

Coordinating commuters







Central Texas agencies work together to improve transportation

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It's the biggest complaint historically among transportation groups in the Central Texas region -- a lack of cooperation.

Thanks to legislation passed in 2003, however, the government is at last seeing that transit agencies work together. Recently, the [Capital Area Council of Governments](#), or CAPCOG, was chosen as the lead agency for the Regional Transit Coordination Committee.

Although CAPCOG has no authority to give directives, the organization coordinates an overall strategy and ensures that everyone's on the same page. It's one step the government is taking to manage transit services efficiently, eliminate duplication among services and address service gaps.

Central Texas currently has more than 25 agencies and organizations that provide public transportation services, health and human services or client transportation services in the region.

Among them are the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the Capital Area Rural Transportation System, the Texas Department of Transportation and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, each with its own acronym.

Some have overlapping responsibilities, providing transportation for disabled and elderly citizens, for example. Others don't provide services to certain areas or portions of the population at all.

The Regional Transit Coordination Committee formed in June 2005 under CAPCOG and the Austin district of TxDOT. Through a grant from TxDOT, CAPCOG has been charged with completing by December a plan that encompasses all of the region's transit systems. The council also will highlight areas that need to be improved and areas that are working.

Sean Moran, director of regional planning and information services for CAPCOG, says this statewide initiative will have a significant effect on Central Texas because of the region's challenges stemming from growth, economic development and a need to improve transportation systems.

"There's a sense that there may be some inefficient transit systems in our area," Moran says. "This is a way to see who's using our transit systems, when they're using it and whether or not their needs are being met. If they are, then great. If not, then we'll highlight some areas that need to improve."

CAPCOG Executive Director Betty Voights says part of the Regional Transit Coordination Committee initiative involves funding as well. Many different funding sources help pay for transportation projects.