



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# Wisconsin Human Service Transportation Coordination Model

FINAL REPORT

July 2008





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# Chapter 1. Introduction

## Project Summary

For several years, the State of Wisconsin has been pursuing coordination as a strategy to increase the mobility of Wisconsin residents and enhance transportation service efficiency. Three recent legislative actions increase the prominence of coordination as a key strategy, at both the federal and state levels:

- The revised Federal Transportation Act, SAFETEA-LU, signed into law on August 10, 2005 requires all entities receiving money from three federal funding programs – Capital Assistance Program for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316) and New Freedom (Section 5317) – to have a “locally developed coordinated public transit human services transportation plan.”
- In 2005, Governor Jim Doyle charged a group of individuals from a number of state agencies to form the Interagency Council on Transportation Coordination (ICTC). The ICTC is dedicated to “creating a coordinated, accessible, affordable, dependable, safe, statewide system providing the best transportation services to transportation disadvantaged individuals in Wisconsin.”
- Presidential Executive Order 13330, issued by the President on February 24, 2004, created an interdepartmental Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM). The mission of the CCAM is to undertake collective and individual departmental actions to reduce duplication among federally-funded human service transportation services, increase the efficient delivery of such services and expand transportation access for older individuals, persons with disabilities, persons with low income, children and other disadvantaged populations within their own communities.

In response to these initiatives and the ongoing coordination efforts in the State, the ICTC, in conjunction with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), retained the consulting team of Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates and RLS & Associates to develop a Human Service Transportation (HST) Coordination Model for the State of Wisconsin. Key goals for this research are to collect data, assess needs and recommend actions towards a state model of transportation coordination with prioritized implementation strategies. This effort is partially funded with United We Ride (UWR) Implementation Grant Funds and is part of the ICTC work plan. The four major tasks associated with developing a recommended coordination model for the State of Wisconsin include the following:

- **Document state agency programs (State Funding Assessment)** – The objective of this task is to identify and document state agency programs that fund human service transportation and the extent to which these funded services are used and coordinated.
- **Identify gaps and barriers (Local Needs Assessment)** – There are two key objectives associated with this task; (1) develop, test and finalize an assessment process that can be used throughout the state to gauge and evaluate coordination status; and (2) as the assessment process is tested in the field, evaluate current coordination efforts in representative areas to develop an understanding of coordination perspectives and priorities in these areas.
- **Identify and compare Wisconsin with other states’ coordination models** – Building on data collection and analysis of both state agency and local level coordination efforts in

Wisconsin, Nelson\Nygaard examined peer state models and best practices and the effectiveness of these approaches toward improving HST coordination.

- **Recommend HST Coordination Models** – Summarize and review the findings from all previous tasks and, from these findings, recommend a HST coordination model for the State of Wisconsin that can realistically be implemented based on the socio-demographic characteristics of the state and the local political environment.

## Organization of the Final Report

This Final Report is organized into the following chapters:

**Chapter 2: Overview of Federal Coordination Requirements** – Provides an overview of current federal requirements for coordination.

**Chapter 3: Funding for Human Service Transportation in Wisconsin** – Presents and discusses current federal and state funding used by public transit and human service transportation programs and outlines the strengths and challenges associated with state transportation funding.

**Chapter 4: Assessment of Local Coordination Efforts** – Describes key findings from field work and discusses their implications for state coordination efforts.

**Chapter 5: Lessons from Peer States** – Summarizes peer review and best practice research and highlights applicable lessons for coordination in Wisconsin.

**Chapter 6: Wisconsin Model of Coordination** – Discusses Wisconsin's coordination infrastructure and lays out recommendations for the statewide coordination model.

**Chapter 7: Implementation Action Plan** – Presents an action plan to implement the recommended model discussed in Chapter 6.

## Chapter 2. Overview of Federal Coordination Requirements

### SAFETEA-LU

On August 10, 2005, the President signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), providing \$286.4 billion in guaranteed funding for federal surface transportation programs over five years through FY 2009. The legislation included \$52.6 billion for federal transit programs, representing a 46 percent increase over guaranteed transit funding levels in the previous transit authorizing legislation (TEA-21). SAFETEA-LU, in addition to substantially increasing overall funding for transit, makes several notable changes to existing programs and establishes several new programs of interest to transit-disadvantaged consumers. SAFETEA-LU:

- Transitions the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program to a permanent formula program;
- Creates the New Freedom program to support new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and,
- Imposes a coordination planning requirement as a prerequisite to the receipt of certain FTA funds.

Specifically, SAFETEA-LU requires that projects selected for funding under the Section 5310, JARC and New Freedom programs be “derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” and that the plan be “developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers and participation by members of the public.”

### Federal Council on Coordinated Access and Mobility

As noted, Presidential Executive Order 13330 on the Coordination of Human Service Programs issued by the President on February 24, 2004, created an interdepartmental Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM). In concert with this Executive Order, the CCAM in October 2006 issued two policy statements requiring federal agencies that are involved in human service transportation to (1) participate in local coordination planning and (2) coordinate their resources in order to maximize accessibility and availability of transportation services. These policy statements are presented and discussed below.

### Local Coordination Planning

Consistent with the Executive Order and the SAFETEA-LU statutes requiring a locally-developed, coordinated public transit-human service transportation planning process, the CCAM recently adopted the following policy statements:

“Member agencies of the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility resolve that federally-assisted grantees that have significant involvement in providing resources and engage in transportation delivery should participate in a local coordinated human services transportation

planning process and develop plans to achieve the objectives to reduce duplication, increase service efficiency and expand access for the transportation-disadvantaged populations as stated in Executive Order 13330. Significant involvement is defined as providing, contracting for and/or subsidizing individual transportation trips for individuals with disabilities, older adults, or people with lower incomes.”

“Members of the Federal Council on Access and Mobility will undertake actions [by March 31, 2007] to accomplish Federal program grantee participation in locally-developed, coordinated public transit-human service coordinated planning processes.”

The significance of this statement is profound in that, for the first time, Federal agencies that fund community transportation services, beyond the Federal Transit Administration, are required to participate in local coordination planning efforts. To date, three federal agencies – the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Education, and Labor plus three offices within the Department of Health and Human Services (Administration on Aging, Office of Family Assistance (TANF) and Office of Head Start) have complied.

## Vehicle Sharing

The CCAM also stated that:

“Some grantees do not permit vehicles and rides to be shared with other federally-assisted program clients or other members of the riding public. Federal grantees may attribute such restrictions to Federal requirements. This view is a misconception of Federal intent. In too many communities, this misconception results in fragmented or unavailable transportation services and unused or underutilized vehicles. Instead, federally assisted community transportation services should be seamless, comprehensive, and accessible to those who rely on them for their lives, needs, and livelihoods.”

In recognition of this misconception, and consistent with Executive Order 13330, the CCAM further adopted the following policy statement:

“Member agencies of the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility resolve that Federally-assisted grantees that have significant involvement in providing resources and engage in transportation should coordinate their resources in order to maximize accessibility and availability of transportation services.”

In conjunction with this statement, the CCAM provided several examples of how this requirement may be implemented:

- Several local human service agencies may contract with a local organization that operates a van service to provide door-to-door service for their clientele. Key destinations include hospitals and other medical facilities, child care centers, senior citizen centers, selected employment sites, and prisons for family visitation purposes.
- In an area with high unemployment and no public transportation services, a community action and economic development agency, another nonprofit organization, and a community mental health center team up with the State’s TANF agency and Labor Department to start a fixed route shuttle operation service that connects individuals to job and training sites, outpatient mental health services, and substance abuse treatment and counseling services in the area. The operation also provides a feeder service to connect clientele to public transportation that goes into the downtown area. Each funding source

pays its fair share of allowable ongoing costs in accordance with the benefit received by each party.

- State agencies that oversee TANF, Community Health Care, and Older Adult Services partner with the State Departments of Transportation and Labor to encourage employers in the area to contribute to the expansion of a local transportation system. The privately-operated system provides shuttle service to selected employment sites and curb-to-curb services to senior citizen centers, retail centers, community health centers or substance abuse treatment and counseling centers, hospitals and other locations. The service is sustained through a fare-based system, with each agency subsidizing an allocable portion of the fares for their clientele.
- Via a cost-sharing arrangement, a senior shuttle service is expanded to provide transportation for persons with disabilities working in community rehabilitation programs and to provide Medicaid non-emergency medical transportation.

A for-profit organization receiving Head Start funds purchases specially equipped buses to transport children to and from their Head Start facility. During the idle periods, the organization rents the vehicles to another program providing transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities.



# Chapter 3. Funding for Human Service Transportation in Wisconsin

## Overview

In 2006, federal and state transportation programs amounted to approximately \$252 million for public transit and human service transportation services in the State of Wisconsin. Wisconsin DOT administers the largest portion of these funds, with some \$189 million (approximately 75% of all funds) available. Each of these programs is discussed in the following text; an overview is shown in Figure 3-1.

**Figure 3-1 Overview of Wisconsin Transportation Funding (includes State and Federal programs)**

State Agency	Transportation Funding Programs	2006 Funding (millions)		
		Federal	State	Total
WisDOT	5307 (Federal Formula for Urbanized Areas)	\$43.3		\$43.3
	5309 (Federal Discretionary Capital Assistance)	\$14.5		\$14.5
	5311 (Rural/Small Public Transp. Assistance)	\$11.0		\$11.0
	5310/s85.22 (Elderly and Disabled Capital)	\$1.7		\$2.6
	s85.20 (State Operating Assistance Program)		\$0.9	\$100.6
	s85.21 (Specialized Transportation Assistance)		\$100.6	\$10.4
	s85.24* (Trans. Employment and Mobility)		\$10.4	\$0.40
	STRAP (Supplemental Trans. Rural Assistance)	\$2.0	\$0.40	\$2.0
	5316 (Job Access Reverse Commute)	\$2.3		\$2.3
	5317 (New Freedom)	\$1.8		\$1.8
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>\$76.8</b>	<b>\$112.3</b>	<b>\$189.2</b>
DHFS	Medicaid (estimated)	\$40.2	\$19.8	\$60.0
	Office of Physical Disabilities	n/a		n/a
	Office on Aging	\$1.5		\$1.5
	Senior Community Service Employment **	\$0.3		\$0.3
	Medicaid Infrastructure Grants	\$0.1		\$0.1
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>\$42.1</b>	<b>\$19.8</b>	<b>\$61.9</b>
DVA	County Transportation Grant	\$0.1		\$0.1
	Disabled American Veterans Program		\$0.1	\$0.1
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>\$0.1</b>	<b>\$0.1</b>	<b>\$0.2</b>
DWD	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation***	\$0.43		\$0.43
	Employment Training Assistance (ETA)*	\$0.55		\$0.55
	Other DWD transportation programs	n/a		n/a
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>\$0.98</b>		<b>\$0.98</b>
	<b>TOTAL (all available information)</b>	<b>\$120.0</b>	<b>\$132.3</b>	<b>\$252.3</b>

Source: Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates

Notes: Includes available information as of July 23, 2007.

\*Administered as part of the Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP) program;

\*\* SCSEP is funded statewide with \$2.5 million; assume maximum spent on transportation and support services is 10%;

\*\* Administered as part of New Freedom Program

## Public and Specialized Transportation Programs

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) funds and manages public transportation programs according to two primary categories of services:

- Public transit – services available to members of the general public. Public transit services include urban systems operating in Milwaukee and Madison as well as small urban areas with populations of at least 2,500. Public transit services in Wisconsin currently include fixed-route, demand response, flex-services and shared-ride taxi.
- Specialized transit – transportation services available to persons with disabilities and older adults.

In 2006, \$183 million was available to fund public transportation, of which approximately 89% was allocated to public transit services (with Milwaukee and Madison receiving about 65% of all public transit funding). 11% of the public transportation funds were used to support specialized transportation services.

In the 2006 calendar year there were 68 public transit agencies operating in the State of Wisconsin. These systems were funded according to four population based tiers:

- Tier A1 and A2 – large urban systems, including Milwaukee County Transit System (A1) and Madison Metro Transit System (A2).
- Tier B – systems operating in urbanized areas with populations between 50,000 and 200,000, including three county-wide systems. In 2006, there were 23 Tier B systems.
- Tier C – systems operate in small urban areas that have populations of at least 2,500 and not more than 50,000 persons. There were 43 Tier C systems funded in 2006: six bus systems and 37 shared-ride taxi programs.

WisDOT currently administers ten programs (seven federal and three state) that provide operating and capital funding programs for the state's public transportation programs:

- **Federal Formula Grant Program for Urbanized Areas (Section 5307)** – The federal funding grant program for urbanized areas (Section 5307) is used to fund capital, administrative and operation costs for transit systems in federally defined urbanized areas with populations of 50,000 or more. There are no specific coordination requirements associated with the Section 5307 program. The FTA does expect, however, that public transit systems will participate in the local planning process.
- **Rural and Small Urban Area Public Transportation Assistance Program (Section 5311)** – Similar to Section 5307, the 5311 program provides operating, capital and administrative resources for rural and small urban public transportation systems. In 2006, 49 public transportation systems in Wisconsin received \$11.3 million in Section 5311 funds. There are no specific human service coordination requirements with this program, except for general requirements associated with participation in the local planning process.
- **State Urban Mass Transit Operating Assistance Program (85.20)** – The State of Wisconsin supplements federal funding for public transit with state resources. The 85.20 program will pay operating expenses of an urban mass transit (i.e., general public) system and/or any local public body providing urban mass transit services. According to the 85.20 program, an urban area is defined as any jurisdiction with a population of at

least 2,500 persons. This program does not specifically require coordination with other transportation services or providers.

- **Federal Discretionary Capital Assistance Program (Section 5309)** – Federally funded discretionary capital grant programs are primarily awarded through congressional earmarks. States, local public bodies or federal recognized Indian tribal governing bodies may apply for funds. Public transit systems in Wisconsin primarily use the Section 5309 to fund fleet replacement programs, develop intermodal transit facilities and build maintenance facilities. In 2006, Wisconsin received \$14.5 million in 5309 funds. There are no coordination requirements associated with Section 5309 funds.
- **Specialized Transportation Assistance Program for Counties (85.21)** – The Specialized Transportation Assistance Program for Counties (85.21) funds transportation services for the state’s elderly and disabled population. Funds are distributed to the department that the county designates to be responsible for administering the program. Counties may fund, operate or purchase transportation services (including capital) for older adults and persons with disabilities in their counties. Allocations for 85.21 funds are set by formula based on the proportion of the state’s elderly and disabled population located in each county. In 2006, the program dispersed \$10.4 million statewide. Counties are required to meet annually to review and approve use of the 85.21 resources and file semi-annual reports document the number of people served, miles of service and the number of rides provided.
- **Elderly and Disabled Transportation Capital Assistance Program (Section 5310 and 85.22)** – Wisconsin combines federal (5310) and state (85.22) funds to provide capital funding for specialized vehicles used for transportation programs serving older adults and persons with disabilities. Eligible applicants include private non-profit organizations, local public bodies that meet certain conditions. Grants are available for up to 80% of the cost of equipment and are awarded accordingly to a competitive biennial grant cycle. SAFETEA-LU requires that projects seeking funds under the Federal 5310 program must be listed in a locally-developed coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan. Semi-annual reporting requirements include documenting the number of passenger trips, the type of passenger trips and whether or not passengers are agency clients.
- **Supplemental Transportation Rural Assistance Program (STRAP)** – STRAP is a federal demonstration project earmarked for the State of Wisconsin under SAFETEA-LU to assess if reducing local share requirements will generate more public transit service, innovation and coordination in rural areas. STRAP is significant because it funds operating projects at 80% of deficit and allow “soft” matching resources (i.e., in-kind goods and services). STRAP grants are awarded annually. WisDOT requires grantees to demonstrate how STRAP-funded projects are coordinated with existing services. The grant application also gives priority to projects identified in county public transit-human services coordination plans, but this is not required. Reporting requirements vary with the funded program.
- **Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) (Section 5316)** – JARC funds provide transportation resources for programs aimed at welfare recipients and low-income workers. JARC funds can also be used to create reverse commute programs. WisDOT administers JARC funding jointly with the Department of Workforce Development as the Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP). In 2006, approximately \$2.3 million was available in the JARC program. Per SAFETEA-LU, projects funded by JARC must be listed in a locally-developed coordinated public transit-

human service transportation plan. Funded projects require quarterly progress reports that include ridership and operational data.

- **New Freedom (Section 5317)** – New Freedom funds were created under SAFETEA-LU to support new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. For fiscal year 2008, WisDOT is administering its non-urbanized 5317 program jointly with DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Projects seeking funds under the Federal 5317 program must have projects listed in a locally-developed coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan. The program requires quarterly progress reports with ridership and operational data.
- **Transportation Employment and Mobility (TEAM) (85.24)** – Wisconsin funds a state program, Transportation Employment and Mobility (TEAM), designed to support low income individuals traveling to/from work and other employment-related services. As of 2006, \$400,000 in TEAM resources are managed as part of the WETAP program (combined with JARC). State resources available through TEAM and managed through the WETAP program are awarded annually through a competitive grant process. There are no coordination requirements with TEAM funding, although there is with the JARC portion of the WETAP program.

## Human Service Transportation Programs

Human service transportation services include programs administered by several State agencies, including the Departments of Health Services (DHS), Workforce Development (DWD) and Veterans Affairs (DVA). Consequently, the programs are typically more oriented to specific program clientele or for a specific trip purpose as compared with the type of service, e.g., rural or urban.

### Department of Health Services (DHS)

The Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) is the second largest provider of community transportation funding (after WisDOT). The majority of all these funds are coordinated and dispensed through local county governments.

### Medicaid

Medicaid is by far the largest resource for human service transportation in Wisconsin with approximately \$60 million in combined state and federal funds expended annually for Medicaid transportation statewide. There are no local matching requirements associated with Medicaid funding. Medicaid's Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) programs have direct relevance to coordination efforts and include:

- **Common carrier or private motor vehicle** – Medicaid pays transportation costs for clients traveling to/from medical treatments and appointments, a service known as Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT). Clients arrange transportation directly with their local county or tribal social or human services agency and local agencies arrange the transportation services. By law, they are required to select the least expensive means of transportation. Local administering agencies may also choose to pay transportation costs only to the closest medical provider who can provide the needed service.

- **Specialized medical vehicle** – Specialized medical vehicle (SMV) refers to transportation services needed for clients with disabilities, such that the client requires a wheelchair, stretcher or has other special transportation needs. To receive SMV transportation, a client's physician must provide documentation stating why SMV transportation is needed. SMV transportation is available only for trips to and from a Medicaid-covered medical service. There are about 170 SMV providers throughout Wisconsin. Services are funded with 40% federal and 60% state funds. SMV costs amount to some \$21 million annually.

In Wisconsin, counties retain significant control over the provision and funding of Medicaid transportation. This responsibility gives them flexibility to design their services to best meet the needs of their local Medicaid recipients. County governments, however, have no responsibility for SMV or ambulance transportation, which is typically operated by private providers that are certified as authorized Medicaid carriers by Wisconsin Medicaid.

There is currently no statewide policy to encourage coordination of Medicaid transportation with local transit systems or other community transportation providers. Indeed, anecdotal evidence suggests that county Medicaid offices have hesitated to use local transit systems. There are, however, no regulations that prohibit the coordination of Medicaid-sponsored NEMT with other public/community transportation services. There are few reporting requirements associated with the common carrier transportation services. Reports are submitted annually by the counties and DHFS is at the early stages of creating a database that will facilitate the tracking of services and expenditures more closely.

### Office of Independence and Employment

The DHFS Office of Independence and Employment administers a Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG), the purpose of which is to increase collaboration among existing programs and policies to create a stronger, consumer-center safety net in support of an individual's employment goals. MIG is not in the business of providing direct services, but rather looks for ways to support and improve the existing system. MIG has sponsored transportation programs the past three years.

### WisTech and WisLoan (Pathways to Independence)

DHFS manages and oversees two assistive technology programs called WisTech and WisLoan. These programs provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to learn about, use and purchase technology that supports independent living. WisTech provides technical assistance for individuals to learn and test available assistive technology. WisLoan provides financing options to support the purchase of assistive technology devices. Both WisTech and WisLoan are administered through the eight Wisconsin Independent Living Centers. The programs are funded by the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration, state Medicaid programs and another DHFS program, Pathways to Independence. The transportation portion of the Pathways program is not easily identified and there are no reporting requirements that specifically call out transportation related expenses.

### Office on Aging

The DHFS Office on Aging has been, and continues to be, active with transportation issues primarily through administration of federal Older American Act Title III-B funds. In Wisconsin, the State allocates Title III-B funds to local county/tribal aging units through a formula; local aging units then determine how to use their supportive services funding. Title III-B funds have been

flat for a number of years but many counties augment Title III-B funds with local resources (including 85.21). In 2006, of the approximately \$20 million awarded to the State of Wisconsin, about 10% or \$2 million of available Title III-B funds were used for client transportation. There are no coordination requirements associated with the Title III-B funds, but local county/tribal aging units do collect data on outcomes associated with transportation funding, including the number of rides provided.

### **Senior Community Service Employment Program/ Wisconsin Senior Employment Program (WISE)**

The U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration sponsors the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). In Wisconsin this program is called the Wisconsin Senior Employment Program (WISE) and is administered by DHFS. Upon enrolling, participants receive an assessment to determine individual needs for training, supportive services, and potential for employment. Supportive services may include transportation. There are no transportation coordination requirements associated with this program and reporting focuses on number of individuals served, demographics and placement in the workforce.

### **Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)**

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) provides financial assistance to counties to provide transportation to Veterans Affairs (VA) medical appointments. The County Transportation Grant (CTG) program consists of \$100,000 to be distributed among eligible counties that do not have regularly scheduled service from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) transportation program (see next section). Grant funds are intended to be a partial reimbursement of county expenses and may be used for capital and operating expenses. Approximately 50% of the eligible counties apply for the funds. There are no specific coordination requirements associated with these WDVA programs. Annual reporting requirements include revenues and expenditures, as well as the number of trips and miles of service provided.

### **Disabled American Veterans (DAV)**

Another transportation program funded by DVA is operated by the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) of Wisconsin, a non-profit organization that supports disabled veterans building better lives. DAV operates several vans around the state that stop at predetermined locations and transport veterans to various medical centers across the state. Rides are free of charge and available to all veterans based on financial need but a veteran does not have to be disabled or belong to the DAV to participate. The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs provides an annual grant of \$100,000 to the DAV to assist with this program.

### **Department of Workforce Development**

Wisconsin's Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is the state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce. DWD offers a variety of employment programs and services, which are primarily, provided via state-funded job centers.

- **Wisconsin Works (W-2)** – Wisconsin Works (W-2) replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in September, 1997. W-2 is based on work participation and personal responsibility. Each W-2 eligible participant meets with a Financial and Employment Planner (FEP), who helps the individual develop a self-sufficiency plan and determine his or her place on the W-2 employment ladder. Transportation benefits may

be included in an individual's self-sufficiency plan. Although funding is available for transportation through W-2, DWD reports the amount is incidental.

- **Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP)** – DWD's Division of Employment and Training (DET) is working jointly with WisDOT to administer the Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP). As described, this transportation program combines state and federal funding sources into a single program to support the development of transportation services to link low-income workers with jobs, training centers and childcare facilities. WETAP funds do not replace other Federal and state funds used for transportation such as capital and operating assistance programs, Wisconsin Works (W-2) program, Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET), and Medicaid.
- **New Freedom and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Supplement** – Funding for the DVR is provided by the Title IV Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the Education Department General Administrative Regulations. As discussed, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) entered into a memorandum of understanding with WisDOT to jointly fund pilot programs to provide opportunities and increase services to rural populations. DVR is providing \$425,000 in funds to the combined New Freedom/DVR Supplement program in 2007. New Freedom accepts only one application per county and all applications must be signed by the Workforce Development Board and the Regional Planning Commission or Metropolitan Planning Organization, where applicable.

**Figure 3-2 Overview of Federal and State Funded Transportation Programs in Wisconsin**

Administering Agency	Funding Program	Eligible Recipient	Appropriate Fund Uses and Local Match Requirement	Coordination Requirements	Reporting Requirements
WisDOT	5307 (with S85.20)	Transit agencies in federally designated urbanized areas	Capital – 20%* Operating – 50%	General coordination requirements only	Federal operating and capital data requirements
	5311 (with S85.20)	Public transit service operating or designed to operate in non-urbanized area (less than 50,000 pop)	Capital – 20%* Operating – 50%	General coordination requirements only	Federal operating and capital data requirements
	S85.20 (with 5307 and 5311)	Local public body in an urban area served by an urban mass transit system incurring an operating deficit	Operating expenses of an urban mass transit system Tier A – 50% Tier B – 42% Tier C – 35%	General coordination requirements only	Federal operating and capital data requirements
	85.21	Counties	Provide direct service, purchase service, reimburse travel, volunteer driver programs, studies, coordination projects; training and capital – 20%	General coordination requirements only	Semi-annual reports; number of people served, miles of service and number of rides provided
	5309	States, local public bodies or federally recognized Indian tribes	Capital – 20%*	None	N/A
	5310 (with S85.22)	Private non-profit, local public bodies providing transportation to elderly and disabled persons	Capital – 20% (typically for vehicles)	Yes – under SAFETEA-LU federally funded 5310 projects must be in locally developed plan to receive funding	Semi-annual reports; number of passenger trips, type of passenger trips and if passenger was agency client
	STRAP	Existing public transit systems operating in rural areas (any local body or federally recognized tribal organization may apply)	Planning/Feasibility Studies Service Expansion New Starts – 20%	Coordination rewarded in grant process	Vary according to funded project

Administering Agency	Funding Program	Eligible Recipient	Appropriate Fund Uses and Local Match Requirement	Coordination Requirements	Reporting Requirements
Combined WisDOT/DWD	JARC; TEAM (s85.24) and ETA	Local public bodies, public transit agencies, tribal organizations & non-profit agencies	Job access and reverse commute services – 20%**	Yes – JARC projects must demonstrate coordination in grant application; with SAFETEA-LU all projects must be in locally developed plan	Quarterly reports – must include ridership and operational data
Combined WisDOT/DWD	New Freedom	Local public bodies, public transportation providers, tribal organizations & non-profit agencies	New programs that improve services for persons with disabilities; 20% match**	Yes – must demonstrate coordination in grant application; with SAFETEA-LU all projects must be in locally developed plan	Quarterly reports – must include ridership and operational data
DHFS	Medicaid Infrastructure Grants	Any local public body	Program design and development (not service delivery)	N/A	N/A
DHFS	Medicaid	Program administered by county; Services provided by certified Medicaid carrier	Non-emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)	None	Receipts for reimbursements
DHFS	Older Americans Act (Title IIIB)	County/tribal governments	Support services for older adults; Requires 15% local match	None	Yes – ridership and trip costs
DHFS	SCSEP	County/tribal governments	Resources can be used for supportive services	None	N/A
Department of Veterans Affairs	County Transportation Grant	County/tribal governments	Van service to travel to medical facilities	None	Revenues, expenditures, number of trips and miles of service provided

Source: Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates

Notes: \*Federal programs have lower local matching requirements, (10%) for the portion of capital projects required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or by the Federal Clean Air Act.

\*\* Federal program combined with Wisconsin State funds to lower local match requirement

## Assessment of State Agency Funding Programs

As documented, Wisconsin spends approximately \$250 million (FY 2006) annually on public and specialized transportation. Wisconsin's current delivery of transportation resources offers both opportunities and challenges as the State sets out to improve and enhance the coordination of these resources. Key assets and challenges are outlined below and are also summarized as a strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats (SWOT) diagram shown in Figure 3-3.

### Assets and Opportunities

Existing coordination efforts in Wisconsin benefit from historical support for both public transit and human service transportation, including:

- Governor-established working forum focused on coordination (ICTC).
- Coordination is recognized as important strategy to improve transportation services.
- Ongoing efforts at the state level to support and encourage local participation in federal grant programs.
- Multiple agencies working together to fund, administer and manage federal transportation programs.
- Considerable federal resources for rural and small urbanized area transportation, including demonstration project funding.

### Barriers and Challenges

Efforts to improve and expand coordination in Wisconsin also face challenges moving forward. Some of these barriers result from the historic government structure in Wisconsin and others result from recent experience changing traditional service delivery models:

- Demographic trends suggest that the demand for transportation services across the State and especially in Wisconsin's small urban and rural areas will increase.
- The existing community transportation delivery system for transportation services in Wisconsin is fragmented. Funding streams further impede coordination with different guidance and restrictions on how funds may be used.
- Fragmented transportation service creates gaps in service delivery.
- Few government services in Wisconsin use a regional service delivery model.
- Several of the existing transportation programs are currently underutilized.
- Local governments and non-profit organizations are challenged to meet matching resources requirements.
- Lack of consistent data information across programs and grants.
- Wisconsin recently attempted a statewide brokerage system that was not successful.
- Medicaid reimbursement for transportation service is problematic. Rates are low, reimbursement process is slow and administrative burden is high.
- Small urban and rural areas face capacity issues with transportation providers.

**Figure 3-3 Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Available resources and funding</li> <li>▪ Enthusiastic, committed staff open and willing to work together</li> <li>▪ Existing network of public transit agencies</li> <li>▪ Staff’s ongoing marketing efforts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of regional transportation service network</li> <li>▪ Lack of regional service delivery network (for any service)</li> <li>▪ Fragmentation of public transit and human service transportation providers; includes funding and service delivery</li> <li>▪ Underutilization of existing funding programs</li> <li>▪ Local level challenges associated with finding matching resources</li> <li>▪ Lack of affordable transportation options</li> <li>▪ Program regulations/requirements that hamper coordination</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interagency Council on Transportation Coordination (ICTC)</li> <li>▪ Multi-agency sponsored WETAP and New Freedom programs</li> <li>▪ DHFS ADRC and CMO delivery models</li> <li>▪ DWD Job Center delivery model</li> <li>▪ STRAP Funding</li> <li>▪ State starting to offer financial incentives for coordination through WETAP and New Freedom – potential for more</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increasing demand for service</li> <li>▪ Increasing demand for regional services</li> <li>▪ Using local funding resources across multiple jurisdictions</li> <li>▪ Experience with Medicaid brokerage model</li> <li>▪ Current coordination champions nearing retirement</li> <li>▪ Capacity issues in rural areas</li> <li>▪ DHFS ADRC and CMO delivery models</li> <li>▪ Lack of coordination requirements and incentives at state level</li> <li>▪ Reluctance to reach across all transportation programs (Medicaid)</li> <li>▪ Programmatic and policy barriers in transportation services required for several human service and medical programs</li> </ul>



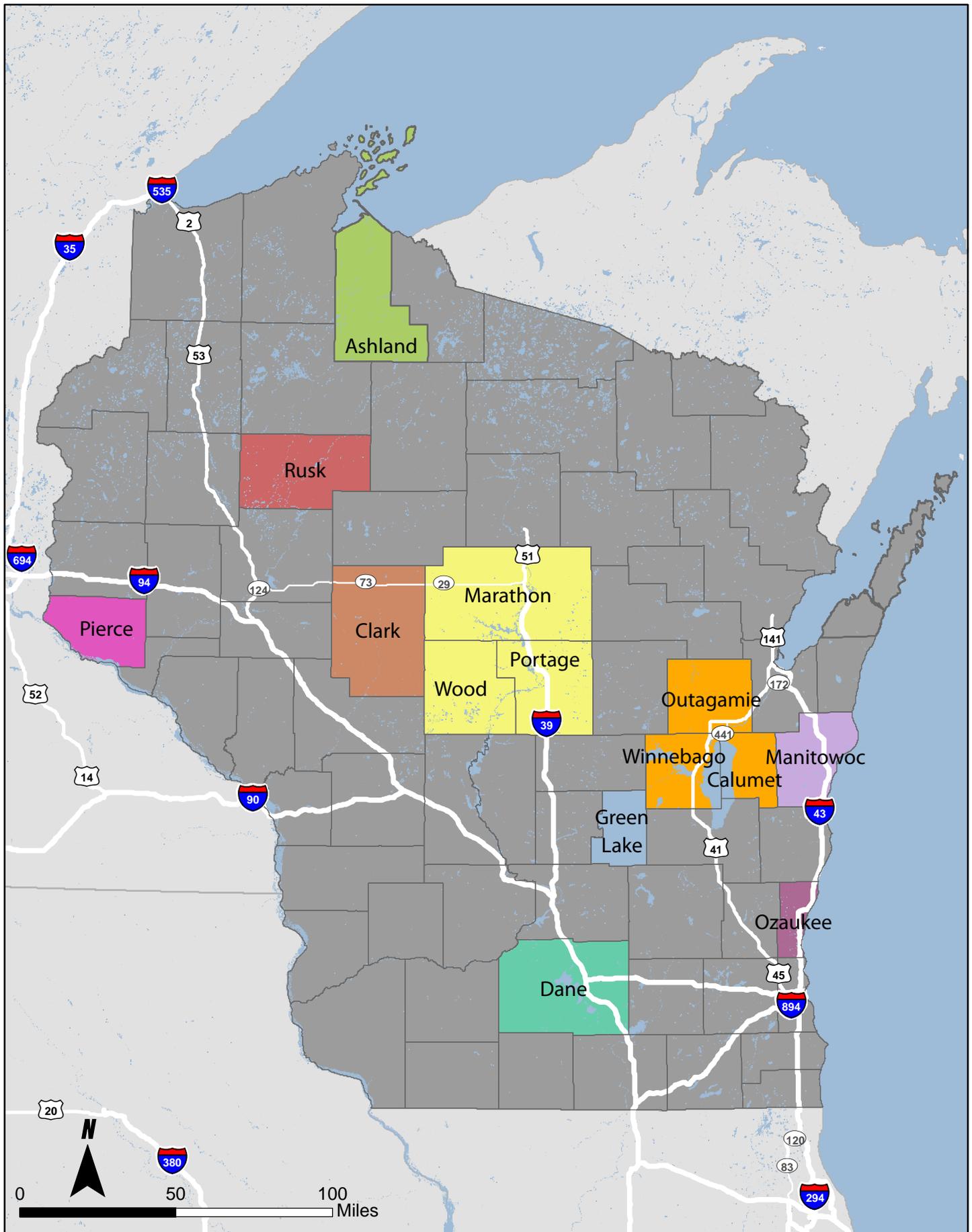
## Chapter 4. Assessment of Local Coordination Efforts

As part of developing the statewide coordination model, the Study Team conducted field work in eight counties and two mini-regions across the State. The objective of this research was to understand local perspectives on transportation services, coordination and state funding programs. Areas included in the field work are shown in Figure 4-1. While the sample of 14 counties represents only a portion of Wisconsin's 72 counties, the sample produced a broad spectrum of service delivery models, a wide variety of coordination activities, and a range of interest and support in coordination. Thus, we feel the exercise collected information that is representative of several environments across the state.

As we summarized and evaluated the information collected as part of the field work, we categorized the data into four primary groups of opportunities and challenges facing local coordination efforts. The categories are:

- **Service Organization and Delivery** – referring to the organization and management of transportation resources and how this relates to coordination.
- **Funding** – discusses local transportation funding and the impact of these decisions on coordination efforts.
- **Regional Resources** – describes the opportunities and challenges associated with creating a more regional-based delivery system.
- **Tools and Techniques** – concerns ongoing successful coordination strategies observed in the field.

Figure 4-1 Wisconsin HST Coordination Model - Assessed Counties



## Service Organization and Delivery

Service organization and delivery models refer to the way transportation services are provided to the general public and/or members of special populations (i.e., older adults, persons with disabilities, persons with low incomes). As discussed, the three primary transportation programs (public transit, specialized and Medicaid) are funded independently; service delivery requirements, operations and reporting requirements are different. This frequently translates to multiple services operating independently within a single county or region. One county, for example, may have fixed-route public transit available within an urbanized area that is operated by a public operator; demand response transportation for older adults and persons with disabilities, available countywide and operated by the county; plus medical assistance transportation available countywide and operated by private contractors.

The relationship between these types of service providers and how the individual services are organized has a direct impact on the current level of coordination and the quality of services available to the public. Our field work led us to the following observations:

- **Service delivery is fragmented.** Fragmentation is present even in rural areas that would otherwise seem unable to support a limited number of providers. In nearly every county and region examined, separate services were available to members of the general public, older adults and persons with disabilities, human service agency clients and Medicaid clients.
- **There is a need for additional services.** Despite the fact that multiple services are available, almost every program manager said they were challenged to provide enough services and the appropriate types of services to their clientele.
- **Few services straddle county boundaries despite an obvious need for such services.** Constraints on transportation funding limit how transportation services can be provided. An ongoing challenge for many transportation providers is providing inter-city and inter-regional services. In many cases, it is also difficult to travel between communities within a single county.
- **The coordinated services that do exist are typically led by county human service/aging departments.** In several counties, county departments have worked together so that all (or most) county-funded transportation services are coordinated through a single department or individual. Frequently, this organization model is successful, increasing the quality and quantity of service.
- **Few county-led coordination programs involve public transit operators, Medicaid NEMT providers and transportation services associated with workforce development efforts.** Thus, even when county services are well-coordinated, service fragmentation persists.
- **In areas where public transit operators are actively involved in community transportation services and coordination efforts, community transportation services are more comprehensive and better coordinated.** It was in these types of places where we observed joint-purchasing of ADA complementary paratransit and non-ambulatory NEMT services, as well as flexible public transit services.
- **Medicaid NEMT is typically provided by private operators and tends to operate independently from other public and specialized programs.** Medicaid transportation providers are typically not active in local coordination efforts. Moreover, in many counties,

there is little or no attempt to assign trips to carriers in a strategic fashion that encourage ridesharing or comingling of clients. Indeed Medicaid funding, especially funding for SMV travel, discourages operators from carrying multiple passengers.

- **Coordination requirements set out in State grant application have not been consistently enforced.** By enforcing existing (and future) coordination requirements, agencies that receive funding from the 5310, 5316 and/or 5317 programs can be encouraged to participate in coordination discussions and efforts. 85.21 funding also requires semi-annual meetings among stakeholders but this requirement is not always checked or enforced.

## Funding

Funding is at the heart of coordination, challenging increased coordination in a variety of ways.

- Local governments are challenged to raise matching resources for existing services. As a result, some communities are unable to take advantage of federal programs or must use them for capital programming. For example, some of the federal programs, such as JARC and New Freedom have not been fully utilized because local entities do not have access to sustainable matching resources.
- Only a handful of communities and service providers have successfully used coordination strategies to leverage non-federal U.S. Department of Transportation funds (i.e. 85.21 and Medicaid) as local matching resources and build on these combined resources to design and support new services. Obstacles to linking transportation resources include limited opportunities or willingness to work together and/or a clear understanding of how to link and leverage funding sources.
- Local governments often have limited staff resources to support coordination. County employees often are not able to fulfill their existing responsibilities, making it difficult to devote the time and energy required by coordination efforts.
- Constraints on local funding in terms of how funds may be used and/or where services may be provided make it difficult for agencies to transport individuals across political boundaries.
- Some local transportation operators are reluctant to get involved with the provision of Medicaid NEMT services because of low reimbursement rates and high administrative costs.
- Some counties and regions do not fully understand state funding and grant procedures, and do not actively pursue the resources.

## Regional Resources

Designing regional transportation systems or connections between local/regional services, is an idea that has been at the forefront of transportation planning in Wisconsin for several years. Many public transit operators are interested in developing a regional service delivery model to create a stable funding source that reflects a logical service catchment area rather than political boundaries. Coordination efforts are intertwined with regional service delivery models and offer potential to both support, and undermine, coordination efforts. Regional service delivery models, or regional transit districts (RTD) can support coordination if they are organized around a model that works to maximize regional transportation resources creating a unified service network. On

the other hand, RTD's would undermine coordination efforts if they actively exclude existing transportation providers.

As regional transportation systems are designed, they should reflect public transit operations, specialized and medical transportation services. There are many operating models that accommodate individual service requirements to create a regional service network where the service types coexist and coordinate smoothly. Any number of models may be acceptable, including models where different levels and types of services coexist within a single region. The key to creating regional service systems is that they are designed to cross jurisdictional boundaries and include a broad range of partners and passengers.

## Tools and Techniques

Our experience in the field shows that the single most effective tool at promoting and developing coordinated transportation services is an active coordination committee that meets regularly, has an active, comprehensive membership, and is charged with a clear mission. Because coordination requires working with a variety of funding sources and transportation programs to improve service delivery, it is logical that meeting regularly and working together will lead to coordination success. While different models exist, the key characteristics of a successful coordination committee include regular ongoing meetings, commitments from participants, at least one champion for coordination and a clear process for developing an action plan to address unmet needs and service duplications. In Wisconsin, while some existing coordination committees have been less inclusive than others, nearly all have been able to improve some aspect of their local transportation services.



# Chapter 5. Lessons from Peer States

## Overview

The purpose of the peer review is to understand the coordination models adopted by peer states and compare and contrast these models with Wisconsin. The objective within this analysis is to identify strategies, programs and practices that could improve coordination in Wisconsin. Consequently, as we examined and considered the coordination programs adopted by peer states, we prepared a more detailed review of the most relevant strategies and programs and compiled them into a best practices review. A full inventory and analysis of the best practice review is available as Technical Memorandum 3. This Chapter summarizes the key findings and lessons for Wisconsin.

## Peer Review

We compared the coordination programs currently adopted from six states: Florida, North Carolina, Minnesota, Ohio, Washington and Pennsylvania. Each state has a unique coordination strategy however several common elements are present in all or most of the states. These common elements include:

- Legislative or executive orders that mandate coordination efforts.
- State level coordination councils involved in the administration, oversight and/or monitoring of local coordination progress.
- Local level coordination councils involved in the organization, funding and delivery of county-based and/or regional transportation services.
- Several of the public and specialized transportation funds are combined and administered as a single funding source.
- States provide funding for to support local coordination efforts, including staff for coordinating council staff.
- States provide technical support for coordination efforts.
- State level coordination councils are engaged in on-going efforts incorporate Medicaid NEMT resources into the local coordinated transportation system.

## Coordination Best Practices

The purpose of the peer review was to compare coordination efforts in Wisconsin with coordination strategies adopted by other states. Using this broad perspective, we also prepared a more detailed review of the most relevant strategies and programs and compiled them into a best practices review. The intent of the best practices review was to provide sufficient detail on select programs and strategies to support consideration for their inclusion in the Wisconsin coordination model. As mentioned, we have not included specific best practices in this document; instead we describe the strategies and their relevance to coordination efforts. The strategies are grouped into four categories:

- Coordination oversight and monitoring
- Dedicated state funding, incentives, and required planning
- Technical strategies and assistance

- Regional Infrastructure

## Oversight and Monitoring

Most states with successful coordination programs provide oversight at the state and county/regional level. This bi-level oversight structure provides a body to oversee a state-level framework of coordination and establish common policies and procedures that mandate or foster coordination at the county/regional level. Responsibility for implementation rests with the local entity, allowing flexibility to establish an appropriate local system. Several states have also created a bi-level oversight structure that is flexible enough to strengthen existing coordination efforts and remove obstacles. In this synergistic relationship, it is up to the local coordination organizations to implement coordination programs and provide feedback to the state level group regarding the effectiveness of policies and strategies. Coordination is continually a work-in-progress.

Select relevant examples of oversight and monitoring including the following states:

- **Florida - Legislation:** Through legislation, the state of Florida established the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) to oversee and set statewide policies for coordination. The same legislation also provides for the establishment of Local Coordinating Boards (LCBs), primarily at the county level, to set local policies, oversee county-based coordination activities, and select and monitor the activities of a Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC).
- **North Carolina – Executive Order:** In 1978 North Carolina's governor issued an Executive Order establishing the state-level Human Service Transportation Council. The role of the Human Service Transportation Council is to address problems, concerns and opportunities regarding the provision of human service transportation and to make policy recommendations. The Executive Order also requires that each county — or group of counties — must have a transportation advisory or governing board in order to be eligible for any FTA program funds. Even before SAFETEA-LU, counties were required to prepare a coordination plan as a prerequisite for FTA funding.

## Dedicated State Funding, Incentives, and Required Planning

Aligning transportation funding resources available through different state and federal funding departments and programs with coordination goals is one of the most challenging tasks associated with state level coordination. Indeed, states can only work within federal program requirements. One way some states have helped remove funding barriers is by combining funding across state and federal programs. Wisconsin's WETAP provides an excellent example of this strategy. Other states have established what are, in effect, state coordination funds; in some cases, coordination funds are available for planning and implementation and in others, funding is available for operations only. Examples of dedicated funding sources from other states include:

- **Florida – Create New Funding Source:** Florida created a special Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund to support transportation to disadvantaged individuals who have no other means of transportation. This fund is administered by the state coordination body, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD). Trust fund

resources are distributed to county/regional Community Transportation Coordinators (CTCs) who manage local transportation services. The trust fund is supported by 15% of the state's public transit block grant and a \$1.50 fee on annual vehicle registrations for passenger vehicles and trucks that weigh less than 5,000 pounds. Additional voluntary contributions can be made by motorists when they register their vehicles. The trust fund totals approximately \$38 million annually.

- **North Carolina – Create New Funds and Combine/Consolidate Existing Programs:** In 1987, the legislature enacted the North Carolina Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program (EDTAP), with funds appropriated for use by counties on a formula basis from NCDOT to provide elderly and disabled transportation services. For FY 2007-08 EDTAP funds total nearly \$9.5 million. To receive funding, counties are required to have (1) an approved Community Transportation Services Plan (see below), (2) a transportation advisory board that includes representation from agencies and (3) programs that serve the transportation-disadvantaged, and that operate in a coordinated manner consistent with the local Community Transportation Service Plan (CTSP). Note that as an incentive for regionalization, NCDOT allows multi-county or regional systems to transfer EDTAP funds from one county to another based on the level of demand for services.

To further support coordination efforts, NCDOT consolidates the Section 5310, 5311 and several state funding programs into one community transportation services block grant program known as the Community Transportation Program (CTP). The CTP supports capital and project administrative expenses for local coordination projects. Projects must provide coordinated human service transportation that is also open to the general public to receive funds under CTP. As a further incentive to provide services to the general public, the NCDOT makes Rural General Public (RGP) funds available to those community transportation systems that serve the general public. RGP was funded with \$7.5 million during FY 2007-08.

## Technical Strategies and Assistance

In addition to broad policy-based strategies, there are numerous ways states can support coordination through technical strategies and assistance. Best practices included cost allocation and rate setting models, transit insurance pools, training and technical assistance and coordination resource handbooks, and implementation guides.

- **North Carolina – Training Courses and Assistance:** NCDOT provides extensive technical assistance in the areas of planning and project development, project management, and transit management. Such assistance includes grant preparing, involving private sector transportation providers, project implementation, project evaluation, third party contracting, employee development, etc. Training and technical assistance is provided directly by NCDOT staff in most situations, but the department does contract for assistance with these efforts when needed.
- **Ohio – Handbooks and Implementation Guides:** The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) has historically worked with other state departments to increase transportation services available to people with disabilities, and the elderly and low-income individuals. To support these efforts, ODOT developed a "Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services" to assist local officials coordinate public and human service transportation programs in rural and small urban areas in Ohio. The document

was prepared in a “user-friendly” format, providing a step-by-step direction of activities that can be undertaken to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of transit services through coordination. The manual was later revised and updated to include additional information, references, and examples to assist with the implementation process. As a supplement to the handbook, an implementation guide was also developed that provides additional reference materials and step-by-step directions and examples of essential policies and procedures.

## Regional Infrastructure

A unique feature of Wisconsin is the strong role of county governments in the delivery of public sector services. Wisconsin is also unique in having a large number of sparsely populated rural counties. Many states have focused on counties as the foundation for coordinated systems, whether or not some or all of the counties subsequently form regions on their own accord. Other states have prescribed community transportation regions with boundaries based on a variety of existing demarcations such as county boundaries, human service agency region boundaries, and state transportation department regions and/or regional planning agency/district boundaries. Still other states have prescribed regions around transit agencies or successful community transportation operations.

- **Minnesota – Bi-Level Structure:** The 2006 Minnesota Public Transit — Human Services Transportation Coordination Study recommended a dual coordination framework:
  - Urbanized areas — Within urbanized areas, the public transit systems would become the “Mobility Managers” within their service area. For these areas, each local community will determine the implementation timeline and role of the mobility manager through the regional planning process.
  - Non-Urbanized Area — In non-urbanized areas, the existing Regional Development Commissions (RDCs) will be utilized for planning. Where the planning jurisdiction of a RDC contains one or more urbanized areas, the RDC and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will coordinate planning activities to encompass all of one or more counties. Depending upon the local area, either the MPO or the RDC will be responsible for creating area-wide coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans with the planning process monitored by Minnesota DOT.
- **North Carolina – Encourage Regional Infrastructure through Funding:** With 100 counties, North Carolina currently has 84 community transportation systems that operate as single-county or multi-county systems. To be eligible for FTA funding through NCDOT, counties have to fulfill two prerequisites. First, counties must put together a local advisory/governing board to guide/oversee coordination planning and implementation, and to monitor the coordinated services. Second, counties must develop a coordination plan. In order to encourage the development of regional (multi-county) coordinated systems, NCDOT provides 100% of the cost of preparing regional transportation feasibility studies and follow-up implementations plans if needed. To be eligible for this funding, local transportation systems must have a broad-based transportation advisory or governing board representing different entities through the region.

# Chapter 6. Wisconsin Model of Coordination

## Introduction

The objective of the coordination model is to develop a series of policies, programs and strategies that will collectively work together to create and support a coordinated network of community transportation services, providing the highest possible level of services to Wisconsin residents. The focus of the coordination model is on state-level strategies to increase the level of cooperation and coordination among state agencies administering and funding programs fostering local level coordination through these efforts.

The coordination model was crafted from the research steps conducted as part of this study. Summarized findings are presented in this report, while detailed findings are available in the individual technical memos produced for this study. Research explored four aspects of coordination in Wisconsin: (1) existing coordination at the state level, (2) existing coordination at the local level, (3) coordination objectives, and (4) obstacles and barriers to achieving coordination.

### Existing Coordination at the State Level

Wisconsin has several coordination and coordination-supportive programs in place. The existing state-level coordination efforts in Wisconsin consist of:

- And the governor's directive to form the Inter-Agency Council on Transportation Coordination (ICTC). The ICTC includes representatives from state agencies that have transportation services offered to consumers through program funding to local government entities or private for-profit and non-profit organizations.
- Transportation funding resources approximately \$250 million (in 2006) available for public and specialized transportation in the State of Wisconsin. Of that figure \$189 million was distributed through WisDot, which included:
  - \$163 million to fund the state's 68 public transit agencies.
  - \$14 million to county and tribal aging units supporting specialized transportation services.
  - Coordinated funding of state and Federal funding programs across agencies, including WETAP and New Freedom, both jointly administered by WisDOT and DWD.
  - Demonstration of the STRAP Federal pilot program. This program provides additional funding for rural areas and can be used to support coordination.

### Existing Coordination Efforts among Local Governments

County/tribal governments and regional organizations are encouraged to coordinate transportation resources through the Federal SAFETEA-LU legislation, which requires "locally developed coordinated public transit-human service transportation plans" as a prerequisite to receiving 5310, 5316 and 5317 funds. In 2006, 71 of Wisconsin's 72 counties prepared local plans. County and regional coordination efforts are also supported by state funding programs

which reward coordination and allow flexibility for some program resources to be used for coordination efforts, including coordination studies and mobility managers. A second coordinated planning exercise was launched in May 2008 and will be completed in September; its objective was to update existing plans to incorporate Federal guidance issued after the initial round of plans were prepared.

In addition, some county/tribal governments and regional organizations are coordinating transportation services as part of changes to non-transportation service delivery models. In particular, service models associated with the expansion of Family Care, Aging Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) are changing the way services are provided so that individuals can access multiple services, including transportation, through a single point of contact. Many of the proposed service delivery formats involve consolidation and coordination of program elements.

## Statewide Coordination Model Objectives

Based on the information collected throughout this study and in consideration of existing coordination efforts, we have identified a series of goals for transportation coordination in Wisconsin:

- Increase the quantity and quality of existing transportation resources:
  - Meet growing demand for transportation services associated with changing demographics and economic circumstances
  - Support emerging human service and medical service delivery models, including Family Care
  - Meet the increasing need for cross-jurisdiction travel, including inter-city and cross-county
- Create more effective transportation delivery system models
  - Eliminate duplication and fragmentation in existing service delivery systems
  - Encourage regional service delivery models
  - Find reliable local resources for transportation (local match)
- Support and encourage local coordination efforts
  - Create clear coordination requirements
  - Develop coordination monitoring and oversight systems
  - Collect consistent data across transportation programs
- Improve transportation service for users
- Improve quality of transportation services

## Coordination Obstacles

Our research has also led us to a number of obstacles impeding progress towards a more coordinated transportation system.

- Existing transportation funding provides resources to different entities for similar purposes. Fragmented programs include 85.20 (public transit), 85.21 (specialized transportation), Medicaid and several small pots of funding for client based human service transportation.

- Transportation funding programs do not have strong coordination requirements. Of the \$252 million in 2006 available for transportation, only \$6.7 million (less than 3%) had coordination requirements associated with funding.
- Coordination is not perceived as a benefit in local areas, which often experience:
  - A lack of clear direction for what and how to coordinate
  - No rewards/financial incentives for coordination, including funding to support coordination efforts
  - Few meaningful consequences for not coordinating
  - A lack of good operational models for effective coordination, and
  - A lack of administrative support systems for coordination, such as consistent reporting requirements and streamlined grant applications.
- Local funding constraints impede coordination efforts, such as stable funding for transportation services and programs, and challenges associated with using local funds across jurisdictional boundaries or for multiple purposes.
- There is no authority to coordinate human service-oriented programs with medical (Medicaid) and workforce services provided outside of the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) or local county/tribal aging units.
- There are limited opportunities for key players to get involved in coordination, such as medical assistance transportation providers, workforce development organizations and Regional Planning Commissions.

## Wisconsin Model of Coordination

Given the current coordination paradigm in Wisconsin, recommendations are for Wisconsin to strengthen coordination efforts at the state level and build on these efforts to encourage coordination at the local level. In particular, we recommend Wisconsin establish a bi-level oversight structure that creates a system at both the state and local levels to support, guide and manage a coordinated transportation service network, as has been done in several peer states. State agencies, through the ICTC, are responsible to coordinate funding programs across departments and set guidelines and priorities for local coordination. As local entities implement coordination programs at the county or regional level, they will make recommendations back to the ICTC as to which policies/strategies work and which do not. Coordination will be a flexible, responsive and will continually be a work-in-progress.

This broad strategic direction was presented to members of the ICTC and its Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC), representing a diversity of interested organizations associated with community transportation services. Potential implementation options for this strategic direction, including the “do-nothing” option, are highlighted in Figure 6-1, together with their associated strengths, weaknesses and key implementation challenges. This matrix of implementation options was presented to the ICTC and SAC. Most members of the ICTC and stakeholder group agreed in principle to a state-level coordination body, mostly likely the ICTC, but with clearer responsibility and authority for coordination. Members of the ICTC and SAC also agreed to encourage local coordination councils, but felt strongly that additional resources would be needed to support local efforts if additional requirements are assigned. In particular, stakeholders were reluctant to divert a portion of the 85.21 program to be used for coordination. These same groups also supported increasing the requirements for coordination over time,

eventually tying community transportation funding to participation in coordination activities. It was felt that without increasing requirements, some counties and regions would not work towards a coordinated system.

Nelson\Nygaard identified four over-riding strategies that form the Wisconsin Model of Coordination. An action plan to achieve these strategies is presented in Chapter 7.

## **1. Strengthen ICTC as Lead Entity for Statewide Coordination Efforts**

### **Overview/Description**

The ICTC continues to function as the state policy body but with an expanded role that includes responsibility and authority for implementing Wisconsin's coordination efforts. Overtime the organizational and membership structure of the committee may change to reflect this increased authority and responsibility.

Under the Wisconsin Model of Coordination, the ICTC would be responsible for a long list of coordination activities, including:

- Creation of an organizational and administrative structure that will support increased oversight and responsibility for coordination, potentially including administration of Federal and/or state funds.
- Development of a clear set of guidelines, expectations and core requirements for county and/or regional coordination councils.
- Institution of directives that reward counties and regions that adhere to these guidelines through preferences in competitive grant programs across all funding agencies.
- Support for county and/or regional coordination councils with technical assistance efforts for planning and implementation activities; this may include training for mobility managers, specialized topical workshops, coordination conferences and written materials.
- Streamlining program reporting requirements to ease the administrative burden on local governments and track progress towards coordination goals.
- Removal of coordination barriers at the state level through multi-agency action plans or policy directives.
- Identification of funding sources to strengthen state and local coordination activities. Funding needs include resources to support both the ICTC and county/regional coordination councils.
- Pursuing executive or legislative support to strengthen coordination efforts, particular to fund start-up activities and link Federal and/or state transportation funds to participation in core coordination activities.

### **Purpose and Need**

As discussed, there are several challenges facing coordination in Wisconsin. The ICTC has addressed and continues to address challenges, but is limited in its current structure. For the ICTC to undertake more substantial challenges, it needs a stronger committee structure with clear authority and independent resources. From such a base, the ICTC will be able to craft a

foundation for coordination, that will guide, strengthen and support coordination at the county and regional levels.

## **2. Encourage County and/or Regional Coordinating Councils**

### **Overview/Description**

Encourage development of county and/or regional based coordinating councils comprised of a broad range of government and stakeholder representatives, meeting regularly and actively working to coordinate transportation services. The role of these groups will be to:

- Provide a forum for all agencies receiving Federal and state transportation resources to understand transportation programs available in their county/region, how services are delivered, when they are available and who is eligible to use them.
- Build on the human service public transit coordination plans created as part of the 2008 planning process, by reviewing information, setting goals for coordination and developing an implementation strategies and an action plan to meet their local needs.
- Implement the coordination plan in their county, or multi-county region
- Assign an entity to serve as the lead implementer of coordination strategies, pursuing technical assistance and grant funding as needed and available.
- Monitor the performance and results of the coordination strategies

The ICTC would play an essential role in encouraging and supporting these county and regional based coordinating councils. Specifically the ICTC would:

- Set clear directions, expectations and benchmarks for local coordinating councils
- Provide start-up funding through Federal grants, and existing state funding programs
- Identify new funding sources for ongoing implementation support
- Provide technical assistance to local coordination council staff
- Monitor the performance and results of the coordination councils

### **Purpose and Need**

Some counties and regions in Wisconsin have county or regional coordinating councils that meet regularly to discuss and identify local transportation needs and gaps and develop strategies to improve services. Fieldwork shows that these counties and regions are consistently further along in the coordination process and provide a higher level of service as compared with counties that do not have an active coordination council.

In most cases, however, existing coordination councils have not included the full range of key stakeholders in the discussions. The purpose of encouraging coordination councils will be to bring together stakeholders involved in using delivery or funding transportation services to meet and discuss transportation service development. We recommend that the State encourage participation from several stakeholder agencies on the local councils, at a minimum reflecting participation in the ICTC.

### **3. Require County and/or Regional Coordinating Councils**

#### **Overview/Description**

Most Wisconsin counties are engaged in some coordination activities, indeed 71 of the 72 counties prepared a Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan as part of the 2006 planning process and all counties are expected to participate in a county or regional plan as part of the 2008 planning process. The level of investment and involvement in ongoing coordination planning and implementation varies significantly across the state. Low levels of coordination activities result from a number of issues, including a lack of resources and technical expertise as well as a perceived lack of need and benefit. We recommend a phased process that begins with encouragement and support for coordination councils, strengthening over time to a system that requires participation in a coordination council as a prerequisite to receiving funding.

The coordination model recommends that Wisconsin go beyond this requirement to tie implementation to Federal and state transportation funding programs. Specifically, this recommendation requires counties and/or regions to have active coordination councils that meet certain criteria, such as identifying clear goals, demonstrating success towards those goals, holding periodic meetings, and including a broad-base of stakeholder participation. If counties and regions do not follow these guidelines, they would not be eligible for some state and/or Federal transportation funds.

#### **Purpose and Need**

One of the key principles of the Wisconsin Model of Coordination is to develop policies and strategies that will create a coordinated network of community transportation services available to Wisconsin residents. We recognize that local entities are in the best position to understand their own circumstances and needs, and are therefore, in the best position to design their own coordination programs. At the same time the Wisconsin Model of Coordination is designed to ensure a standard of service across the state. Accordingly, there is a need for a core set of requirements that set participation, frequency, measurement and implementation objectives for coordination councils.

Because counties and regions have different levels of expertise and experience with coordination, the Model recommends a development period of between one and three years, where coordination councils are encouraged but not required. At the end of this development period, coordination councils should be required. Requirements may be enforced by tying Federal and/or state transportation funding to participation in these activities.

### **4. Encourage Regionalization Through Incentives and Rewards**

#### **Overview**

There is no clear-cut template for grouping counties into regions; Regional Planning Commissions, Area Agencies on Aging, and Family Care regions are all different. Experience from other states suggests that assigning regions in this manner would not be accepted by the counties and fail. Instead, we recommend that counties wishing to group together and prepare a regional coordination plan be encouraged to do so.

#### **Purpose and Need**

There are 72 counties and 11 federally-recognized tribal government in Wisconsin. Most programs, services and funding are delivered via these local county and tribal units. While the

delivery systems allow for considerable local control, the need and demand for transportation services is not confined to county boundaries. In the long term, encouraging counties to work together to create more regionally based service delivery models is advised.

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**Figure 6-1 Implementation Considerations: Strengthen Role of ICTC in Coordination Planning**

Option	Description	Strengths	Weaknesses	Implementation Considerations
Do Nothing	Continue with ICTC as currently functioning – act as transportation coordination entity between state agencies with focus on education, outreach and policy development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continues current mission and success.</li> <li>- No requirements for additional resources or changes in membership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does not support systematic approach to increasing coordination or addressing increasing demands for transportation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report to governor on existing accomplishments.</li> <li>- Prepare new work plan based on existing authority, may include training for mobility managers.</li> <li>- DOT remains de facto lead coordination agency by virtue of funding</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthen Role of ICTC in Coordination Planning and Implementation Responsibility</b>				
Oversight of Local Planning Process	<p>ICTC authorized responsibility for oversight and monitoring of local coordination efforts.</p> <p>ICTC will become administrative and management entity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creates clear role for ICTC with increasing responsibility for coordination oversight.</li> <li>- ICTC defines coordination expectations &amp; outcomes.</li> <li>- Requires state agency to examine coordination barriers inherent in individual agency programs.</li> <li>- Supports phased approach – funding elements could be added as success and support for initiative grows.</li> <li>- Does not require change in existing agency funding streams; may not require change in membership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Separates coordination management and implementation from funding for services (funding remains with DOT).</li> <li>- Requires jointly establishing goals/outcomes; reporting and monitoring mechanisms for local coordinating councils.</li> <li>- Will be a labor intensive exercise and may require staff assigned to ICTC to perform research tasks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Necessitates clear directive for coordinating councils; actual elements can be defined jointly by ICTC.</li> <li>- Requires legislative/gubernatorial directive to designate roles, responsibility and authority of ICTC in overseeing coordinating councils.</li> <li>- Within ICTC agencies will need MOU between ICTC participants and dedication of staff time, and administrative resource commitment from participants.</li> </ul>
Shared Management of Existing Funds	Funding stays with individual agencies but ICTC works to tie decisions over use and distribution of transportation funding programs to coordination efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Links administrative/management oversight with funding decisions.</li> <li>- Allows ICTC to use funding as incentives or disincentives for specific coordination activities.</li> <li>- ICTC as an entity will be strengthened with funding authority.</li> <li>- Keeps all funds with current agencies and in current funding programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Departments likely to be reluctant to permit other departments decision making authority over funding.</li> <li>- Agencies will have to establish internal reporting chain for spending and oversight decisions.</li> <li>- May require change in ICTC staffing to reflect spending authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Necessitates clear directive for coordinating councils that can be reflected in funding programs.</li> <li>- Requires legislative/gubernatorial directive to designate spending authority of ICTC to support and manage coordinating councils.</li> <li>- Will need MOU between ICTC agencies, dedication of staff time, and administrative resources.</li> <li>- Will need extensive guidelines for funding decisions based on coordination requirements. Also requires consistent interpretation and administration of guidelines across all departments.</li> </ul>
Shared Management of Dedicated Fund	Creates new transportation funding sources to support coordination goals. Funds are jointly managed and distributed by ICTC and tied to coordination goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordination fund will clearly establish coordination priority with dedicated resources. Best opportunity for link between coordination priorities and funding.</li> <li>- Allows ICTC to directly use funding as incentive or disincentive for specific coordination activities.</li> <li>- ICTC as an entity will be strengthened with funding authority.</li> <li>- As ICTC becomes versed with funding, may be able to leverage additional funds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requires taking money from existing programs to create new fund.</li> <li>- New fund will need to be created through legislation.</li> <li>- May create perception of “winners” and “losers” at local level, requires effective communication strategy.</li> <li>- May require change in ICTC staffing to reflect spending authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Necessitates clear directive for coordinating councils</li> <li>- Requires legislative/gubernatorial directive to create coordination fund either by redirecting existing funds or creating new funds.</li> <li>- Requires legislative/gubernatorial directive to designate ICTC as spending/management entity.</li> <li>- Will need MOU between ICTC participating agencies, dedication of staff time, and administrative resources.</li> </ul>
<b>If agree to shared management of dedicated fund</b>				
Transfer Existing Funds	Establish 85.21 funds as coordination fund.	- 85.21 already used to support E&D transportation. Portion could be allocated for coordination.	- Diversion of 85.21 would have direct impact on local service levels, especially in short run.	- Requires legislative/gubernatorial directive to change use of funds and establish ‘strings’ on use.
Create New Fund	New fund created by contributions from ICTC member agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shares burden and stake in of finding and spending resources for coordination.</li> <li>- Shared funds to support multitude of programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of resources will challenge individual state agencies to make meaningful contributions.</li> <li>- New funding reduces other program resources.</li> </ul>	- Requires legislative/gubernatorial directive to allow agencies to divert funds to coordination.
Create New Fund	Find new fund source for coordination.	- Lowest impact on existing constituent group.	- Will require change in economic/spending environment to find resources.	- Requires legislative/gubernatorial directive to establish new fund and define purpose.

**Figure 6-2 Implementation Considerations – Establish Local/Regional Level Coordinating Councils**

Option	Description	Strengths	Weaknesses	Implementation Considerations
Do Nothing	Continue with ongoing coordination efforts – consists of SAFETEA-LU requirements, federal grant programs and 2008 planning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meets federal requirements.</li> <li>- Continues with existing coordination program.</li> <li>- Includes mechanisms to encourage local efforts and reward innovations.</li> <li>- Low impact on local resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does not establish clear expectations for coordination in Wisconsin.</li> <li>- Will not lead to consistent levels of transportation service statewide.</li> <li>- Does not substantively address or prepare to address increasing demand for transportation.</li> <li>- Does not address changes in other program service delivery (human service and medical) with anticipated increases in demand for service.</li> </ul>	- Business as usual – no resistance from existing partners.
Encourage Coordinating Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue with ongoing coordination efforts.</li> <li>- Define and set goals for local coordination efforts, reward with grant funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Similar to status quo, but with more direction.</li> <li>- Meets federal requirements and includes mechanisms to encourage local efforts and reward innovations.</li> <li>- Low impact on local resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No real control over coordination program elements or timelines.</li> <li>- Will not lead to consistent levels of transportation service and coordination statewide.</li> <li>- State has limited ability to use more than federal programs (5310, 5316 &amp; 5317 plus STRAP) to encourage and reward coordination councils.</li> <li>- Does not substantively address or prepare to address increasing demand for transportation.</li> <li>- Does not address changes in other program service delivery (human service and medical) with anticipated increases in demand for service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Necessitates setting clear definitions and expectations for coordination strategies and outcomes as well as entity responsible for oversight and monitoring.</li> <li>- Can be combined with ongoing coordination education, training and networking</li> </ul>
Use Incentives to Encourage Coordinating Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create coordination incentive fund by carving out portion of existing 85.21 (as small as 1%).</li> <li>- Use fund to award start-up grants to counties and regions strengthening coordination efforts.</li> <li>- Grant program sets clear guidelines for developing coordination programs and expected outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consistent with current practice of using grants to encourage innovation.</li> <li>- Rewards counties and regions interested in working on coordination.</li> <li>- Minimal impact on state resources.</li> <li>- Will address increasing demand for transportation services and increase best practices in State of Wisconsin.</li> <li>- Grant process may be managed by ICTC..</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requires legislation to change 85.21 administration rules.</li> <li>- Will not lead to consistent efforts statewide.</li> <li>- Potential for resistance associated with reduction in 85.21 funding from some groups.</li> <li>- Requires state oversight, reporting and monitoring mechanisms to ensure success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requires legislative action to change rules associated with 85.21.</li> <li>- Requires gubernatorial/legislative action to assign management to ICTC.</li> <li>- Necessitates setting clear definitions and expectations for coordination strategies and outcomes as well as entity responsible for oversight and monitoring.</li> <li>- Can be combined with ongoing coordination education, training and networking.</li> </ul>
Require Coordinating Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue with ongoing coordination efforts.</li> <li>- Define and set goals for local coordination efforts, reward with grant funding.</li> <li>- Phase in mandate for local coordinating councils that ties council activities to funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phased approach gives communities an opportunity to ramp up efforts.</li> <li>- Sets clear expectation and timeframe for coordination efforts.</li> <li>- Will lead towards consistent levels of transportation service and coordination statewide.</li> <li>- Will substantively address increasing demand for transportation services.</li> <li>- Can require participation from variety of stakeholders and integrate medical/human service programs with transportation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increases administrative responsibilities of local entities.</li> <li>- Requires funding to implement, or will meet resistance to unfunded mandate.</li> <li>- Allocating funding will likely divert existing resources and thus may encounter resistance.</li> <li>- Requires state oversight, reporting and monitoring mechanisms to ensure success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Necessitates allocating funding to support program.</li> <li>- Necessitates setting clear definitions for coordination strategies and outcomes as well as entity responsible for oversight and monitoring.</li> <li>- Can be combined with ongoing coordination education, training and networking.</li> </ul>
Option	Description	Strengths	Weaknesses	Implementation Considerations
Regional Coordinating Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can be used with steps to encourage or mandate coordinating councils. Add element that encourages and/or rewards regional models.</li> <li>- Assumption is regions will self-form.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allows coordination efforts to more closely reflect current need for travel across jurisdictions.</li> <li>- Can be retained as option and implemented as appropriate.</li> <li>- Allows counties to work together based on preferences and champions.</li> <li>- Consistent with current programs.</li> <li>- Experience supports this approach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will require that counties develop processes to balance service delivery and funding across counties, urbanized areas and rural districts.</li> <li>- Leaves control over when and how to regionalize with local entities.</li> <li>- Some areas may be slow to form regions or counties may be left out of regionalization efforts all together.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will work best if financial incentives are provided to areas that form regional working groups.</li> <li>- Regional service delivery entities may require changes in state and/or local funding programs.</li> </ul>

# Chapter 7. Implementation Action Plan

## Overview

The objective of the implementation plan is to identify work tasks and actions that will collectively achieve the Wisconsin Model of Coordination. As discussed, the Model is developed around a series of principles that members of the ICTC and SAC jointly determined will support and guide future coordination planning in the State of Wisconsin:

- Coordination councils are an essential element of a coordinated transportation system. The councils should operate at the state and local levels and be comprised of individuals representing a broad range of stakeholders to include relevant organizations, agencies and departments. The state level coordinating council should provide local councils with clear directives in terms of goals and objectives and ensure local councils have flexibility to design locally-appropriate programs, projects and strategies.
- State agencies guide and fund most local transportation programs, and are in an excellent position to support coordinated transportation systems. A critical objective for state-level agencies is to create an administrative, funding and management structure that works across agencies to reward and facilitate coordination of local transportation services.
- County and regional government agencies and organizations, with sufficient financial and technical support, are in the best position to craft coordinated transportation systems that meet local and regional needs.
- As a strategy to ensure consistent services across Wisconsin, the State may eventually require local governments to participate in elements of a coordinated transportation system, such as a local coordinating council, in order to receive funding.
- As part of SAFETEA-LU, three sources of federal grant funds require coordination plans to be in place before funding can be awarded. In the future, Wisconsin may build on this requirement by tying Federal and/or state funding programs to coordination efforts.
- Coordination policies and programs should encourage development of regional (multi-county) transportation systems and regional coordination efforts where appropriate.

## Ongoing Coordination Activities

Over the past several months, the ICTC has created momentum and increased interest in coordination through dialogue generated as part of developing the Wisconsin Model of Coordination and the 2008 SAFETEA-LU planning process. Further activities will maintain interest and support for coordination as it sets a course for future efforts:

- **Coordination Report to the Governor (Fall 2008)** – As it finalizes the Model, the ICTC is also preparing a report to the Governor outlining its activities and accomplishments. The objective of this report, from the perspective of the Model, is to extend the existing legislative order empowering the ICTC. In addition, the report provides the ICTC with a number of key opportunities:
  - Defining the future role of ICTC as a Council with clear responsibility and authority for statewide coordination efforts. This process should incorporate the ICTC's refined mission statement, core values and key goals for the Council.

- Determine the level of legislative and gubernatorial support required to achieve these goals. At a minimum this involves extending the existing legislative order for another two years.
- Develop an aggressive yet realistic work plan that supports a more responsive role for coordination, with clear performance goals and activities over the two-year period.
- Sustain stakeholder involvement in coordination planning by providing opportunities for SAC input to the Governor's report.
- Strengthen the commitment of individual departments and agencies to coordination efforts.
- **2008 SAFETEA-LU Planning Process (Summer 2008)** – WisDOT led a coordination planning process, for counties and multi-county regions to update existing transportation coordination plans. These locally developed plans are the foundations of future coordinated systems. As plans are developed and projects identified, WisDOT has opportunities to support these plans through:
  - Funding projects identified in local plans with competitive grant resources. Potential resources include STRAP, 5310, 5316, 5317 and the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) program.
  - Invite individuals who led local planning processes to present their experiences to the ICTC.
  - Reward counties and multi-county regions that created exemplary plans by acknowledging staff efforts, presenting awards at statewide venues, or providing other appropriate speaker and training opportunities.
- **Mobility Management Training Program (Ongoing 2008/2009)** – In the past year, WisDOT awarded Federal transportation grants to county and regional mobility managers, most of whom are assigned to coordinate and strengthen inter-agency transportation services. Recognizing the need for technical support, WisDOT implemented a nine-month training and networking program for mobility managers. To strengthen coordination at both the state and local levels, the training program should:
  - Ensure mobility managers understand the importance of coordinating councils in sustaining long-term coordination efforts. Mobility managers should be shown methods to organize individuals representing a variety of interests, programs and agencies, and armed with techniques to sustain interests and efforts over time.
  - Include other State agencies, both to teach mobility managers about program developments as well as to create opportunities for State staff to learn about challenges and opportunities directly from front-line staff.
  - Engage mobility managers in discussions about future coordination policies and strategies to get input and advice, and begin developing support for potential state-level policy or programmatic changes.
  - Build on existing success by creating a Wisconsin-based best practices forum where mobility managers teach staff from other counties.
  - Support mobility managers in becoming a sustainable part of the transportation system in their regions by identifying ongoing funding for their positions and continued technical assistance.

## Next Steps for ICTC

Successful implementation of the Wisconsin Model of Coordination is dependent on a strong and influential ICTC that has the resources and support it needs to set standards, fund programs, and monitor progress. The committee also needs the authority to hold county and regional agencies accountable. As it establishes itself as the lead group responsible for statewide coordination efforts, the ICTC faces the dual tasks of sustaining momentum for successful ongoing coordination activities and pursuing additional authority for future efforts. The two tasks are mutually reinforcing – ongoing activities create opportunities to strengthen Wisconsin’s coordination infrastructure, identify success and develop support for future efforts. Additionally, as the ICTC pursues additional authority and resources for future activities, it further strengthens existing efforts both at the state and local level.

Despite the synergy across tasks, achieving both at the same time will require considerable effort, in terms of staff resources and stakeholder outreach. This is especially true considering the ICTC already lacks dedicated staff and funding. Balancing the challenges facing the ICTC as it pursues the coordination model are the compounding external circumstances that make coordinated transportation systems more, not less, important to Wisconsin residents. Failure to achieve success and build trust in the ICTC now will only make future efforts more costly, in terms of funding and stakeholder support.

### **Task 1: Sustain Momentum for Successful Ongoing Coordination Activities**

The ICTC and WisDOT have several ongoing programs:

- Collaboration among ICTC members to prepare and submit the Governor’s report
- Participation from broad Stakeholder Advisory Committee in ICTC activities and programs
- Multi-agency participation in statewide conferences, meetings and workshops, demonstrating coordination and collaboration to stakeholders and constituents
- Multi-agency collaboration to fund and review competitive transportation grant programs (WETAP, New Freedom, 5310 and Medicaid Infrastructure Grants)
- Funding of 19 mobility managers with Federal grant programs
- Training opportunities for mobility managers, funded and managed by WisDOT

Combined these activities develop momentum for coordination, demonstrate commitment and create success stories. Most of these activities have been implemented as independent ad-hoc opportunities rather than as part of a clear, well-defined strategy. Participants and staff are unsure if and how efforts will be sustained. Likewise, counties and agencies currently not participating are not sufficiently motivated to get involved. We recommend the following as next steps (a summary is available in Table 7-1):

- Develop local coordination guidelines. Coordination efforts by counties and regions are currently guided by Federal SAFETEA-LU requirements, which are focused on planning. The ICTC should also set straight-forward guidelines consistent with 2008 planning efforts and reflecting state coordination goals. Guidelines should focus on consistent ongoing collaboration among funding agencies to improve service delivery and increase the

quantity and quality of community transportation services in Wisconsin. Guidelines and goals can set expectations for coordination councils (participation, frequency and activities), mobility managers, and coordination funding.

- Develop an outreach program. ICTC members should continue and expand on efforts to educate, inform and encourage coordination among stakeholders and other constituents. The ICTC has been effective at this in the past, but more multi-agency representation and collaboration at its conferences, workshops and seminars focused on the coordination model will strengthen the committee's goals, increase awareness and understanding, and build support for future activities
- Create a technical assistance program. County and regional organizations working towards coordination have consistently identified technical assistance as a critical element of coordination efforts. As more counties and regions employ mobility managers and create coordinating councils the need for technical assistance will increase. Technical assistance includes guidance about implementing coordination strategies and information about how changes in non-transportation related state and federal programs may impact transportation. Technical assistance should also include information about available grant and funding resources.
- Strengthen multi-agency participation in competitive grant programs. Wisconsin currently jointly administers several Federal grant programs. Through the ICTC, state agencies currently have multiple-agency representation on grant review procedures. These activities support coordination at the state and local level. The ICTC should continue to look for and take advantage of available opportunities to increase collaboration on grant programs that fund community transportation services.
- Develop a multi-agency reporting and performance monitoring system. The ICTC should develop a uniform reporting system with several common reporting measures collected across transportation funding programs. Common reporting formats will help the ICTC measure, demonstrate and articulate success associated with agencies, regions and programs that include coordination elements. This information will strengthen county and regional coordination efforts, but also build support among state agencies and elected officials.
- Enforce existing coordination requirements. At least three federal transportation programs have coordination requirements. Staff should follow-up on these requirements to be sure they are implemented as defined. Demonstrating commitment to these requirements will show local agencies that the requirements are taken seriously. The process should also help to uncover challenges and obstacles to increased coordination.

### **Task 2: Pursue Additional Authority and Responsibility for Future Coordination Efforts**

While much of the recent success and momentum achieved by the ICTC has been funded and supported by WisDOT, this is unlikely to continue. In the future, WisDOT will not have the resources to continue to be able to support the ICTC at its current level. Furthermore, for state agencies to truly be coordinated, they must jointly participate in funding and staffing of coordination programs. Many of the action steps required to strengthen the ICTC and secure funding will not be easily achieved. To become a stronger, more effective entity, the ICTC should:

- Adopt the Wisconsin Model of Coordination. The ICTC should officially adopt the Model, specifically the objectives of (1) strengthening the ICTC so it becomes the lead agency with authority and responsibility for coordination; (2) defining and developing county and regional level coordination councils; (3) supporting coordination councils (initially through encouragement and rewards, but ultimately requiring participation in multi-agency coordination councils as a prerequisite to funding); and 4) encouraging and rewarding regional transportation services. These key principles will subsequently guide future ICTC efforts.
- Establish ICTC Funding and Staffing Needs. The ICTC should determine the level of support required to implement the Model. These needs will include staffing and funding not only for the ICTC but also for counties and regions implementing the required coordination activities. ICTC staffing should be sufficient to support ongoing and future coordination efforts. Funding should be sufficient for the ICTC to provide technical assistance and outreach, and sufficient “seed money” grant resources to encourage and reward county and regional coordination activities.
- Develop Funding and Staffing Plan. The ICTC needs to identify how it will staff and fund its efforts. Potential funding sources include contributions from multiple agencies, diversion of resources from existing programs and/or new taxes, fees or other source. As discussed in Chapter 6, there are very clear advantages and disadvantages associated with different funding and staffing models. Consequently, these decisions will have a direct impact on the organization structure and composition of the ICTC and must reflect a realistic assessment of funding and staffing opportunities. Implementing the funding and staffing plan will require strategies such as clear articulation of costs and benefits, developing multi-agency support, reaching out to stakeholders, and establishing legislative and executive relationships.
- Refine Organizational Structure and Member Composition. As the ICTC discusses a funding plan, it should be sure the organizational structure and membership are sufficient to support new approaches. Agencies’ participating on the ICTC should reflect the roles they play in supporting coordination activities in general and the ICTC in particular.

**Figure 7-1 ICTC Next Steps**

Implementation Option	Purpose/Reason	Short-term Objectives	Longer-term Objectives
<b>Task 1: Sustain Momentum</b>			
Define Coordination and Set Goals for ICTC	Establish a process to measure progress and future evaluation of ICTC efforts	Clear goals will help define and structure ICTC efforts	Provides point of departure for evaluation of ICTC efforts
Develop Local Coordination Guidelines for Counties & Regions	Communicates expectations to counties and regions	Guides local coordination efforts	Creates mechanism to measure success
Develop outreach strategy	Advertise existing grant opportunities; Create process in communication between ICTC, stakeholders and local level coordination entities	Maintains communication channels; Ensures maximum participation in grant programs	Strengthens links between ICTC and local coordination efforts
Create Technical Assistance Plan	Identify and provide technical resources for county and regional coordination efforts	Multi-agency approach to technical assistance	Strengthens links between ICTC and local coordination efforts
Strengthen Multi-Agency Participation in Grant Funding	Establish inter-agency involvement in transportation funding; Cross-pollinate among programs	Fosters understanding; Creates collaboration among agencies	Strengthens links among ICTC members
Develop a Multi-Agency Reporting and Performance Monitoring System	Measure and track performance of transportation programs and effectiveness of coordination efforts	Communicate successes with agency senior staff, state legislature and governor	Develops support for increased resources and funding
Enforce Existing Coordination Requirements	Demonstrates commitment to coordination	Helps identify barriers and opportunities	Lays foundation for future requirements
<b>Task 2: Strengthen ICTC</b>			
Adopt Wisconsin Model of Coordination	Demonstrate agreement on key model principles	Sets strategic direction	Sets strategic direction
Establish ICTC Funding and Staffing Needs	Ensure committee has adequate resources to carry out responsibility	Establishes joint responsibility; Creates buy-in among agencies	Establishes ICTC as multi-agency entity with resources and responsibility
Develop a Funding and Staffing Plan	Meet ICTC support needs; identify ongoing funding resources	Establishes joint responsibility; Creates buy-in among agencies	Establishes ICTC as multi-agency entity with resources and responsibility
Re-assess ICTC and Refine Organization Structure and Member Composition	Create common understanding of ICTC responsibility and authority	Ensure organization structure is sufficient to support work plan	Ensure organization structure is sufficient to support work plan
Develop Legislative Strategy	Develop and build support to strengthen coordination efforts through legislative changes	Outline desired changes and identify sponsors and supporters	Implement legislative objectives

## Ongoing ICTC Coordination Activities and Work Tasks

Even as the ICTC fundamentals are established, the ICTC will continue to work on a number of coordination tasks that will continue to improve and foster coordination at the state and local level but do not require a substantive change in policy or administration. These tasks are not required for the Wisconsin Model of Coordination; rather they complement efforts and can be carried out concurrently. Strategies and tasks are grouped roughly by implementation time frame, and are summarized in Figure 7-2.

- **Listening sessions or focus groups with county and regional coordination staff** – ICTC staff may hold regular listening sessions or focus groups with individuals working on local transportation and coordination issues. The existing SAC provides an opportunity to meet with agencies but the group is primarily charged with sharing information, receiving feedback and discussing potential changes. On the other hand, listening sessions or focus groups are an opportunity for agency staff to learn from local experience, understanding their challenges and receiving potential solutions. These sessions may be held annually, especially if there are a lot of changes implemented at the state level.
- **Inventory and assess county/regional coordination challenges** – There are numerous, well-documented challenges associated with creating a coordinated transportation system; volunteer driver reimbursement, grant submission timelines, cost allocation models to name a few. Instead of the ICTC anticipating which challenges are most critical to county and regional entities, the ICTC should solicit input as part of its outreach efforts and create a “wish list” of coordination challenges. Ideas may be solicited annually through web-based comment forms, conferences, emails or other accessible formats. The ICTC can then address the “wish list” and determine which challenge(s) it can remove, or provide guidance as to how to remove. Some proposals on the wish list may be easily addressed, while others may require significantly longer lead time outside the ICTC. Regardless of the outcome, the process will provide the ICTC with insights on local concerns and frustrations, and channel ICTC response to local concerns.
- **Inventory and promulgate existing funding opportunities for coordination** – The ICTC should develop a transportation funding matrix that lists available Federal and State funding to support county and regional coordination efforts and community transportation services. The ICTC may explore how coordination elements may be integrated into grant programs outside of the SAFETEA-LU requirements and incorporate coordination criteria into other agency grants. The resulting funding matrix should be shared with representatives in all of Wisconsin’s 72 counties.
- **Support county and regional coordinating councils with existing grant funds** – In the short-term it is highly unlikely that additional new funding will be available to support coordination efforts. Grant funding for coordination, including resources to support county or regional coordination councils, is available through existing programs, such as the DOT programs STRAP, 5310, 5316, and 5317 and Medicaid Infrastructure Grants. As the ICTC supports mobility manager training and other coordination technical assistance programs and coordination efforts gain traction, the ICTC should channel available funding resources to these efforts.
- **Evaluation of coordination technical assistance programs** – An immediate and useful step for the ICTC would be to evaluate existing technical assistance programs, such as the mobility manager training program and/or opportunities provided by federal programs like United We Ride. Evaluators should meet with county and regional coordinating

councils to understand their priorities and preferences for technical assistance. The evaluation should determine the types of information and assistance that are most useful, meaningful, and transferable to ongoing efforts to coordinate transportation services. Information collected during this process would guide future technical assistance and communication efforts.

- **Establishment a roundtable on transportation coordination for senior staff** – While the ICTC has long recognized the importance of engaging stakeholders, it has been less successful at enlisting support from senior level staff at ICTC member departments and agencies. Previous efforts have relied on ICTC members to communicate with their senior staff independently. While this process has served to keep agencies informed, it has not been as effective at strengthening cross-agency ties, such that senior department and program staff understand and appreciate the inter-related aspects of transportation services, programs and funding. A key task for the ICTC is to establish regular meetings between senior staff at each ICTC member agency to discuss transportation, outline key challenges and present proposed solutions.
- **Evaluation of state directed coordination efforts** – The ICTC should be engaged in ongoing evaluation and review of its activities through regular interaction with stakeholders and members of the senior staff. After two years of efforts, the ICTC should evaluate statewide coordination efforts against stated goals and re-assess system strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. The evaluation should also include quantitative performance data on the success of different strategies, programs and geographic regions. The data is anticipated to be instrumental in determining future recommendations. The objective of the evaluation will be to gauge progress towards coordination goals, assess the effectiveness of coordination activities and determine the demand and need for additional coordination activities.
- **Report on coordination success and challenges** – Building on the results of the evaluation, the ICTC should prepare a second report on coordination to the Governor. Similar to the upcoming 2008 report, this report should include input and comments from stakeholders and department senior staff. If the report concludes that policy and legislative changes, such as requirements to participation in certain coordination activities and/or tying funding to participation in coordination activities and/or additional resources are needed, stakeholders and senior staff should participate in planning subsequent legislative actions. Additional reporting and/or briefing documents should be available as needed to support legislative changes.

**Figure 7-2 Ongoing ICTC Activities and Strategies**

Activity or Strategy	Purpose/Reason	Implementation Challenges	Implementation Difficulty
Hold Listening Sessions/Focus Groups with Local Coordination Staff	Understand local perspective on coordination; assess what is working and why	Identify resources to conduct evaluation	Low
Address County/Regional Coordination Challenges	Provide opportunity for local to inform ICTC about key challenges; Encourages ICTC to work together to support local coordination efforts	Requires committee to conduct in-depth research on select issues and work collaboratively to solve difficult problems	High
Inventory Existing Funding Opportunities for Coordination	Create clear matrix that lists current funding opportunities and allowable uses	Collecting clear information across departments	Low
Support Existing Coordination with Grants	Excellent opportunity for state agencies to coordinate; Supports local coordination efforts and reinforces coordination model	Requires individual agencies to reward counties/regions that meet ICTC goals rather than agency goals	Medium
Evaluate Technical Assistance Programs	Determine how to provide technical assistance that best supports local coordination efforts	Identify resources to conduct evaluation	Low
Establish Senior Staff Roundtable on Transportation Coordination	Create opportunities for senior staff to understand and recognize importance of coordination	Securing participation from senior staff	Medium
Evaluate State-Directed Coordination Efforts	Assess ongoing coordination efforts; Determine need for additional and/or increased coordination requirements	Evaluation may be controversial, may need to engage external resources to conduct evaluation	Low
Report on Coordination Success and Challenges	Update Governor and legislature on coordination progress and effectiveness	Depending on results and requests, getting agreement may be challenging	Medium

