



Public Transportation Division

Revisiting Regionalization: A Budget Special Provision

Miriam Perry

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Overview

- ❑ What is regionalization?
- ❑ A little history. . .
- ❑ Why revisit regionalization now?
- ❑ Next Steps
- ❑ Summary
- ❑ Open Discussion





What is regionalization?

Current definition –

- Full integration of the administration and operations of a minimum of two contiguous single county community public transportation systems

OR

- Consolidation of an urban fixed route and at least one community transportation system into a single fully integrated system





It all began in 2002 . . .

NCDOT Research and Analysis Planning Committee selected the proposal as an FHWA funded research project.

Study scope:

Gather information on, and develop preliminary plans for methods to facilitate delivery of public transportation at the regional level.





Institute for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) at N.C. State University documented a number of reasons why community transportation systems should coordinate their services.

Report presented at the 2002 Community Transportation Conference in Asheville

And then . . .





Report generated LOTS of discussion . . .

“What *is* DOT doing?”

“If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!”

“My drivers know their passengers. What will happen to them?”

“NCDOT just wants to do less work.”

“What if I don’t want to join the system next to my county?”





REPORT FINDINGS

Benefits to Riders – A primary rationale is to provide more efficient and effective service at affordable fares to riders.

More Effective Regional Planning – Both metropolitan and rural planning is facilitated when a regional transportation agency can develop a comprehensive regional plan for public transportation operations and investment.

Ability to Address Regional Transportation Problems – Issues such as traffic congestion and air pollution are better addressed on a regional basis.





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Adequate Funding for Public Transportation – A regional transportation agency can be created with its own dedicated funding source, ensuring matching funds for state and federal grant opportunities.

Operational and Administrative Economics – Duplicate routes can be eliminated from overlapping transit system boundaries. Schedules can be coordinated. Administrative functions can be consolidated.

Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness for Transit Systems and the Department of Transportation – Administrative functions will be streamlined, and grantees will be better served





Resolution presented to the NC BoT requiring that each Community Transportation Program be part of a regional structure within 5 years

NC Board of Transportation decided to allow systems to willingly consolidate operation.

In 2006, regional outreach meetings held at 6 locations to gather feedback from local officials, transit consumers and transit operators.





Common themes from feedback -

- ❑ Don't penalize areas that choose not to participate
- ❑ Let NCDOT determine the regions (RPO and COG boundaries)
- ❑ Cover the planning costs since it's an NCDOT initiative
- ❑ Provide funding incentives





Which brings us to - why now?

Joint Transportation Appropriations Committee of 2011 General Assembly request for department efficiencies

PTD was asked to identify strategies for creating internal efficiencies

- ❑ Regionalization of Transit Services
- ❑ Use of State Funds to Increase Leveraging of Federal Funds
- ❑ ROAP Program Consolidation





Budget Special Provision

Session Law 2011-145 – Section 28.21 (page 286-287)

“The Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division, is directed to study the feasibility and appropriateness of developing regional transit systems with the goals of

- (i) Providing increased mobility between existing transit systems within one county and between counties
- (ii) Improving planning and coordination to better meet public demand
- (iii) Maximize funding, and
- (iv) Developing centralized professional staff that will create operational and administrative efficiencies.





This study shall examine both the

- (1) Consolidation of transit service planning and delivery based on regional travel patterns and
- (2) The consolidation of single-county transit systems, where applicable.

The Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division, shall report the results of its study to the Joint Legislative Transportation Committee no later than March 1, 2012. “





Next Steps

Identify steering committee of 10-12 stakeholders – August 2011

Develop scope of work and obtain NC Board of Transportation approval – September 2011

Consultant begins work – September 2011

Study complete and presented to NC BOT for endorsement – February 2012

Study presented to Joint Transportation Legislative Committee – March 2012





The time is now . . .

North Carolina has long been recognized as having one of the finest networks of coordinated transportation systems in the country .

We are one of the first state's to figure out that coordination makes sense.





Changing demographics -

North Carolina's population is still booming.

- ❑ Expected to grow by 4-5 million more people in the next 25 years.
- ❑ What will be the impact on our transportation network if the population of the State of South Carolina moves across the border into our state?





North Carolina is quickly becoming one of the most attractive places to retire in the country.

- ❑ Number of persons over the age of 60 in North Carolina is expected to increase from the current level of about 17.9 percent of our state's total population to over 22 percent by 2025.
- ❑ Need for mobility will only grow as our state's senior population increases, placing a greater demand on transit systems to provide choices and flexible service.





If transit is to be ready for the changing demographics and the uncertain economic times, and

If we want to keep North Carolinians moving forward.

- ❑ We must be inventive.
- ❑ We must be willing to partner with other governments and organizations to take bold steps.





DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS?

