

Region: Heart of Texas

Barrier # 1

Brief description of the Barrier: **Decreasing state funding for public transportation across increasing number of providers**

Source of Barrier

 Is the Barrier officially documented? If Yes, define specific source of Barrier.

- Federal Statute _____
- Federal Agency Regulation _____
- Federal Funding Policy _____

- Texas Statute (Transportation Code, for example) _____
- Texas Regulation (Administrative Code, for example) _____
- Texas Agency Policy, especially funding policy _____

- Regional Government Policy _____

- Local Agency Policy _____
- Local Interpretation of Federal/State law _____

 X **Is the Barrier something you know by reference** but not necessarily documented? If Yes, define your best understanding of the source of Barrier.

Federal and state funding is packaged to the legislature in such a way that it suggests an increase in funding while hiding the individual revenue sources.

Specifically describe how this Barrier is obstructing coordinated regional service. *Attach additional pages as required to describe in detail and with supporting facts.*

When funding is packaged to the legislature, it hides the individual funding resources. When unwrapped, it exposes an increasing federal portion of revenue and a decreasing state portion. There are two problems with this: First, the federal portion is contingent upon local match and there is no dedicated process for the consistent generation of local match by rural and small urban transit providers. Without sufficient local match, the ability to

draw down available federal funding diminishes. Second, an increasing demand for service and additional service providers means that more agencies are competing for the same, basically stagnant, pot of money.

Unbundling the package prior to presentation to the legislature would provide a realistic view of funding streams. In theory, this would encourage legislators to earmark more state funding for public transportation. Additionally, creating a consistent method for securing local match would assure maximum draw-down of available federal funding.

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Barrier # 2

Brief description of the Barrier:

Service delivery method restrictions across various transit services vary among programs.

Source of Barrier

X Is the Barrier officially documented? If Yes, define specific source of Barrier.

- Federal Statute _____
- Federal Agency Regulation 5307, 5310 and 5311 programs _____
- Federal Funding Policy _____

- Texas Statute (Transportation Code, for example) _____
- Texas Regulation (Administrative Code, for example) _____
- Texas Agency Policy, especially funding policy _____

- Regional Government Policy _____

- Local Agency Policy _____
- Local Interpretation of Federal/State law _____

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Specifically describe how this Barrier is obstructing coordinated regional service. *Attach additional pages as required to describe in detail and with supporting facts.*

The reporting guidelines for providing delivery of public transportation to various groups of people in specific sections of the authorization bill for public transportation, including 5307, 5310 and 5311, result in preventing coordinated services among various transportation providers and ineffective use of infrastructure.

For example, 5311 does not allow for rural providers to maintain fixed route

systems that would increase ridership and provide a more coordinated service. A cohesive authorization bill that applies the same general guidelines for service delivery in both rural and small urban settings would allow more efficient use of agency vehicles and more coordinated efforts between transportation providers getting people where they want to go and when they want to be there.

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Barrier # 3

Brief description of the Barrier:

Lack of standard policies and procedures for drivers.

Source of Barrier

X **Is the Barrier officially documented?** If Yes, define specific source of Barrier.

- Federal Statute _____
- Federal Agency Regulation 5307/5311 _____
- Federal Funding Policy _____

- Texas Statute (Transportation Code, for example) _____
- Texas Regulation (Administrative Code, for example) _____
- Texas Agency Policy, especially funding policy _____

- Regional Government Policy _____

- Local Agency Policy _____
- Local Interpretation of Federal/State law _____

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Specifically describe how this Barrier is obstructing coordinated regional service. *Attach additional pages as required to describe in detail and with supporting facts.*

Driver eligibility, training and testing requirements vary among agencies. One regulatory-based example would be the difference in the licensing requirement between drivers of 15 passenger vans used by paratransit as compared to a 30 passenger city bus driver that must possess a CDL. However, these differences extend to the types of training for passenger assistance and safe driving techniques as well. An agency then will not trust another agency's drivers to provide proper quality of service if the other agency's drivers have not received appropriate training.

Development of standardized policies and procedures that affect all drivers and their training is necessary to effectively coordinate a regional transportation system.

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Barrier # 4

Brief description of the Barrier:

Urban sprawl has stretched the resources of transit agencies

Source of Barrier

 Is the Barrier officially documented? If Yes, define specific source of Barrier.

- Federal Statute _____
- Federal Agency Regulation _____
- Federal Funding Policy _____

- Texas Statute (Transportation Code, for example) _____
- Texas Regulation (Administrative Code, for example) _____
- Texas Agency Policy, especially funding policy _____

- Regional Government Policy _____

- Local Agency Policy _____
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Both commercial and residential trend is to abandon hub/downtown to expand out to the outer limits of major communities—i.e. suburbs—without forethought into public service needs. Many of the residential communities and public parking lots in commercial areas will not accommodate the public transportation vehicle or have space available for a common bus station.

Specifically describe how this Barrier is obstructing coordinated regional service. *Attach additional pages as required to describe in detail and with supporting facts.*

State law prohibits the restriction of land uses outside of incorporated cities and a few select counties. In addition, many cities do not have land use restrictions. The resulting development has pushed residential, commercial, office, industrial and public sector land uses far apart from each other. In

order to serve the same number of persons and to connect to the same services, public transportation providers must cover even greater distances. For urban services, the low population densities of new developments makes fixed route services unfeasible, further stretching the resources of demand response services. The state legislature does not necessarily need to enact or permit land use restrictions everywhere; however, if they choose not to, additional resources will be needed for public transportation to offset the great travel distances required as a result of urban sprawl.

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