chips, and beverages. The forum will go from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the People's Transit building, located at 120 Wyoming Avenue SW. The public transportation service has already reached out to businesses and members within the community. "We have already been around town and interviewed many agencies and we heard many positive comments," said Hegland. "Some of them include; transit allows individuals to age longer in their homes, assist parents with providing youth transportation for their youth to get to their destinations, people with disabilities can get rides to work, seniors can go to medical appointments, and social events. Transit mobilizes a large number of residents in Huron and Beadle County."

The input of community members and agencies can help funding be concisely divvied out. "Activities identified in the region’s coordination plan can access funds in the program to carry out the planned activity," said Hegland. "So any ideas that surface on Wednesday, and after accessing their feasibility they look achievable will be incorporated into the plan and hopefully get funded. If they get funded they can be accomplished. However, we don’t know how many total dollars the state will get next year and that is always a barrier. Nevertheless, the first step is incorporating the idea into a coordination plan."

The forum can be utilized as a place to voice opinions as well as ask questions to gain a better understanding of the services. As People's Transit stated, "Your input can make a difference!"

**Appendix C**  
**Sign-In Sheet for Public Meeting of October 9, 2013**  
**People's Transit Operations Facility, Huron**

COORDINATION MEETING PEOPLE'S TRANSIT - OCTOBER 9, 2013

Name	Organization	Phone	E-mail Address
Lisa Manning	Spink County Transit	472-1552	lisamanning@nvc.net
John Jensen	Palace Transit	605-945-8440	jhanson@cityofmitchell.org
Markot Gillette	BASEC	460-1769	markot.gillette@basec.org
Amy Hofer	BASEC	626-6165	amy.hofer@basec.org
Brenda Schweitzer	BATA	692-5416	bschweitzer@brookingsareatransit.com
Carol Harms	Huron, SD	352-3501	
Maya An Wyle	Huron	432-213-6244	mayawyle@hotmail.com
Dawn Marshall	Huron Schools	605-370-6114	dawn_marshall@k12.sd.us
Rita Anderson	DoSnot Development Corp	605-854-9011	rita@dosnotsouthdakota.org
EARL NORDBY	USER	352-5222	en335@midco.net
Jessica Spencer	Violet Tschetter Memorial	352-8533	jessica.spencer@redwoodcc.com
Kinnet Perryman	USER	352-2801	
Dorothy Dobs	user - van/bus	252-1761	
Robin Shoultz	SD Dept of Labor & Regulation	353-7155	robin.shoultz@state.sd.us
Neal Cause	LSS RTT	554-0460	Neal.Cause@lsssd.org
M. W. Y. Jangle	Huron - SV	352-2471	
Laurie Solem	St. August Healthcare Center	352-8471	laurie.solem@sunguesthealthcare.com
Mike Mullaney	Brookings Area Transit Authority	695-6596	MMullaney@BrookingsAreaTransit.com
Salma M. Backs	Bus rider	352-9622	
Tara de Long	Bus rider	352-5958	
Daisi Zaleep	Bus rider	352-1395	
Dee Forrest	interested party	350-4829	
Dan THADEN	" "	352-0737	
Kate Stahl	Bus USER - Courtyard	352-9489	
Diane Cordaro	SD Towns + Townships	353-1439	sclatat@sdtownships.com
Rhonda Kludt	United Way Heartland Region / Preschool Partnership	352-3537	rkludt@nur.midco.net

## **Appendix D**

### **Mobility Management Concept**

Mobility management is an innovative approach for managing and delivering coordinated transportation services to customers, including older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes. Changes in demographics, shifts in land use patterns, and the creation of new and different job markets require new approaches for providing transportation services, particularly for customers with special needs. Mobility management focuses on meeting individual customer needs through a wide range of transportation options and service providers. It also focuses on coordinating these services and providers in order to achieve a more efficient transportation service delivery system for public policy makers and taxpayers who underwrite the cost of service delivery.

Mobility management underscores the importance of service advocacy as a way to improve public transportation management and delivery. A mobility manager acts as a travel agent/service coordinator to seek the most effective means for meeting an individual's transportation needs. Transit agencies generally focus on the direct provision of services.

#### **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION EDUCATION**

Mobility management can help take the “scary” out of public transportation. Many people needing to use public transportation for the first time find that they don't know where to start or what to do. Schuyler County Transit offers free travel training to groups or individuals who would like to learn more about public transportation.

#### **IDENTIFY GAPS IN TRANSPORTATION SERVICE AND CREATE SOLUTIONS**

Mobility management helps to determine where transportation service does not exist and is needed. Creative solutions to address these needs can be created by the collaboration of human service organizations, mobility managers, and service providers. The reporting and data collection efforts of People's Transit need to match the information needs for effective mobility management and coordination planning.

#### **Provide Public Transit Information**

As discussed earlier, mobility management aims to help individuals, human service organizations, employers and the public maximize the benefits of transportation options in their area. The availability of understandable, empathetic and simple transit system information is an important plan strategy for People's Transit.

## Appendix E

### People's Transit Board of Director's Meeting Minute's December 12, 2013

Present: Kelly, Dave, Kim, Ted, Rhonda, Gary, Mayor Aylward, Gary, Shellie, Ron and Jackie

Meeting called to order by Rhonda @ 8:06 am

Old Business

Minutes approved:

Motion made by Dave

Seconded by Kim

Motion carried

Medicaid: Update on status on the overpayment on Medicaid claims, 1<sup>st</sup> payment was made to Department of Social Service's and they set People's Transit up with a 12 month payment plan

Is there a way to training on the guidelines and rule making, Rhonda wants Nikki to review the regulations and processes.

City will be giving \$6,000 for the Fiscal Year 2014, People's need to send a letter/invoice, then the City will make payment.

Steve Charon visiting about extended hours and getting them around town, the Mayor has stated that that he was unsure if a permit was given, the Mayor would double check and get back to us. Taxi service is up and running so People's Transit cannot do same day rides. (At approximately 10:00 am the Mayor called and spoke with Ron, the taxi company is licensed and bonded, so we will speak with the Cab Company and see if we can have an agreement to work possibility with people that have disabilities for same day rides, also look at seeing what other needs we can help out with).

Operating Loan – Bank loan cannot be completed because everything that we have is owned by Federal Transit Administration, we will watch our budget, and stay in balance

Traci with Kinner and Association was here on Monday, there is a balance under Payroll Liabilities approx. \$1,200 balance and it should be looked. Shellie will try to clean up the line items and clean up the savings accounts.

Budget on the state line items, they want our request to match the budget that was approved, and need QuickBooks to match

Approve Financial

Motioned made by Kelly

Seconded by Ted

Motion carried

Bus stop at a red light, there was damaged and had a call that we did not call the parents of the children. Kelly said they do not have a policy but feels the school would call all of the parents.

People's Transit will be having a Christmas Party January 5 @12:30 p.m, we will furnish the meat and potatoes and then employees will bring dishes to pass around. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Tablet issues not recording the correct information, we need to speak with the drivers and dispatchers, trying to get the issues resolved. State paid for the Hybrid screen which keeps all rides on the screen.

Kelly asked about a contract with River Cities Public Transit, will add to the next meeting.

Coordination Plan - discussion

Currently need to work on chapter 8, that has the strategies in there and need to talk about.

Mobility Management put as number one then on page 25, need to add Mitchell to the list.

Page 17 – wording needs to be correct,

Need to read through and need to rank them in the order that the board feels should be.

Went through pages 25 thru 30 and develop the priorities:

#1 – Develop and implement an expanded public relations, public information and marketing efforts for People's Transit service, including to outlying communities and towns in Beadle County.

#2-Prepare and continue to provide People's Transit service brochures, fact sheets, marketing flyers, a rider's guide in English, Spanish and Karan, information packets for contract agencies and potential funding sources.

#3- Provide the Daily Plainsman newspaper with additional materials and/or draft articles on People's Transit service for additional outreach to existing and potential riders.

#4-Make presentations about People's Transit to local service organizations and agencies for support and funding opportunities.

#5- Continue and actively participate in the Dakota Transit Association (DTA) to develop and maintain professional network.

#6

The next section Transportation Coordination decided to have the Board take and email their choices. Will email directly to Gary, and he will compile all of the information, then he will resend out the choices to all the board members.

Motion made to approve the coordination plan  
Motioned made by Kim  
Seconded made by Kelly  
Motion carried

Motion made to adjourn the meeting @ 9:10 am  
**Minutes attested by**

**Jackie Mattheis, Assistant Director**