Marketing Transit Toolkit: Guidance and Tools for Small Agencies

Massachusetts Community Transportation Coordination Conference
May 3, 2016

National RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

FTA U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Agenda

- National RTAP Overview
- Marketing Transit Toolkit
  - Toolkit contents overview
  - Transit marketing basics
  - Marketing strategies
  - Developing a marketing plan
  - Marketing tools
- More on RTAP products
- Questions

National RTAP Overview

National Rural Transit Assistance Program

- Technical assistance center funded by the Federal Transit Administration
- Provides FREE training and technical assistance to rural and tribal transit operators
- Funded by Section 5311 formula program for rural areas
- State RTAP programs vs. National RTAP
- FTA contracts with Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association (NVTMA) in Woburn, MA to run National RTAP

What Does National RTAP Offer for You?

- Comprehensive offering of FREE resources
  - Help you do your job better and manage costs
- One stop for technical assistance products and services
  - If we can't help with your request, we'll connect you with someone who can
- Commitment to innovation
  - Forward-thinking products to address rural transit challenges. You don't have to be a tech expert – know-how and support are provided!

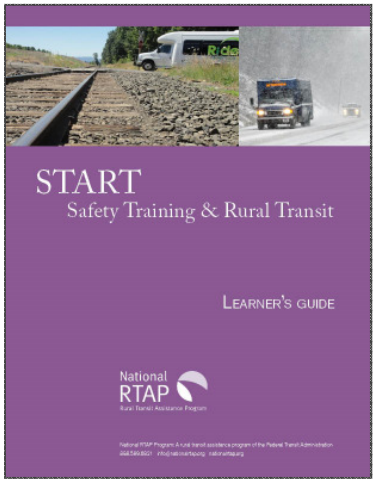
National RTAP Products and Services

- Resource Center – nationalrtap.org, phone, email, chat
- Bi-weekly eNews
- Trainings – physical (ships free) and online
- Web Apps – Website Builder, GTFS, ProcurementPRO
- Online Toolkits – Transit Manager, ADA, Find Anything
- Technical briefs – Oversized Wheelchairs, Grant Writing
- Topic guides and partner resources
- Webinars – Title VI, ADA, D&A, Safety/SMS, Charter Regs
- Peer Calls and Peer Network

Training Modules

Popular Products

- Safety Training and Rural Transit (and START Online – new!)
- Customer Driven Service
- Emergency Procedures
- Problem Passengers
- Scheduling and Dispatching
- Top Shops: Emergency Management in Vehicle Maintenance Facilities (new!)
- 2 the Point Training
- **Available at nationalrtap.org or register at elearning.nationalrtap.org**



Use National RTAP Resources to:

- Create or update a training class
- Answer your questions about rural transit planning, operations, management, or funding
- Incorporate technology into your program or transit system
- Learn about the latest developments in rural transit, including funding opportunities
- Hear knowledgeable speakers without leaving the office
- Get advice from a peer transit provider

Marketing Transit Toolkit

Marketing Transit Toolkit

- Launched in October 2015
- Developed by Selena Barlow of Transit Marketing, LLC with help of National RTAP's Review Board
- Designed for small systems without dedicated marketing staff
- Helpful for any transportation provider looking to revise their marketing plan and strategies
- Available at nationalrtap.org/marketingtoolkit

National RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

Marketing Toolkit
How-To Guide for Marketing Transit
Marketing Overview
Marketing in the Transit Environment
Developing a Marketing Plan
Strategies for Marketing Public Transit
Fundamental Communications
Strategies for Building Awareness, Image, and Support
Targeted Strategies for Generating Ridership
Marketing Plan Workbook
1. Situation Assessment Worksheet
2. Resources Worksheet
3. Goals and Objectives Worksheet
4. Target Markets Worksheet
5. Marketing Strategy Worksheet
Marketing Tools
Photo Library
Graphics Library
Templates
Other Tools
Other Resources

Marketing Transit Toolkit

SHARE

Welcome to the National RTAP Marketing Toolkit

This toolkit is designed as a comprehensive and practical guide for rural and tribal public transportation agencies to develop and implement successful marketing programs for their systems. Transit agencies in smaller communities rely on a relatively small staff to keep the wheels turning. Of necessity, transit managers are involved in virtually all aspects of their organization, supervising day-to-day operations, vehicle maintenance, customer service, financial reporting and more. Some even drive the buses.

The goal of this toolkit is to help transit managers when they need to step into the marketing role by supplying them with the information and tools they need in a straightforward way.

Section 1 — How-To Guide

The first section of the toolkit is a "How-To Guide" for transit marketing and provides directions for identifying and accomplishing marketing goals and objectives.

The How-To Guide begins with an overview of marketing in general, then takes a closer look at marketing's role in the transit environment. Transit marketing must pursue a variety of objectives and address diverse target markets. In addition, it needs to be ongoing — a part of the day-to-day operation of the service.

Toolkit Contents

- How-To Guide
  - Overview of marketing in the transit environment
  - How to develop an effective transit marketing plan
  - Marketing strategies for building awareness, image, support and ridership
- Marketing Plan Workbook
  - Worksheets to help you develop and implement a marketing plan
- Marketing Tools
  - To help you implement the strategies that you identify as right for your system
  - Designed for novice marketers and come with instructions

Transit Marketing Basics

What is Transit Marketing?

Transit marketing:

- Everything an agency does to communicate with its riders, potential riders, and other important stakeholders within the community.

Objectives:

- Build visibility for transit and its role in a community
- Build support among decision makers and tax payers
- Educate potential riders about what the system has to offer
- Generate ridership among those with transportation needs you can meet

Why Market Your System?

- Increase ridership
- Raise awareness of public transit in the community
- Dispel misconceptions – service not just for certain populations
- Develop community partners
- Satisfy funding requirement

Marketing cannot fix poor or inadequate service.
If service falls short — buses break down, schedules are unreliable — or it simply does not meet the needs of the target user, marketing will only make matters worse by offering a promise that the service cannot fulfill.

Identify Your Target Markets

Transit marketing requires an understanding of the needs and wants of your current and potential riders.

Types of transit need:

- Ongoing
  - Limited travel options - core target market
- Temporary
  - Tourists and visitors
  - Normally drive, but currently unable to
  - To avoid traffic or parking
- Discretionary
  - Save money
  - Convenience
  - Benefit the environment

People try a service because it meets their needs. Whose needs can you meet?

Identify Your Target Markets

Current riders

- Effective communication with is vital to retaining

Potential riders

- Match your services to the needs of potential riders
  - Fixed route, demand response, commuter and intercity

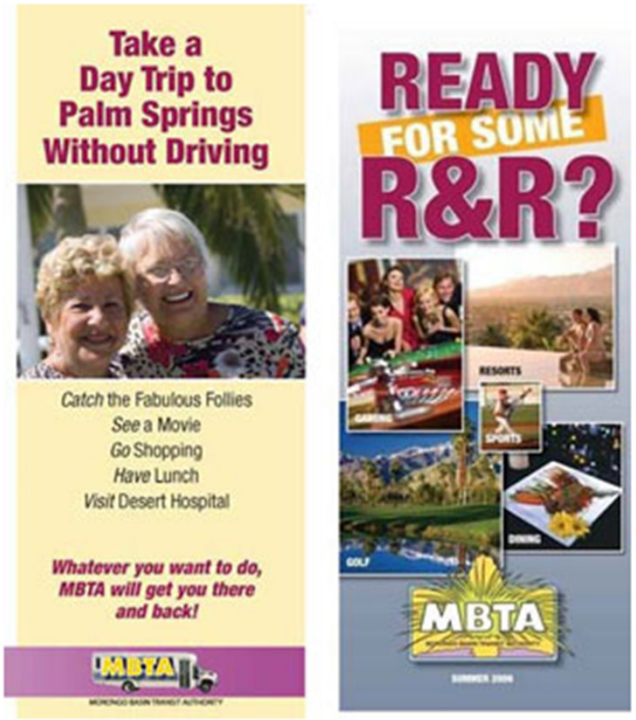
Non-riders

- Gatekeepers
  - Employers, social services, schools/colleges, COAs, healthcare
  - Provide access to potential riders
  - Important marketing partners
- Decision Makers
  - Elected officials, board members, staff at local jurisdictions

Crafting the Message

- Benefits of Transit
  - Personal benefits
  - Societal benefits
  - Sell the benefits relevant to your audience

- Barriers to ridership – what marketing can and can't do
  - Service doesn't meet needs
  - Knowledge Gap
    - Information on brochures and website
    - Travel training and other outreach
  - Perceptual Stigma



Transit Marketing Strategies

How-To Guide:
Strategies for Marketing Transit

- Fundamental Communications
  - Branding
  - Passenger Information
- Building Awareness, Image, Support
  - Paid and Non-paid Communications
- Targeted Strategies for Generating Ridership
  - Gatekeeper Outreach
  - Marketing Partnerships

1. Fundamental
2. Recommended
3. Optional

How-To Guide:
Strategies for Marketing Transit

Fundamental Communications

- Branding
  - Name and Logo
  - Vehicle Graphics
  - Bus Stop Signage
- Passenger Information
  - Printed Guide
  - Website
  - Google Transit (and similar)
  - At-the-Stop Information
  - Telephone Support
  - Real-Time Information

Effective branding will enhance a transit system's image. It can help turn capital investments — buses and facilities — into powerful marketing tools, raising awareness and visibility throughout the community.

Douglas RIDES
Community Transportation

How-To Guide:
Strategies for Marketing Transit

Building Awareness, Image, Support

- Non-paid Communications
  - Communicate with Non-Riders
    - Present to decision makers and stakeholders
  - Get the News Out
    - Conventional and social media
  - Community Events
    - Health/job fairs, Stuff-the-Bus, Earth Day, festivals
- Paid Communications
  - Media Advertising
    - Newspaper, radio, TV, mail, posters, online, vehicle/facility

How-To Guide:
Strategies for Marketing Transit

Targeted Strategies for Generating Ridership

- Gatekeeper Outreach
  - Social service agencies
  - human service organizations
  - Employment programs
  - Senior centers and complexes
  - Schools and colleges
  - Youth programs
  - Disability organizations
  - Medical clinics and facilities
- Maintain list of gatekeepers
- Educate front line staff
- How to reach their constituents
  - Information displays
  - Include in orientation packets
  - Posters and flyers
  - Website links and email blasts
  - Newsletter articles
  - Travel training and presentations
  - Incentives to try transit
  - Prepaid fare programs

Developing a Marketing Plan

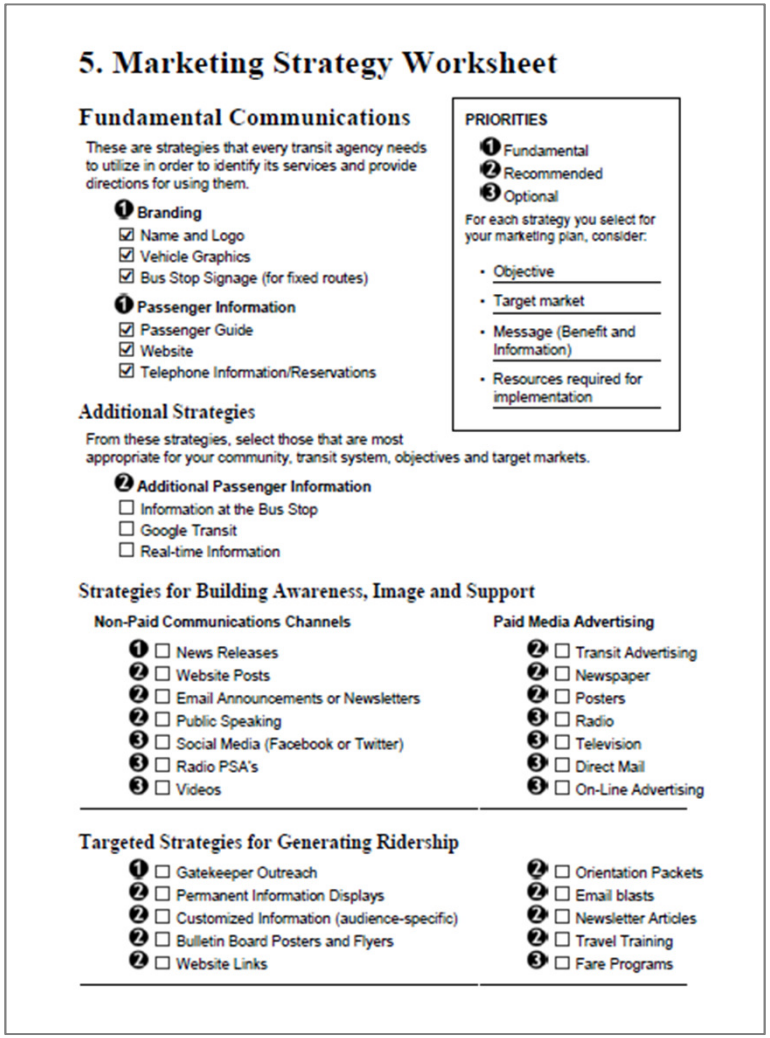
Developing a Marketing Plan

- Why Develop a Marketing Plan?
  - Roadmap of where you are now, where you want to be, and how you plan to get there
  - Promotes confidence in your marketing decisions

- Elements of a Plan
  - *Situation* – where you are now
  - *Resources* – people and funds available for marketing
  - *Goals and Objectives* – what you want to accomplish
  - *Target Markets* – who you need to communicate with
  - *Strategies* – methods for reaching your goals

Marketing Plan Workbook

1. Situation Assessment
2. Resources
3. Goals and Objectives
4. Target Markets
5. Strategies



5. Marketing Strategy Worksheet

Fundamental Communications

These are strategies that every transit agency needs to utilize in order to identify its services and provide directions for using them.

PRIORITIES
1. Fundamental
2. Recommended
3. Optional

For each strategy you select for your marketing plan, consider:
- Objective
- Target market
- Message (Benefit and Information)
- Resources required for implementation

1 **Branding**
- ☑ Name and Logo
- ☑ Vehicle Graphics
- ☑ Bus Stop Signage (for fixed routes)

1 **Passenger Information**
- ☑ Passenger Guide
- ☑ Website
- ☑ Telephone Information/Reservations

Additional Strategies

From these strategies, select those that are most appropriate for your community, transit system, objectives and target markets.

2 **Additional Passenger Information**
- ☐ Information at the Bus Stop
- ☐ Google Transit
- ☐ Real-time Information

Strategies for Building Awareness, Image and Support

Non-Paid Communications Channels
- 1 ☐ News Releases
- 2 ☐ Website Posts
- 2 ☐ Email Announcements or Newsletters
- 2 ☐ Public Speaking
- 3 ☐ Social Media (Facebook or Twitter)
- 3 ☐ Radio PSA's
- 3 ☐ Videos

Paid Media Advertising
- 2 ☐ Transit Advertising
- 2 ☐ Newspaper
- 2 ☐ Posters
- 3 ☐ Radio
- 3 ☐ Television
- 3 ☐ Direct Mail
- 3 ☐ On-Line Advertising

Targeted Strategies for Generating Ridership

- 1 ☐ Gatekeeper Outreach
- 2 ☐ Permanent Information Displays
- 2 ☐ Customized Information (audience-specific)
- 2 ☐ Bulletin Board Posters and Flyers
- 2 ☐ Website Links
- 2 ☐ Orientation Packets
- 2 ☐ Email blasts
- 2 ☐ Newsletter Articles
- 2 ☐ Travel Training
- 3 ☐ Fare Programs

Marketing Plan Workbook

1. Situation Assessment
   - Assess Your System's Visibility and Visual Image
   - Assess the Passenger Experience
   - Assess Your Image in the Community
2. Resources for Marketing
   - How much should you allocate? Rule of thumb is 1% of operating budget.
3. Goals and Objectives
   - Awareness, Education, Image, User-Friendliness, Ridership, Support
4. Target Markets
   - Helps identify potential target groups for increasing ridership
   - Helps identify groups to reach out to for support and partnership
5. Strategies

Marketing Tools

Marketing Tools

- Photo and Graphics Libraries
  - Copyright-free transit-related photos and graphics
  - High and low resolution images for print, online, email, and social media
- Microsoft Publisher Templates
  - For passenger information and promotional materials
  - Map and Schedule Maker “utilities” for use in templates
  - Detailed instructions for using the templates
- Other Tools & Resources
  - Guidance and examples for news releases, radio spots, surveys, and more

Photo Library

- Various transit riders and situations:
  - Bicycles
  - Buses
  - Family
  - Groups
  - Mobility-Assistive
  - Senior
  - Senior Mobility
  - Service Dog
  - Shopper
  - Students
  - Workers

Graphics Library

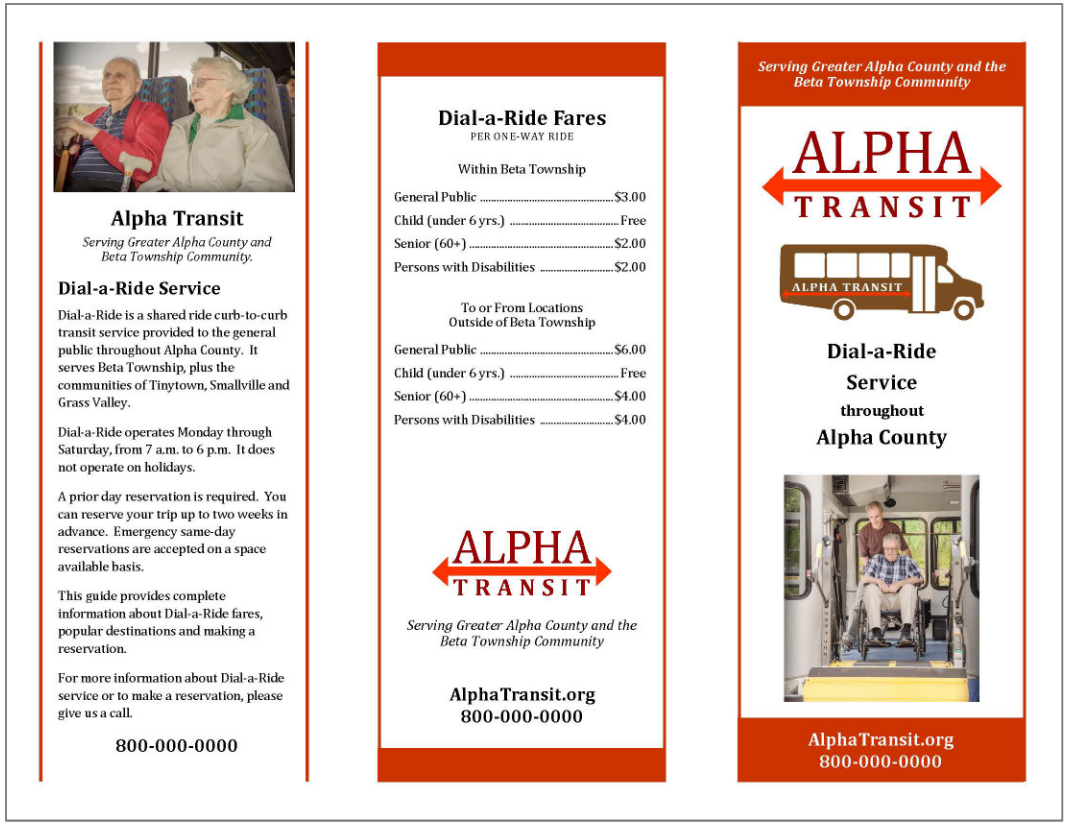
- Two styles of illustrations:
  - Graphic vehicles
  - Illustrations of buses in various situations and environments
- Three styles of vehicles:
  - Vans
  - Cutaway buses
  - Transit buses
- Transit Symbols and Icons
- Graphics are black and white, but can be colored in Publisher

Templates in MS Publisher
(2 styles of each)

- Flyer
- Poster
- Postcard
- Newspaper Ad
- Newsletter – print
- Newsletter – email
- Letterhead
- Business Card
- Bus Stop Sign

- Brochure/Passenger Guides
  - Letter – options with and without map and schedule (e.g. for Dial-a-Ride)
  - Legal – with map and schedule
  - Tabloid – for multi route systems
- Template Utilities
  - Map Maker Template (Publisher)
  - Schedule Maker Template (Excel)
- Instructions for Templates
  - Customizing Templates in Publisher
  - Printing Instructions

Templates



Alpha Transit

Serving Greater Alpha County and Beta Township Community.

Dial-a-Ride Service

Dial-a-Ride is a shared ride curb-to-curb transit service provided to the general public throughout Alpha County. It serves Beta Township, plus the communities of Tinytown, Smallville and Grass Valley.

Dial-a-Ride operates Monday through Saturday, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. It does not operate on holidays.

A prior day reservation is required. You can reserve your trip up to two weeks in advance. Emergency same-day reservations are accepted on a space available basis.

This guide provides complete information about Dial-a-Ride fares, popular destinations and making a reservation.

For more information about Dial-a-Ride service or to make a reservation, please give us a call.

800-000-0000

Dial-a-Ride Fares

PER ONE-WAY RIDE

Within Beta Township

General Public	$3.00
Child (under 6 yrs.)	Free
Senior (60+)	$2.00
Persons with Disabilities	$2.00

To or From Locations Outside of Beta Township

General Public	$6.00
Child (under 6 yrs.)	Free
Senior (60+)	$4.00
Persons with Disabilities	$4.00

ALPHA TRANSIT

Serving Greater Alpha County and the Beta Township Community

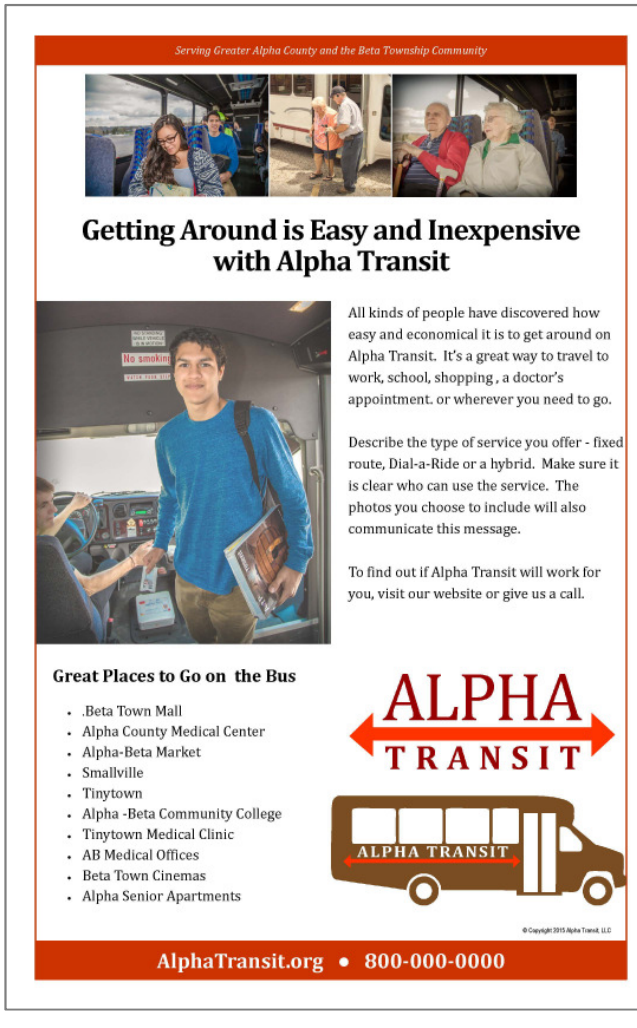
AlphaTransit.org
800-000-0000

Serving Greater Alpha County and the Beta Township Community

ALPHA TRANSIT

Dial-a-Ride Service throughout Alpha County

AlphaTransit.org
800-000-0000



Serving Greater Alpha County and the Beta Township Community

Getting Around is Easy and Inexpensive with Alpha Transit

All kinds of people have discovered how easy and economical it is to get around on Alpha Transit. It's a great way to travel to work, school, shopping , a doctor's appointment. or wherever you need to go.

Describe the type of service you offer - fixed route, Dial-a-Ride or a hybrid. Make sure it is clear who can use the service. The photos you choose to include will also communicate this message.

To find out if Alpha Transit will work for you, visit our website or give us a call.

Great Places to Go on the Bus

- .Beta Town Mall
- Alpha County Medical Center
- Alpha-Beta Market
- Smallville
- Tinytown
- Alpha -Beta Community College
- Tinytown Medical Clinic
- AB Medical Offices
- Beta Town Cinemas
- Alpha Senior Apartments

ALPHA TRANSIT

ALPHA TRANSIT

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AlphaTransit.org • 800-000-0000

User Examples

Serving Person County Residents since 1999

Dial-A-Ride

There are 14 buses in service daily for the residents of Person County.

Monday through Friday:
Operation Hours: 6:00am—6:00pm
Office Hours: 8:30am—5:00pm

There is 1 bus in service for Person County Residents going to Prospect Hill, Durham or Chapel Hill for Medical appointments only.

Tuesday through Thursday:
Departs from PATS parking Lot around **6:00am**
Returns to PATS parking Lot by **5:00pm**

Person Area Transportation System
341 South Madison Blvd.
Roxboro, North Carolina 27573
Office: (336) 597-1771
Fax: (336) 330-2311

Roxboro Uptown Shuttle

As of now there is 1 bus in service daily for Person County Residents to catch the Roxboro Uptown Shuttle. See schedule below.

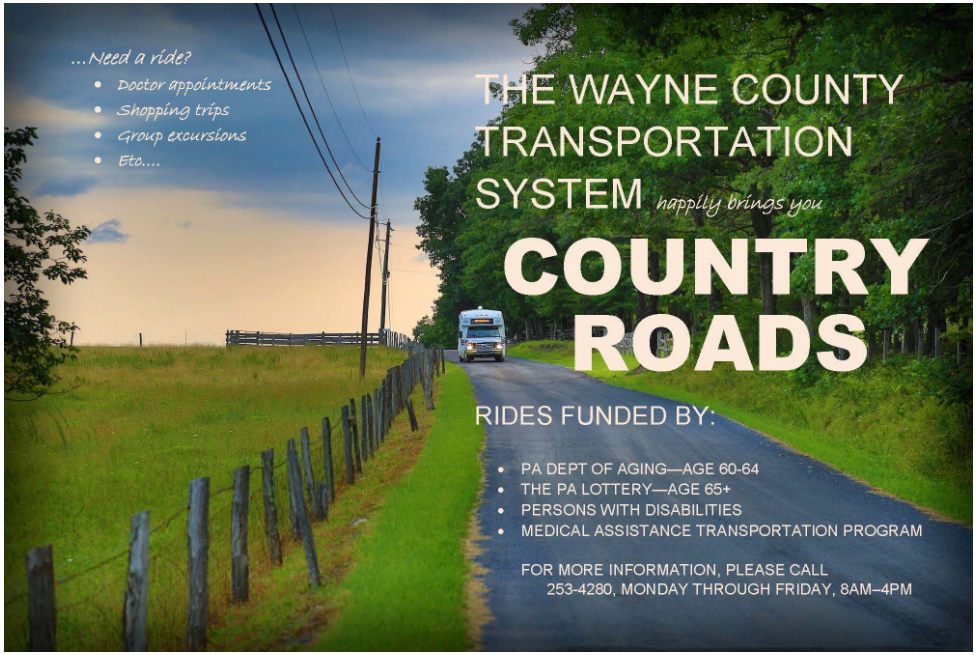
Monday through Friday:
Departs from PATS parking lot
7:00am—12:00pm
1:00pm—5:00pm

A Public Transportation System

Roxboro Uptown Shuttle Map and Schedule

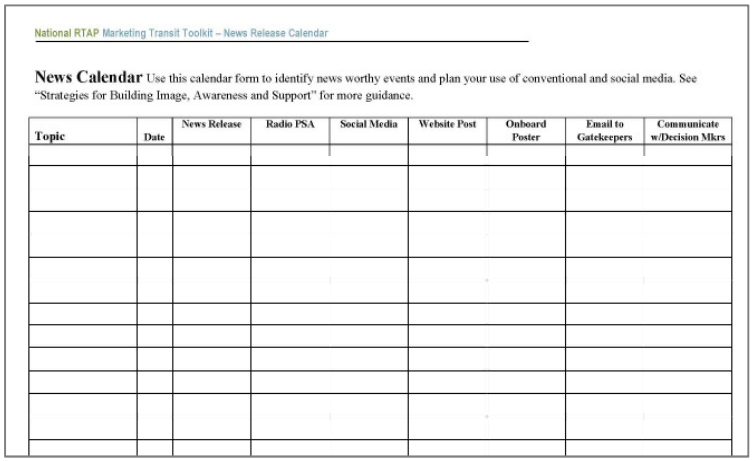
STOPS	AM					PM				
1—Cleveland Lane (Playground)	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00
2—Brookstone / Shale Circle (Mailboxes)	7:05	8:05	9:05	10:05	11:05	1:05	2:05	3:05	4:05	5:05
3—Walmart (2nd door)	7:10	8:10	9:10	10:10	11:10	1:10	2:10	3:10	4:10	5:10
4—Week Drive (across from Golden Coral)	7:15	8:15	9:15	10:15	11:15	1:15	2:15	3:15	4:15	5:15
5—Madison Square Center (DSS/FEMA)	7:20	8:20	9:20	10:20	11:20	1:20	2:20	3:20	4:20	5:20
6—PMH	7:25	8:25	9:25	10:25	11:25	1:25	2:25	3:25	4:25	5:25
7—PCC	7:32	8:32	9:32	10:32	11:32	1:32	2:32	3:32	4:32	5:32
8—Oaks Apartment	7:34	8:34	9:34	10:34	11:34	1:34	2:34	3:34	4:34	5:34
9—Pine Ridge	7:36	8:36	9:36	10:36	11:36	1:36	2:36	3:36	4:36	5:36
10—Roses / Food Lion	7:41	8:41	9:41	10:41	11:41	1:41	2:41	3:41	4:41	5:41
11—Person Plaza (Peebles / Just Save)	7:47	8:47	9:47	10:47	11:47	1:47	2:47	3:47	4:47	5:47
12—Long Memorial Church Parking Lot (Help Center)	7:48	8:48	9:48	10:48	11:48	1:48	2:48	3:48	4:48	5:48
13—Courthouse (Main Street)	7:51	8:51	9:51	10:51	11:51	1:51	2:51	3:51	4:51	5:51
14—Library	7:53	8:53	9:53	10:53	11:53	1:53	2:53	3:53	4:53	5:53

www.personcounty.net (Transportation Department) • Office: 336-597-1771



Other Tools

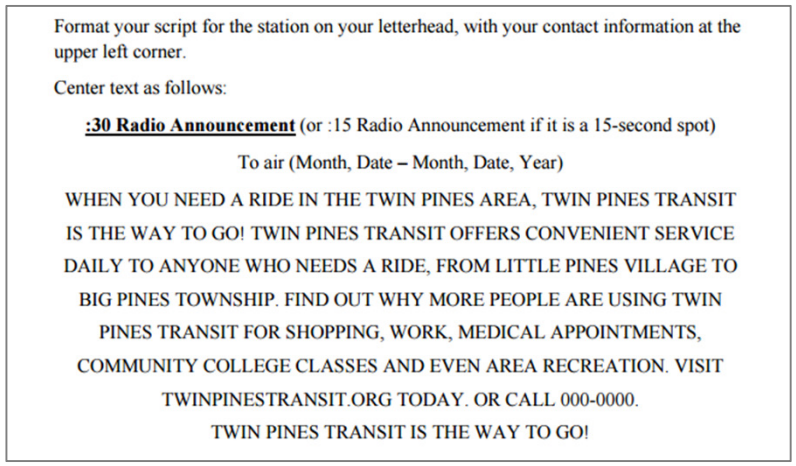
- Instructions for Creating Content for Passenger Guides, Ads, Flyers
- Photo Tips and Photo Release Form
- News Releases and News Calendar Schedule
- Radio Script Guidelines and Samples
- Sample Questionnaire for Passenger Survey
- Tips for Communicating with People with Special Needs



National RTAP Marketing Transit Toolkit – News Release Calendar

News Calendar Use this calendar form to identify news worthy events and plan your use of conventional and social media. See "Strategies for Building Image, Awareness and Support" for more guidance.

Topic	Date	News Release	Radio PSA	Social Media	Website Post	Onboard Poster	Email to Gatekeepers	Communicate w/Decision Mkrs



Format your script for the station on your letterhead, with your contact information at the upper left corner.

Center text as follows:

:30 Radio Announcement (or :15 Radio Announcement if it is a 15-second spot)

To air (Month, Date – Month, Date, Year)

WHEN YOU NEED A RIDE IN THE TWIN PINES AREA, TWIN PINES TRANSIT IS THE WAY TO GO! TWIN PINES TRANSIT OFFERS CONVENIENT SERVICE DAILY TO ANYONE WHO NEEDS A RIDE, FROM LITTLE PINES VILLAGE TO BIG PINES TOWNSHIP. FIND OUT WHY MORE PEOPLE ARE USING TWIN PINES TRANSIT FOR SHOPPING, WORK, MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS, COMMUNITY COLLEGE CLASSES AND EVEN AREA RECREATION. VISIT TWINPINESTRANSIT.ORG TODAY. OR CALL 000-0000.

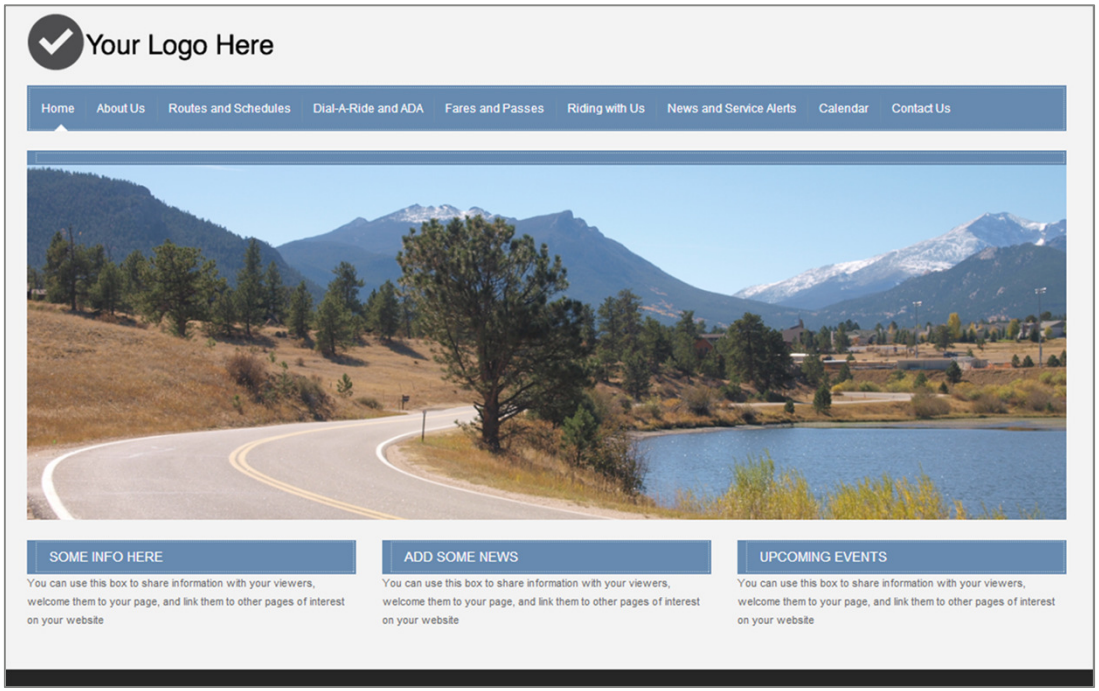
TWIN PINES TRANSIT IS THE WAY TO GO!

Other National RTAP Products

National RTAP Marketing Tools

Website Builder

- Template with transit related pages – just fill in your content
- Easy to customize design
- Instructional Videos
- Tech Support
- Free website hosting

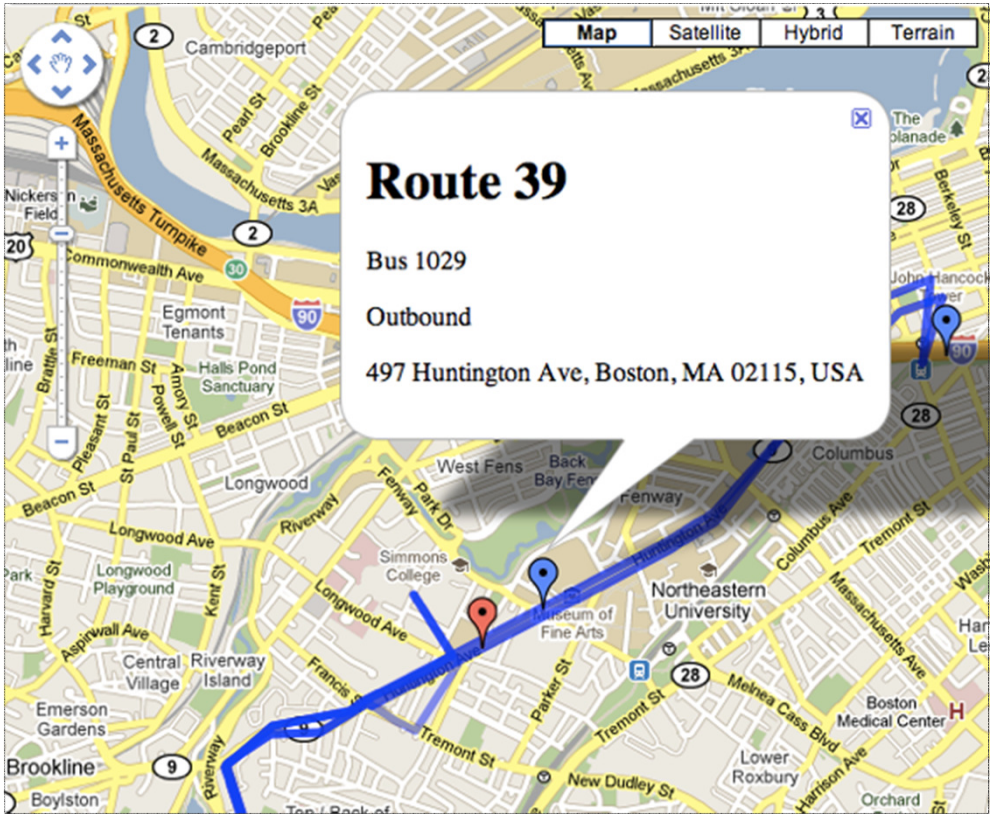


National RTAP Marketing Tools

GTFS Builder

(General Transit Feed Specification)

- Helps transit providers enter their route and schedule data into Google Transit and other online trip planners
- Excel spreadsheets
- Free hosting of GTFS data
- Step-by-step guidance in brief instructional videos

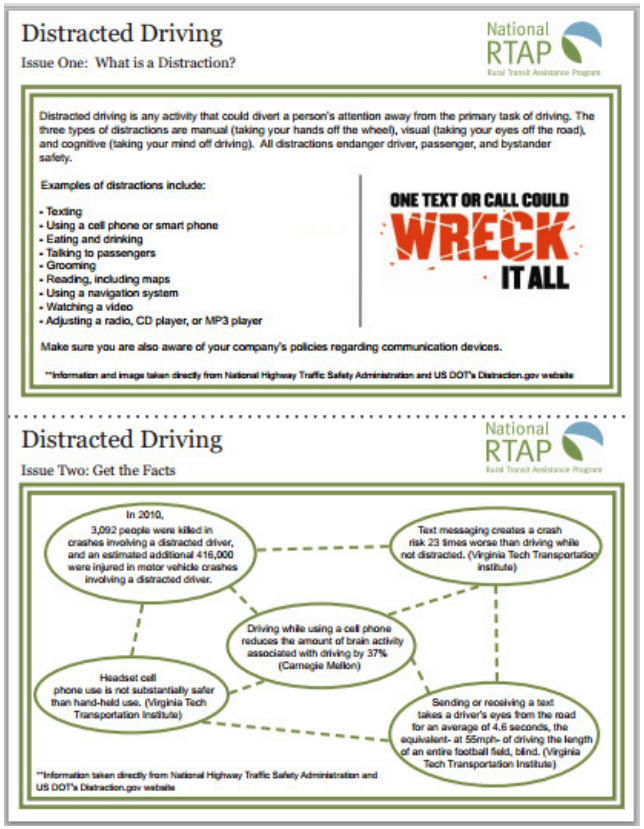


ProcurementPRO Web App

- Guides subrecipients and state DOTs through FTA procurement procedures
- Basic project information entered by user
- Generates required clauses and certifications, documentation, and procurement guidance
- State and local portals

2 the Point Training

- Training and quizzes on cards for on-the-go refresher training
- Nine topics, 56 subtopics, 78 cards
  - ADA and Sensitivity
  - Bloodborne Pathogens
  - Customer Service
  - Defensive Driving
  - Distracted Driving
  - Drugs and Alcohol
  - Emergency Management
  - Passenger Safety
  - Transporting Nonambulatory Passengers



Toolkits, Technical Briefs & Topic Guides

Toolkits

- Marketing Toolkit
- Transit Manager's Toolkit
- ADA Toolkit
- Find Anything Toolkit
- Bus Roadeo Toolkit
- State RTAP Manager's Toolkit

Toolkits, Technical Briefs & Topic Guides

Technical Briefs

- Why GTFS? New!
- Top Shops: Emergency Management in Maintenance Facilities
- eLearning Technical Brief
- Oversized Wheeled Mobility Devices
- Grant Writing Made Easy: How to Write a Successful Grant Application
- Drug and Alcohol Testing, DOT and FTA Compliance
- Livable Communities: Tips for Designing Transit Services and Infrastructure to Promote Liveability

Toolkits, Technical Briefs & Topic Guides

Topic Guides

- ADA
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Defensive Driving
- Distracted Driving
- Drug and Alcohol Programs
- Liveability
- Mobility Management and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Map-21 Program Changes
- Safety & Transit Asset Management (TAM)
- Tribal Transit
- Wheelchair Securement

Webinars & Peer Calls

101 Webinar Series

- ADA and Rural Transportation
- Drug and Alcohol Testing
- Title VI Requirements
- Ethics in Transit Decision-Making
- FTA Bus Safety Program and SMS for Small Agencies
- Charter Service
- Rides to Wellness

Video recordings and PowerPoints available on our website

Webinars & Peer Calls

Peer Calls

- Procurement for IT – coming up in May
- Transit Manager 101
- Title VI Plans
- Tribal Transit
- Interstate Regulations
- TCRP Research Needs

Video recordings and PowerPoints available on our website

Questions

Contact Information

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50 F Street NW, Suite 7020
Washington, DC 20001

National RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

FTA U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration