

FINAL REPORT

Rural Public Transportation Brokerage in Illinois

Project IVA-T1, FY 02

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Executive Summary

Federal, state, and local governments have recognized and promoted the benefits of interagency coordination of public transportation and human service agencies. One form of interagency coordination is a brokerage. In a brokerage, a centralized authority directly or indirectly provides transit services through several transit operators to potentially reduce administrative and transportation costs, support data centralization, integrate community transportation services, and enhance client services. These benefits may result from centralizing critical functions, including planning, public information, call-intake, certification, scheduling, and transportation, and from overcoming barriers related to statutory and legal difficulties; administrative, institutional, and perceptual issues; system operations, and client restrictions.

This study, therefore, has examined the potential for implementing paratransit brokerages in the State of Illinois. It has determined whether transportation brokers can provide better and more economical transit, identified whether current Section 5311 transit operators or other entities should operate a brokerage, determined how a broker can dispatch rides for a group of operators or agencies, and explained how IDOT can implement brokerages statewide.

The research team addressed these objectives by conducting a literature review, determining the success of other states' efforts to implement a brokerage or brokerages, surveying Illinois' existing transit and human service agencies and operators, analyzing and evaluating the collected data, devising plans for a model brokerage, studying a demonstration brokerage's operational needs, and developing brokerage implementation strategies. Activities in each task are discussed in separate chapters of this report.

In Chapter 1, the research team discusses what agencies are usually involved in the creation of a brokerage and the barriers and aids to success that these agencies face when they plan to implement a rural paratransit brokerage. While some barriers exist on the local level, others result from state or national policy. While some barriers may be easily overcome, others are difficult to eliminate. A look at the various agencies and an in-depth analysis of common barriers will help existing agencies and operators successfully implement a rural paratransit brokerage.

Nationwide, many public and private agencies and organizations provide transit services to disadvantaged people who need transportation options. Some of these providers include area agencies on aging, public transportation agencies, and state departments of social services, education, and employment. These agencies coordinate with many state agencies that have regulated funding, including state departments of transportation, state departments on aging, and state Medicaid agencies. These funding agencies and organizations may want to work together to negotiate conflicting or unnecessary demands on partnering agencies that want to form a brokerage. Laws, regulations, and organizational structures usually create these conflicting demands.

To implement these brokerages, transportation and human service agencies will likely need to overcome persistent administrative, institutional, and perceptual barriers that have separated them. Misconceptions and fears related to sharing of space, competition for funding, confused roles or responsibilities, and a lack of effort lead to these persistent barriers. A comprehensive approach to paratransit brokerages should therefore be developed, which would take into account the partnering agencies and their needs and interests. This approach would give the partnering agencies a sense of ownership in the brokerage and provide some transparency. The literature review, therefore, identifies barriers and success factors and correlates success factors with individual barriers to show how a brokerage and/or its partnering agencies can use these factors to mitigate specific barriers.

In Chapter 2, all fifty states were contacted in order to determine the status of their brokerage or brokerages. Most states do not have a brokerage and are not in the process of implementing one. However, the following seven states already have or will soon have at least one brokerage: Alaska, Florida, Kentucky, Oregon, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington State. These states' transportation departments have adopted various roles in their state's brokerage strategies, which range from adopting top-down approaches to acting as "bystanders" that typically facilitate legislation or collaboration. Surprisingly, none of the states has mandated that its transportation and human service agencies subscribe to a brokerage strategy.

Kentucky's Department of Transportation is most actively involved in its brokerages. It monitors its brokerages to ensure that proper service is provided, rather than providing services in-house or through another entity. On the other hand, in Washington State, the Department of Transportation acts as a consultant to the Department of Human Services which has taken a top-down approach to implementing and maintaining its state's brokerages.

Vermont has a program similar to Kentucky's since it has consolidated its transit systems and has used a common dispatch system in its operations to encourage brokerage implementation. Alaska's CARTS program oversees its state's brokerage project. It has no mandatory statute to pressure agencies to participate; however, CARTS compensates drivers who provide its service.

Florida has an extremely unusual procedure for overseeing its brokerages because it takes a bottom-up approach. Several different organizations are involved and share responsibility for this strategy's success.

In Virginia, FASTRAN is the operating brokerage for service originating in Fairfax County and the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church. The county, not the state, is the sole operator. This operation was created through incorporation of transportation already being provided to the transportation disadvantaged since 1986.

Monetary issues typically drive a project's completion or elimination. Each state has used similar funding sources to support its brokerage systems. The bulk of Alaska's

funding has come from an initial \$500,000 federal grant that one of its senators secured and a steady flow of federal rural transportation funds that have resulted from a national gas tax. Oregon has used four prominent sources, which include an employer's payroll tax, cigarette tax, property tax, and general funds. All of the other states have generated funds through similar sources.

While these examples show that intergovernmental cooperation is growing, opportunities remain for other states to further collaborate with their rural transit providers. Many communities fear a loss of control and identity if they cooperate with another government entity, especially if it is larger, but evidence reveals that many communities are overcoming those concerns out of economic necessity and entering into agreements with each other. These agreements, to date, benefit all of the parties.

In Chapter 3, the research team presents several case analyses of paratransit brokers and transportation service providers within Illinois. These analyses are based on structured interviews with one or more top executives in each agency, and are supplemented by archives, reports, brochures, and websites. During the interviews, the research team asked these executives about their current operations, experiences, or plans for paratransit coordination; their perceived success factors and barriers in the process; and their attitudes toward a statewide coordination system. Four interviews were done on-site (First Transit, DuPage County, South Central Mass Transit District, and the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District), and two were done over the phone (RIDES and Rock Island Mass Transit District). Although these agencies vary in size, location, and progress toward paratransit coordination, they all showed interest in higher-level coordination and provided valuable suggestions.

In Chapter 4, the discussion builds on the previous chapters' conclusions and consolidates the set of national and Illinois brokerage barriers and success factors into a common set. It also specifically recommends changes in policies and regulations that can facilitate brokerage development. Agency coordination, funding, technology, perceptual constraints, labor issues, vehicle use restrictions, government restrictions, and the crossing of district boundaries are cited as critical barriers that could hinder a transit brokerage's success. However, agreements among participating agencies, an advisory board or committee, agreements between IDOT and the broker(s), funding stability, agreements between the broker(s) and transportation providers, strong political support from local governments, standardized computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching technology, training, rider education, and labor issues are factors that could help a transit brokerage's sustainability and overall success.

Various benefits could potentially accrue as a result of a successful transit brokerage, including an increase in service quality, efficiency and effectiveness, as well as overall financial savings. For discussion purposes, the research team has created a typology of brokerage types that describes five types of brokerages: the *Consolidated Brokerage*, *Full Brokerage*, *Administrative Brokerage*, *Call-Center Brokerage*, and *Partial Brokerage*. Each of these brokerage types highlights different functions that were previously in the domain of individual transit operators or social service agencies. Clearly, there are many

variants to these five basic brokerage types. The participating operators and other agencies will select a brokerage type when they determine which functions they want to retain or relegate to the broker.

The discussion then turns to a brokerage's organizational requirements. In this context, the research team presents criteria that relate to a brokerage's operational qualities, as well as requirements for participating organizations. This chapter concludes that IDOT should try to implement a hybrid computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching program in Illinois and establish several regional brokerages. It would allow these regional brokerages to expand their service areas once they have initially succeeded. The best approach would be to start some Call-Center Brokerages that can eventually be upgraded to Full Brokerages when their employees and riders are familiar with the changes and can maintain a more sophisticated system. This would only apply to several areas and organizations, since the majority of operators could not meet the requirements for implementing such a large strategy.

Other operators, such as South Central Transit, could easily implement a Full Brokerage. South Central Transit currently has all of the technology needed and is eager to develop its program into other service areas. It has begun minimal coordination with other counties and organizations and could sustain the impact of implementing such a high level strategy.

In Chapter 5, Peoria, Macomb, and South Central Transit were identified as being able to benefit from a brokerage system and having the minimum necessary requirements for establishing a brokerage. Peoria has a well established paratransit system operating in Peoria County. Macomb is located in the western part of the state, and South Central Transit maintains the largest service area in a six county district near Marion, Illinois.

Recommending the creation of a model brokerage in Peoria was not difficult because Peoria already has a quasi-brokerage. However, it only lacks coordination. MV Transportation and the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District currently exhibit a brokerage's qualities. Since both organizations are currently carrying out all functions, the logical brokerage type for Peoria would be the "Consolidated Brokerage" model. The Consolidated Brokerage can be determined or defined by the actions of the broker and the participants. In this type of brokerage, the broker is responsible for receiving calls, scheduling and dispatching, determining eligibility, providing management and training, submitting reports, updating and maintaining the client database, providing trip approval and verification, providing transportation/vehicles, and billing funding agencies.

However, Peoria is a unique situation, since MV Transportation currently acts as the broker and the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District acts as the administrator. From a brokerage perspective, these two organizations would act as one agency and all others would be considered participants. The suggested participants include the following organizations: We Care, Rural Peoria Council on Aging, Lutheran Social Services, Fulton County Red Cross, Spoon River Home Health Care, Central Illinois Agency on Aging, Peoria Area Blind Center and Pekin Municipal Service. Other suggested coordinated

efforts may lie in forming a relationship with Bloomington/Normal Mass Transit, Show Bus and MSW Projects.

Recommending a brokerage model for Macomb is slightly more involved. Macomb has fewer agencies that provide public transportation, a lower population, and an area that is widely spread throughout McDonough County. Currently, there is very little coordination in Macomb, however, there is an initiative supported through Western Illinois University that would facilitate brokerage implementation in the Macomb area.

American Red Cross, Barry's Taxi, Bridgeway, Inc.; and Go West would likely participate in Macomb's brokerage. The research team recommends that Macomb have a modified full brokerage, in which a third-party would schedule and dispatch, maintain a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system, receive calls, and house all of the equipment. Since this brokerage type can be quite costly, the most-able party should operate it. A bidding process would determine who this third-party is.

This system's participants would then be able to log into the system using a DSL or cable modem connection. This would allow for quick data transfers and the posting of excess room on vehicles in order to accommodate riders that the normal transportation provider cannot pick up. The consultant team recommends that the third-party or broker maintain the following responsibilities: management and training, reporting, database maintenance, trip approval and verification, receiving calls, scheduling and dispatching, and billing. The research team also recommends that the brokerage's participating agencies determine eligibility and provide transportation.

The recommended brokerage models for transit agencies in southern Illinois vary due to differences in service, funding, perceptions, current infrastructure, and information obtained from interviews and site visits. The models suggested below, however, are simply a starting point and can be expanded to reflect changes in political, economic, and funding structures.

In a South Central Transit – RIDES brokerage, the research team recommends that South Central Transit provides management, training, reporting, and database maintenance, while RIDES provides call-taking, scheduling, dispatching, eligibility determination, trip approval, trip verification, transportation, and billing. This brokerage type could improve service in the counties that border the service areas of these two transit providers and is called an *Administrative Brokerage*.

In a South Central Transit – St. Clair County Transit District brokerage, the research team recommends that South Central Transit become the broker and therefore responsible primarily for such administrative duties as management, training, reporting, and billing. The St. Clair County Transit District would perform call intake, scheduling, dispatching, trip approval, and transportation. The St. Clair County Transit District would continue to contract out its transportation, until it could enter into labor agreements to allow South Central Transit to be responsible for its own transit service or to bring other agencies such as ATS into the brokerage system.

In a South Central Transit – Washington County Senior Services brokerage, the research team recommends that South Central Transit become the broker, while Washington County Senior Services provides only transit service. As residents in Washington County continue to age, the need for transit service to medical services and shopping centers will grow. A brokerage system can economically offer improved transit services for these residents.

The research team also recommends a *Full Brokerage* between South Central Transit and Williamson County Council on Aging (WCCoA). This brokerage type allows Williamson County Council on Aging to continue performing transportation and possibly scheduling and dispatching, while South Central Transit would be responsible for call taking, billing, reporting, and other administrative activities.

Finally, brokerage arrangements could be established between South Central Transit and taxi and ambulance companies. A suitable brokerage type for these companies is one that allows these agencies to continue providing transportation services and relieve them of demanding administrative duties, such as reporting, call taking, scheduling, dispatching, and training.

Chapter 6 discusses the needs that prospective participants would need to assess in the identified brokerages, in order to successfully partner such programs. The discussion focuses on hardware and software needs, coordination potential, and technology assessment.

The brokerage development strategy presented in Chapter 7 is based on an extensive literature review; surveys of states, agencies, and operators; and interviews with potential brokerage actors and participants. The brokerage strategy, if implemented, can help overcome potential barriers to brokerages in each of the selected areas. The proposed strategy has several dimensions as follows:

A. Need for State Commitment and Consistency

1. **The Governor's Office, IDOT, and other state agencies, including the MPO or regional planning commission, must first commit to creating a sustainable and manageable paratransit brokerage.**

B. Crossing Organizational Boundaries

1. **IDOT and regional MPOs or regional planning commissions must help agencies and transit providers cross organizational boundaries.**
2. **IDOT should work with the Department of Health and Human Services, each paratransit provider, and other agencies interested in involvement with the brokerage to break down barriers to implementation.**

3. **IDOT should establish an advisory board for each brokerage that includes representatives from various transit and public agencies as well as other paratransit affiliates. The advisory board will guide brokerage implementation through its initial stages and remain as a tool for agencies to consult with on problems, concerns, and issues.**

C. Make Working Together Work

1. **The advisory board should guide all participants in the brokerage implementation process and continuously rate the coordination effort's progress. Similarly, the advisory board should assess the needs of participating agencies and their riders and gauge progress.**
2. **IDOT should identify a strong local leader to lead the brokerages, create their advisory boards, and assume other responsibilities in the brokerage's preliminary stages.**
3. **IDOT should assure transit providers that participation in a brokerage would not jeopardize their ability to receive new vehicles.**
4. **The advisory board should develop an agreement among participants.**
5. **IDOT should assure all agencies participating in a brokerage that their funding is secure.**

D. Establish Consistent Requirements

1. **A primary responsibility of the advisory board, in partnership with IDOT, is to establish a set of requirements and standards for brokerage participation and service provision.**

E. Vehicle Responsibility

1. **IDOT and all transit providers that participate in a brokerage should become involved in negotiations over vehicle maintenance and responsibility.**

F. Technology – A Regional Approach

1. **IDOT should certify and select a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems vendor for statewide implementation.**
2. **IDOT should commit to monitoring performance.**

3. **IDOT should supply computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system hardware and software.**
4. **IDOT should supply funds to train computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system users.**
5. **IDOT should fund conversion to the new computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system.**
6. **IDOT should fund system maintenance and upgrades.**

Finally, a model written agreement between the broker and participating agencies is provided to help the reader understand the scope and impact of such agreements. It may also act as a starting point for development of an agreement in a specific area.

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Chapter 1 Barriers and Aids to Establishing Rural Paratransit Brokerages

1.1 Introduction

Several states have successfully implemented coordinated paratransit brokerages, which offer benefits to paratransit providers, their riders, and the states themselves. A paratransit broker is a centralized authority, which uses transit providers to directly or indirectly provide demand responsive transit services. Coordinating transit under a broker or other centralized authority can improve services, reduce service area overlap, centralize administration and scheduling, lower operating costs, and reduce funding barriers.

In this report, the researchers have examined how to effectively create rural paratransit brokerages. They will therefore begin their analysis with a discussion of the barriers and aids to success that face those agencies, which are looking to implement rural paratransit brokerages.

1.2 Barriers to Paratransit Brokerage

A variety of barriers, including misconception and misinterpretation, can hinder implementation of paratransit brokerages. While some of these barriers exist on local levels, others exist on state or national levels. Although some of these barriers may be easily overcome, others are challenging to eliminate. An in-depth understanding and analysis of common barriers will help Illinois' agencies overcome some of their problems when they begin to look at implementing rural paratransit brokerages.

Regulatory guidelines or restrictions on such subjects as ridership eligibility, funding, record keeping, and monitoring can vary from one type of funding agency or paratransit provider to another. The U. S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) regulations, for example, ensure that transportation is provided to all members of the general public, while federal Health and Human Services (HHS) programs are more stringent and offer services only to groups of riders whose eligibility is predetermined. Thus, barriers occur when an entity looks to merge these and other requirements for agencies that want to work together under a brokerage. However, agencies may overcome these barriers with proper planning and agency cooperation.

In general, it is important that the brokerage implementers negotiate with all of the agencies that want to participate in the brokerage in order to alleviate barriers that can arise from varying policy standards and service requirements. Funding agencies, for example, have policies that vary on background checks for paratransit drivers. A brokerage, therefore, might ask its participating operators to adopt the most stringent level of background checks for its drivers in order to lower its operating costs by streamlining this function and giving it to the broker. This and other potential barriers are shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Potential Barriers to Paratransit Brokerage

Too Many or Too Few Partnering Agencies	Record-keeping
Unfamiliarity With the Partnering Agencies' Goals, Terminology, or Requirements	Licensing and Certification
Confusing Eligibility Requirements and User Restrictions	Insufficient Amount of Information
Training	Preferential Treatment
Lack of a Mandate for a Brokerage	Turf Protection
Labor Issues	System Operations
Existing Service Contracts	Schedule and Route Needs
Funding Confusion	Vehicle and Equipment Requirements
Lack of Technology in Rural Areas	Subsidized and Non-subsidized Riders
Varying Client Needs	Insurance
Responsibility, Priority, Accountability	

1.3 Identifying a Necessary Level of Agency Coordination

Coordination and cooperation among agencies on each level of a paratransit brokerage is a first, vital step for success. The Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM, 2000) has found that rural area transit agencies usually work with more local human service agencies than their urban counterparts. While some states have created guidelines or procedures to identify their rural areas' transit needs, other states have done little for their rural areas.

Cooperation may be defined here as two or more public, private, or hybrid public-private agencies, organizations, or companies that are working together toward a common end. (CCAM 2000) Cooperation also implies that these agencies, organizations, or companies will work loosely together and retain their identity and/or authority.

Unlike cooperation, coordination requires agencies, organizations, or companies to centralize their planning, public information, call-intake, certification, scheduling, dispatching, and/or record or information sharing functions. Coordination is defined here as joint decisions or actions of a group of agencies, organizations, or companies, which have formally established management of its resources. (CCAM 2000)

The level of cooperation or coordination needed to implement a successful paratransit brokerage may vary from one region to another, depending on the amount of resources available, the will of state and local leaders, and the extent to which a brokerage already exists. Agencies, organizations, or companies may have difficulty and spend a lot of time identifying the necessary level of cooperation and deciding whether formal agreements are necessary. However, identifying the necessary level of cooperation is important when

creating a brokerage. A number of barriers can result from centralization of any of these activities. These barriers will be discussed in more detail later in this report.

1.4 Maintaining Needed Level of Agency Coordination

Maintaining identified levels of coordination may become strained over time since coordinating agencies, organizations, or companies often do not realize all of the benefits that they receive from coordinating their efforts. The expenses of forming a brokerage may take longer to recover from than they initially anticipated. Many of them will expect reimbursement for their investments, when in reality, most cost savings are re-circulated to unmet travel needs and further transit improvements, such as improved technology or vehicle fleet improvements. Constant and consistent work is therefore required to maintain the necessary level of coordination since formalized agreements may deteriorate, which can force them to re-evaluate the benefits of participating in a brokerage. (CCAM 2000)

1.5 Number of Partnering Agencies

Increased complexity, opportunities for confusion and misunderstanding, and a higher level of coordination and effort result from having more programs and agencies involved within a brokerage. (U.S. DHHS 2000) Therefore, limiting the size of a brokerage and carefully choosing agencies and providers that will form a brokerage is necessary. The right size for each brokerage will vary from region to region. If too many agencies are involved in the brokerage, they may feel alienated or become neglected because they have overloaded the broker. This situation may cause conflict between the agencies and broker and lead to the brokerage's failure. On the other hand, if too few agencies and providers join a brokerage, the brokerage will be inefficient and fail to prosper.

1.6 Unfamiliarity with Partnering Agencies

Similarly, people who are involved with an agency that offers or regulates paratransit are often unaware or unfamiliar with their partnering agencies' missions, objectives, rules and regulations. (CCAM 2000) This creates a challenge to paratransit brokerage that must be overcome. Coordination efforts require a new method of doing business. Workers from each agency must strive to understand the goals and regulations of partnering agencies. As stated in Report 70 of the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP), "Accepting and helping other agencies to meet their trip needs must be seen as of equal importance to meeting one's own agency needs." (TCRP 2001)

1.7 Terminology Differences

Statutes and agencies often define the same words in different ways. For example, statutes widely vary on their definitions of who persons with disabilities are, and agencies greatly vary on their definitions of a client. Human service agencies often use the term "client" to refer to what transportation agencies consider "riders" or "consumers."

(CCAM 2000) These slight differences in definition and usage may cause misunderstandings and thus create barriers for paratransit brokerages. (TRR 784 1980)

1.8 Differences in Employee Requirements

Requirements that specifically pertain to unionized employees can significantly complicate the brokerage development process. Existing agreements may require that some agencies only hire unionized employees, for example, while other agencies may not be obligated to hire any. A brokerage's potential partnering agencies will therefore have to determine whether union and non-union agencies can work together and whether this difference can adversely impact any of the partnering agencies.

1.9 Training

Training requirements can widely vary depending upon the nature of the agencies and their clientele. These requirements include the type and duration of training and trainee re-certification. Training expectations, therefore, need to be assessed early on in the brokerage development phase to avoid confusion, frustration, and incorrect expectations.

Partnering agencies may have different employee training requirements for serving their riders. Riders with disabilities, for example, have very different needs than those riders who can no longer drive. The training necessary to serve riders with disabilities is more involved and difficult than that of providing service to those without disabilities. For example, drivers must learn how to properly tie-down wheelchairs without inappropriately touching those who are using them. If the brokerage decides that drivers will need to incorporate new rider types into their routes, it will need to impose new training requirements on its partnering agencies in order to comply with existing statutes and regulations for serving these new riders.

1.10 Lack of Brokerage Mandates

Very few states have mandated paratransit agency coordination. Given this lack of precedence, many paratransit operators, human service providers, and transit agencies are reluctant to participate in a brokerage, although many of them know that coordinated transportation systems usually improve efficiency, profits, and overall service. Further educating these existing providers and agencies about the benefits of participating in a brokerage system may be too difficult to overcome since it requires substantial time and funding. However, the Ohio Department of Transportation has organized a task force to help solve this problem. It has organized three statewide conferences that educate human service agencies, public and private transportation providers, and municipalities about the benefits of coordinated transportation. This type of effort has effectively educated many key players about the benefits of joining brokerages. This type of effort requires leadership, persistence, and other resources of local and state agencies. (ODOT 1998)

1.11 Labor Issues

Negotiating labor agreements with current and new paratransit providers can jeopardize attempts to create a brokerage. Labor problems can result from issues surrounding the nature of the agreements themselves or from determinations about the brokerages' optimal size. The brokerage's optimal size will dictate how many agencies are sought to create the desired efficiencies. The more agencies, which become involved in the brokerage attempt, the more difficult it will likely be to reach a compromise. Some of these agencies may have unionized labor while others may not. Other agencies may have to layoff or retrain workers once the brokerage is implemented. Hence, paratransit workers and providers need to be assured that the brokerage contracts will have provisions for resolving labor disputes and fostering cooperative activity.

1.12 Service Contracts

Existing service contracts may have specifications or requirements that differ from those required for the brokerage. While some contracts may expire within a reasonable time and thus may be re-negotiated, others will expire well after the brokerage is implemented. Negotiating a new contract's terms or terminating an existing contract will require a concerted effort from all interested parties.

1.13 Confusion Surrounding Funding

Federal, state, and local agencies have more than 100 separate programs, which fund transportation services and promote system coordination. Each of these programs has different funding requirements, restrictions, and funding levels. The amount of funding spent or currently available for all of these programs, however, has not been clearly identified. (DHHS 1995) This funding situation is so complex that the Federal Coordinating Council of Access and Mobility (CCAM) was created to bring together requirements and policies of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). (Community Transportation 2002) Table 1.2, which is shown below, lists several programs that fund transit services. A concerted effort to teach brokerage participants about funding and related issues will help reduce this problem.

Table 1.2 – Federal Funding for Transportation Services

Selected Federal Funding for Transportation Services	
DHHS Programs	
Program	Description
Title III, Grants for State and Community Programs	Provides for a wide range of community-based systems of supportive and nutrition services include in-home services for elders
Community Services Block Grants	Assist service providers in meeting the needs of transportation to low-income persons.
Head Start	Provides for comprehensive services to aid those children who are economically disadvantaged.
HIV Care Grants	Provides assistance for health providers who offer home and community-based health care and supportive services such as transportation for those persons suffering from HIV.
Rural Health Services Outreach Grants	Enables health care services operating in rural areas with transportation to health care facilities.
FTA Programs	
Program	Description
Section 18, Federal Transit Grants for Non-Urban Areas	Assists in providing operating capital and administrative assistance to transit service providers in rural areas.
Section 16, Federal Transit Capital Grants for Transporting Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities	Provides capital assistance to transit providers servicing elderly passengers and those with disabilities in both urban and rural areas.
Other	
Program	Description
Rural Development Grants	Aids in the development of private enterprises including assistance with infrastructure and service design.
Senior Companion Program	Offers transportation services for low-income elderly riders who volunteer in community service activities serving elders with impairments.

* Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 1995

1.14 Responsibility and Priority

An agency's traditional responsibilities will likely change when it joins a paratransit brokerage. The existing literature on brokerages shows only a few policies that currently exist for allocating paratransit operators' responsibilities under a brokerage. Given this lack of research, a broker and its paratransit operators should create several flow charts that will identify each agency's responsibilities under several brokerage arrangements. This will help all of the parties create mutually beneficial policies.

The broker and his or her paratransit providers need to also decide which providers or riders receive priority when resources reach capacity. All of the service providers, dispatchers, and agencies involved in the brokerage need to understand which agencies

and riders have priority in each possible situation to ensure rider satisfaction with the service.

1.15 Accountability

Each agency's workers need to fully understand their new role in the brokerage. If their roles are undefined or unclear, they will have misunderstandings, which could lead to ineffective management, confusion, and poor transit service.

Management accountability is one of the first barriers that may be difficult to resolve as transit providers attempt to blend service areas and responsibilities. Staff accountability and responsibility may ensue after management accountability has been structured. (DSHS/WSDOT 1992) Since there exists little policy guidance on accountability from a federal level, states and regions should create agreements and understandings of accountability.

1.16 Record Keeping Variances

Conflicting, complicated, or duplicated record keeping policies and requirements may hinder a brokerage's effectiveness. Record keeping policies and requirements need to be clearly outlined and streamlined as much as possible so that the broker will not have to spend an inordinately long time trying to meet all of its service agencies' reporting requirements or trying to determine which reports it should file. The Ohio Department of Transportation funded a study to look at this issue entitled "Standard Transportation Program Reporting and Reimbursement Requirements." (ODOT 1998)

1.17 Licensing and Certification

The brokerage's participating agencies will need to work with funding agencies and jointly agree on common licensing and certification requirements that meet federal and state regulations. These licensing and certification requirements should account for the needs of each agency's clients, since these clients could access each of the brokerage's providers. These requirements, however, should not be so demanding that they would impede participation in a brokerage.

1.18 Lack of Sufficient Information

Insufficient information about current trends, transportation costs, and efforts needed to successfully implement a brokerage can hinder paratransit brokerage formation. (TRR 784 1980) Initial costs and efforts required to establish a brokerage are often higher and more elaborate than anticipated. (ACCT 2000) More effort is required than typically expected, when arranging and coordinating existing and new contracts that engage participating agencies and organizations. Constant and consistent work is necessary for parties to cooperate with one another.

1.19 Perceptual Constraints

All parties involved in a brokerage, including the service providers and their riders must be open-minded and willing to cooperate with each other in order to achieve a more efficient and effective transit service. These parties must be willing to overcome any long-standing negative perceptions, which could hinder the brokerage's operations. This type of barrier may thus be the easiest or hardest to overcome.

1.19.1 Client Perceptions: Loss of Personalization and Preferential Treatment

Clients often fear the loss of personalized services when their provider joins a brokerage, including the possibility of others getting priority over them. As the providers adjust their operations to better serve the brokerage, existing riders will likely be forced to share their trips with riders from other agencies and make stops before their destination that they did not previously make.

To allay these fears, the broker and its service providers will need to market the brokerage's benefits and ask for their riders' patience as schedule and service adjustments are made. The brokerage should be seen as a way for increasing the number of rides and improving service quality in the near future.

1.19.2 Agency Perceptions: Preferential Treatment

Just as clients fear a decline in service quality because of another's preferential treatment, paratransit providers may worry that the broker will favor one provider over another when dispatching trips. In reality, riders who are involved with some programs may have particular circumstances that require detailed or specialized care and service. Medicaid riders, for example, may require the shortest ride possible to their destination for medical or psychological reasons that may, in turn, inconvenience other riders. Hence, service providers that offer partnering services which are less restrictive may view this type of service as preferential. These fears and perceptions need to be addressed adequately.

1.20 Turf Protection

Turf protection can also complicate the formation of paratransit brokerages. Perceived threats to turf largely result from incomplete information gathering and a lack of communication. Agencies are often reluctant to relinquish control of their turf and require assurances of cooperation, coordination, equality, and collaboration. Transit service providers fear that participating in a brokerage will diminish their turf and possibly profit, where in reality, the opposite is typically true. Turf protection can lead to disagreement among participating agencies on a method of coordination. The lack of a mechanism or incentive for building an alliance among paratransit providers will create a barrier that hinders paratransit brokerage. (TCRP 2001)

1.21 System Operations

Conflicting operating practices may complicate the formation of paratransit brokerages. These conflicts are highlighted when different types of transit services attempt to merge. For example, school bus operators prohibit standees and require passengers to pass in front of their buses, while mass transit systems encourage standees and ask their passengers to cross behind their buses. Resolving some of these conflicts will require detailed agreements that can become very complicated. (ACCT 2000)

1.22 Conflicting Schedule and Route Requirements

Often times, a rider's need for paratransit services may directly conflict with the needs of riders from other paratransit services. Public housing residents, for example, generally live far from adequate job opportunities or medical services. To get to these places, they will usually need to take long rides that leave them dissatisfied with their paratransit service providers. This situation has become more common as more and more clinics and facilities seek to re-locate to outlying areas. To minimize this problem, the brokerage will need to more efficiently schedule rides and better design paratransit routes. This solution will take time to evolve, however, and riders may become dissatisfied in the interim.

Discrepancies in route designations or services may also hinder a brokerage's formation. Private, nonprofit transit operators typically limit their services to one vehicle type on a single route. Also, small Section 5311 operators (with up to three vehicles) do not typically provide fixed-route services. On the other hand, fixed-route operators often serve a single city, instead of providing intercity or rural transit services. These operators may find it difficult to expand to other types of services that a brokerage might need.

1.23 Conflicting Vehicle and Equipment Requirements

Transit agencies have vehicles that are sized and configured differently to meet their particular needs. When a brokerage increases its pool of potential riders, the transit agencies may find that their vehicles no longer serve all of their riders' needs. Some of the new riders may have disabilities that require wheelchair lifts or that require adequate room for medical devices such as passengers' oxygen tanks. To accommodate these riders, the brokerage may pay for modifications to existing vehicles or buy new ones. Existing federal vehicle purchasing procedures will constrain those brokerages that want to replace their vehicles.

1.24 Insurance Coverage

The brokerage will need to uniformly insure each of its service providers against liability when it provides transit services for the brokerage. The brokerage must provide insurance that is comparable or better than that of its service providers and should not carry any additional hardships on them.

1.25 Lack of Technology and Guidance

Rural areas may have much lower levels of up-to-date technology, infrastructure, or technical assistance than their urban counterparts. To remedy their technology and infrastructure needs, federal, state, and regional agencies should extensively help rural grantees assess their needs, identify what resources they have to bring to the brokerage, and realistically plan for implementation of new technologies and systems. (CCAM 2000) To remedy their technical assistance needs, these agencies need to identify the types of services that they and others can provide in a logical, comprehensive, and integrated manner. Federal, state, and regional transit agencies, for example, need to know which health and human service agencies provide vehicles, driver equipment, and technical expertise to their grantees.

1.26 Eligibility Requirements

The brokerage will need to find a common set of eligibility requirements that the participating agencies will accept. This process should be grounded in a complete understanding of participating agencies' eligibility requirements and the ramifications of accepting or denying particular classes of people from eligibility. Otherwise, the broker will have confusing and conflicting eligibility requirements that will result in frustration and inefficiency.

1.27 Varying Client Needs

A paratransit brokerage's diverse ridership may have some riders feeling uncomfortable with their fellow travelers because of age differences or differences in their physical or mental condition. Other riders may not be physically or mentally able to travel longer distances than they currently do. The broker and its service providers, therefore, need to accommodate those riders who have special, intractable needs, and help others feel more comfortable with these service changes, whenever they can.

1.28 Subsidized and Unsubsidized Riders

The broker will need to work with human service agencies to establish a fare payment procedure that will have all of its riders using the same type of fare medium, such as tickets or vouchers. Agencies who subsidize their clients could pay the brokerage, which would send their tickets or vouchers directly to the riders. Unsubsidized riders could pay the brokerage in advance and receive their tickets or vouchers through the mail. These fare payment procedures would blur the differences between subsidized and unsubsidized riders and minimize any conflicts between these two groups. It would also help the brokerage simplify its record keeping.

1.29 Success Factors

While documented and unexpected barriers may hinder the formation or success of a paratransit brokerage, a number of key elements may contribute to its successful

implementation or operation. Certainly, each region and state varies, but the experiences of successful and unsuccessful brokerage attempts have yielded a number of success factors, which are shown in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 – Success Factors

Success Factors	
New institutional structure	Policy boards
Significant roles of agencies	Volunteer operators
Strong advocates	Labor issues
Established agreements	Training
Advisory and planning agencies roles	Efficient record keeping
Expectation definition	Licensing, leasing and certification
Outline benefits	Quality of service
Funding assurance	Technology
Expansion of existing services	Inventory
Guidelines and guidebooks	Strong vehicle fleet
Define responsibilities and accountability	Number of riders
Address fears and perceptions	Fee collection
Public education	

1.30 New Institutional Structure

Development of a new institution that is committed to lobbying for funds and has received support from those involved with creating the brokerage can greatly aid a brokerage's success. This new institutional structure may stem from the partnership or merging of agencies on a variety of levels and include agencies and organizations from the private sector.

The creation of an effective new institutional structure requires intergovernmental cooperation and agency coordination. In Illinois, Jo Daviess County has used an intergovernmental agreement between its townships and cities to provide cost-effective transit services for its residents. Similarly, five townships in Christina County, Florida annually contribute funds to a local nonprofit organization that provides weekly transit services. No *formal* intergovernmental agreement is used here, however, it serves as an example of what intergovernmental cooperation can accomplish. (IIRA 1999)

Local agencies which provide paratransit services likewise need to be encouraged to work with private sector companies and agencies. Since everyone will have a stake in its success and since the brokerage will initially require many difficult changes, all agencies and service providers will need to be kept well-informed and reassured.

1.31 Roles of Agencies

Federal, state, and local agencies play important roles in implementing brokerages. At the federal level, the Administration on Aging (AoA), for example, has actively promoted transportation consortiums and provided assistance to state and local agencies in order to

promote better transit system coordination. (DHSS 1995) At the state level, state departments of transportation can provide funding and technical support for rural brokerage projects. Finally, at the local level, local human service agencies can work with state agencies to help rural areas establish brokerages. (CCAM 2000) The roles that these agencies play are critical to a brokerage's success and should be investigated and encouraged.

1.32 Strong Advocacy

Encouraging and convincing public and private sector agencies to become partners in a brokerage requires strong advocacy in the public and private sectors. This advocacy should include creating a strategic process for implementing paratransit brokerages, helping assess riders' needs, evaluating existing infrastructure and services, and finding funding sources and other tools necessary to implement the brokerage. A good first step would likely be receiving strong support from the Governor, who can back the legislation, funding, and proposals that promote brokerage formation. From there, a trickle down or top-down effect may occur. The Governor's support of brokerages may encourage others to learn about the benefits of brokerages and to advocate for them. (WSDOT 1992)

1.33 Establishment of Agreements Among Participating Agencies

Before agencies unite to create a paratransit brokerage, they should enter into one or more interagency agreements that clearly delineate each of the participant's responsibilities. These agreements will lessen the chances for misunderstandings among the parties. In King County, Washington, for example, two separate agreements were drafted to create a brokerage, which partnered a state Medicaid program with a local program that helps people with disabilities that are covered by the Americans With Disabilities Act. Each of these agreements detailed such things as training requirements and operating policies. (ACCT 2000) While separate agreements may prove beneficial, brokerages should not create so many agreements that they become ineffective or unmanageable.

The process for drafting these interagency agreements should also include all of the agencies that can affect the brokerage or all of the agencies that the brokerage can affect. Agencies such as the Agency on Aging (AoA), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), if available, and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) may offer financial and/or technical assistance to the brokerage, if they are aware of its needs, goals, and problems, if any. In Illinois, the CEFS Economic Opportunity Corporation provides transit to Clay, Douglas, Fayette, Montgomery, Moultrie, and Shelby Counties. CEFS established the Central Illinois Public Transit System to provide transportation between nursing homes, dining sites, medical providers, and state agencies. Before it began operating this service, CEFS entered into agreements with management from each of these sites. (DHHS 1995)

1.34 Well-Defined Expectations about Responsibilities, Goals, and Benefits

Each of the brokerage's participants needs to understand the other's expectations when they are identifying the brokerage's responsibilities, goals, and benefits. This process is essential for dispelling ill-conceived perceptions and laying groundwork for efficient and cooperative efforts. All parties should have clear expectations of costs, vehicle maintenance issues, licensing and certification procedures, responsibilities, and benefits. Realistic expectations need to be established early in this process in order to avoid discontent and frustration among these agencies. (Ecosometrics 1980)

1.35 Assured Funding Sources

Successful paratransit brokerages require assured funding sources. Federal, state, and local agencies have more than 100 separate programs, which fund transit services and further transit system coordination. Each of these programs has different funding requirements, restrictions, and funding levels. A concerted effort is needed to teach these agencies about funding sources and their requirements. One means of teaching this is through a spreadsheet or matrix of the various funding sources and their requirements.

1.36 Expansion of Existing Services

A balance must be struck between expanding or improving existing services and creating new service types and routes. Expanding existing services will likely use less capital, administrative, overhead, and direct operating costs than the formation of new service types and routes. Existing service providers know their service areas and can provide very useful information to new service partners. In South Dakota, a decision to upgrade its bus service to van service using better lifts, for example, improved service for existing riders and may have attracted several new riders, but was at the cost of new transit service. This transit operator, however, later balanced its existing and new services when it launched service to four new counties. (Community Transportation 2002)

1.37 Guidelines and Requirements for the Brokerage's Participating Agencies

Partnering agencies to a brokerage should draft written guidelines and requirements that cover such areas as minimum safety standards, training, vehicle requirements, and research on developing tools to improve service. These guidelines may stem from funding or specific agency requirements, issues and concerns related to the brokerage project, or the experience of other brokerages and agencies. These experiences can be learned from guidebooks and reports that other brokerages may have developed.

1.38 Responsibilities and Accountability

Each of the brokerage's participating agencies needs to be keenly aware of its employees' role in sustaining the brokerage and hold them accountable. Likewise, other agencies within the brokerage need to hold these agencies' managers accountable. A flow chart of

the partnering agencies and their internal organizations may prove very helpful for understanding everyone's roles and responsibilities within the brokerage.

1.39 Training

Responsibility and accountability require effective and thorough training. While training may be costly and time consuming, each participant should be taught the duties of his or her position. This training should occur first for managers and then proceed to all other staff. The State of Ohio Statewide Transportation Coordination Task Force economically provided this training by sponsoring three statewide conferences to educate over 500 individuals from public and private transportation service providers, agency members, and municipal partners. This training was one of the factors that led to the creation of several brokerages within Ohio.

1.40 Addressing Fears and Perceptions

Addressing clients and agencies' fears and perceptions about a brokerage's establishment is essential to its success. These fears and perceptions usually come from ill-informed but credible sources. To allay these fears, the broker and its participating agencies will need to develop a public information campaign that consistently addresses the concerns of its employees and clientele. This campaign should include informative announcements and public meetings on new services and changes to existing services. In Washington State, several counties found that clients and agencies had little knowledge of existing transportation services. A training video and accompanying computer program was therefore created and used to educate clients and agencies about existing transportation services and how to access them. This educational program not only dispelled fears and perceptions but also provided clients and agencies with a common base of knowledge. (CCAM 2000)

1.41 Creation of Policy Boards

Each brokerage should have a policy board that regularly meets to monitor the brokerage, help set annual goals, and help it overcome difficulties. To perform these functions, these policy boards should receive service reports that accurately evaluate their brokerages' activities.

1.42 Volunteer and Informal Operators

A voluntary and informal operators group consisting of administrators, drivers, and dispatchers should be formed to elicit employee and client feedback on the proposed brokerage prior to its implementation. This group will help dispel negative perceptions and fears regarding paratransit coordination and increase cooperation and information sharing among providers. It may also identify issues that are hindering brokerage formation and work through these potential barriers to ease the process.

1.43 Labor Issues

A brokerage must comply with those labor and wage protection requirements that are outlined in numerous federal, state, and local statutes, such as the Urban Mass Transportation Act. (Ecosometrics 1979) Although these requirements are comprehensive, they do not cover all of a brokerage's potential labor issues. These issues should therefore be resolved in agreements, which are negotiated among the brokerage's participating agencies. Two of these primary issues are potential job displacement and employee fringe benefits.

If existing volunteer or paid drivers are displaced, the brokerage should give these employees an option for future employment. All attempts should be made to quell labor issues as soon as possible since they can damage the brokerage or prevent it from forming.

Fringe benefits for drivers and other employees help ensure that the brokerage has reliable service. This has been shown in the Central Illinois Public Transit System, which has offered an attractive fringe benefits package to help retain reliable transit drivers. (DHHS 1995)

1.44 Consistent and Efficient Record Keeping

Implementation of a consistent and efficient record keeping system is essential to implementing a successful paratransit brokerage. Since record keeping requirements vary from agency to agency, the brokerage needs to determine what the reporting requirements are for each of its participating agencies and develop a record keeping system that meets all of these needs. Without consistent record keeping, all other elements of a brokerage attempt may fail.

1.45 Licensing, Leasing, and Certification

As previously stated, licensing, leasing, and certification problems have hindered past attempts to create paratransit brokerages. Since the requirements and steps that are involved with these issues are complex and time consuming, it will require development of a licensing and certification program. This program should accommodate the various needs of the broker and its participating agencies. For example, the program should have certification cycles so that each driver is certified as soon as possible. It should also have vehicle leasing programs that capitalize on regional differences in vehicle leasing procedures that vary with the agencies involved. In some areas, health and human service agencies, sometimes offer vehicles for lease, while in other areas, the brokerage's partnering agencies may lease vehicles to either the broker or other partnering agencies. Whichever is the case, a leasing program should be established to ease record keeping and system operations.

1.46 High Quality of Service

Maintaining a high standard of service has proven successful for many brokerages. Since customer service is where the brokerage process begins for riders, maintaining a high level of service will dispel fears that the brokerage will downgrade or depersonalize it. (ODOT 1998)

1.47 Technology

Technology can make or break a brokerage. While some agencies and service providers may be reluctant to implement technology, technology can greatly improve record keeping, service dispatching and call intake. One particularly useful tool for providing transportation services is computer assisted scheduling and dispatching systems.

Brokerages can use computer assisted scheduling and dispatching systems to more efficiently collect and disseminate information for areas such as ridership, ridership demographics, and client needs. It can also generate reports that can help the broker make decisions, which will result in greater efficiency and reduced costs. (Cashin 1998)

Early adoption of other related technologies may greatly help the brokerage survive. The brokerage may be initially overwhelmed with having to maintain and track its transportation resources and equipment, efficiently group trips, and evaluate its resource and equipment allocation. Relying on manual processing can slow or hinder a brokerage's success. Today's technologies have benefited brokerages on a variety of levels from customer service to management. While the initial capital costs and required training may be off-putting, early adoption of available technologies will likely help the brokerage become successful.

1.48 Inventory

Keeping a continuous and complete inventory of local services and equipment is essential to a brokerage's success. The brokerage will need to have inventory guidelines and initial inventory records so that it will prevent agencies from submitting haphazard or overly complex inventory records.

1.49 Strong Base Fleet of Vehicles

Successful brokerages are able to maintain a strong base fleet of vehicles. The CEFS Economic Opportunity Corporation of Illinois has a fleet of standard and lift-equipped vehicles, which make its system accessible to everyone. Since a large fleet of vehicles may not be feasible for all brokerage systems, a strong and diverse fleet of vehicles may lead to optimal provision of paratransit service.

1.50 Number of Riders

The broker and its participating agencies should establish the minimum and maximum number of riders each vehicle and route should serve. They should take into account their riders' needs and requirements when creating these guidelines in order to ensure the best and most efficient service. Since existing providers already have riders, they should avoid drastically changing their existing riders' travel habits.

Clearly, the brokerage should establish the minimum numbers of riders required to offset costs. In Tennessee, parents have planned bus routes as part of a unique partnership with the school district and the local public operator, Metropolitan Transit Authority, to offer bus rides for students who attend Nashville area magnet schools. It was determined early on that 48 riders were necessary to offset costs and to keep the fare at 75 cents per pupil. This model went on to inspire further transit coordination projects and demonstrate a community's cooperation and collaboration through transit. (TRB FTA No. 23 1998)

On the other hand, determining the maximum numbers of passengers may be more time consuming and difficult, however, it needs to occur as well. The partnering operators should take into account their riders' feedback when making this determination. If riders are uncomfortable, they may choose not to use the service.

1.51 Fare Collection

The partnering agencies will have to decide how fares will be collected from riders and how fare collection will be standardized. They should thoroughly investigate the impacts of standardization before the brokerage is implemented or while it is in its infancy, so that confusion over fare policies and/or riders' discontent is minimized. If fare policies are inconsistent from one agency to another, the broker and its partnering agencies should negotiate their agreements in order to avoid conflicts and to ensure more accurate record keeping and accounting procedures. (Ecosometrics 1979)

1.52 Conclusions

A variety of barriers can harm the creation of paratransit brokerages. While some barriers exist on the local level, others result from state or national policy. While some barriers may be easily overcome, others are challenging to eliminate. An in-depth understanding and analysis of common barriers will help existing agencies and operators implement an efficacious rural paratransit brokerage.

The creation of a rural paratransit brokerage may overcome persistent administrative, institutional, and perceptual barriers. A variety of public and private agencies and organizations provide transit services to disadvantaged people who need transportation options. Some of these providers are:

- The Department of Social Services,
- The Area Agencies on Aging,
- The Department of Education,
- The Department of Employment, and
- Public Transit Agencies.

These agencies coordinate with a variety of state agencies that have regulated funding. Several of these agencies are the:

- State Departments of Transportation,
- State Medicaid Agencies,
- State Health and Human Services Agencies,
- State Associations of Public Transit Providers, and
- State Agencies on Aging.

These federal and state agencies and organizations may want to work together in order to negotiate conflicting or unnecessary demands on partnering agencies that seek to form brokerages. These conflicting requirements may stem from laws, regulations, and each state agency's goals and organizational structures.

Misconceptions and fears related to sharing of space, competition for funding, confused roles or responsibilities, and a lack of effort can also inhibit cooperation. A comprehensive approach to paratransit brokerages should therefore be developed, which would take into account all of the partnering agencies and their needs and interests. This approach would give all of the partnering agencies a sense of ownership in the brokerage and provide a sense of transparency. Table 1.4 summarizes barriers and success factors and correlates success factors with individual barriers to show how a brokerage and/or its partnering agencies can use these factors to mitigate specific barriers.

Table 1.4 – Summary of Barriers and Corresponding Success Factors

<i>Potential Barrier</i>	<i>Corresponding Success Factor</i>
Determine Needed Level of Agency Coordination	1.31, 1.34, 1.36, 1.39, 1.43
Maintain Needed Level of Agency Coordination	1.31, 1.33, 1.34, 1.35, 1.36, 1.41
Too Many or Too Few Partnering Agencies	1.30, 1.31, 1.35, 1.37
Unfamiliarity with Partnering Agencies: Goals, Terminology, Requirements	1.33, 1.35, 1.36, 1.41, 1.42, 1.43, 1.44
Confusing Eligibility Requirements and User Restrictions	1.33, 1.48
Training	1.50, 1.51
Lack of Brokerage Mandate	1.30, 1.32, 1.36
Labor Issues	1.33, 1.36, 1.41, 1.42, 1.43, 1.44, 1.47, 1.49
Existing Service Contracts	1.33, 1.38
Funding Confusion	1.30, 1.32, 1.33, 1.37, 1.46, 1.48, 1.51
Responsibility, Priority, Accountability	1.30, 1.31, 1.33, 1.35, 1.39, 1.41, 1.42, 1.43, 1.51
Record Keeping	1.30, 1.31, 1.33, 1.48, 1.49, 1.51
Licensing and Certification	1.33, 1.39, 1.42, 1.49
Lack of Sufficient Information	1.30, 1.31, 1.34, 1.35, 1.37
Preferential Treatment	1.35, 1.36, 1.41, 1.42, 1.43, 1.50, 1.51
Turf Protection	1.30, 1.31, 1.32, 1.33, 1.35, 1.38
System Operations	1.33, 1.38, 1.41, 1.42, 1.46, 1.48, 1.49, 1.50, 1.51
Schedule and Route Needs	1.33, 1.49, 1.50, 1.51
Vehicle and Equipment Requirements	1.33, 1.48
Insurance	1.31, 1.33, 1.48
Lack of Technology in Rural Areas	1.30, 1.32, 1.35, 1.36, 1.51
Eligibility Requirements	1.33, 1.36
Varying Client Needs	1.31, 1.33, 1.36, 1.42, 1.43
Subsidized and Unsubsidized Riders	1.33, 1.51

Chapter 2 Survey of States with Rural Paratransit Brokerages

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research team describes the experiences of states that have implemented or are in the process of implementing one or more brokerage projects. To determine whether states had any experience with brokerages, the research team asked the state transportation departments whether they had any experience with brokerages and to describe their experiences, if they had. Most of these agencies did not. However, Alaska, Florida, Kentucky, Oregon, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington had some experience with brokerages and provided the research team with documentation of their implementation process. Using this information, the researchers found characteristics, which helped or hindered each state's ability to successfully implement a brokerage. These characteristics are discussed below.

2.2 Background/Description

The following descriptions show how brokerages successfully provide transportation for those people who rely on others to help them meet their basic daily needs.

2.2.1 Washington State

In 1988, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WDOT) and the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) sought funding to coordinate transportation for DSHS' clients. These agencies wanted to develop a system that would meet the following objectives:

- Provide a single point of contact for DSHS' clients that want transportation;
- Develop a system for tracking the costs of transporting DSHS' clients to specific social and health services,
- Test a brokerage that would use public and private transportation providers, and
- Identify and overcome barriers to providing an efficient system for transporting DSHS' clients to social and health services.

In 1989, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration awarded an \$80,000 grant to the Washington State Department of Transportation, which transferred the money to DSHS. DSHS used the money to hire a project manager who learned about his Department's transportation needs, the magnitude of those needs, and the importance of getting people to and from their social and health service appointments. Given this information, he determined that a brokerage was best suited to meeting these needs. Specifically, it allowed coordination of multiple sponsors and providers, regional service areas, and client services across jurisdictional boundaries.

After deciding to use brokerages, the project manager marketed this concept to federal, state, and local officials as well as the general public. This effort coincided with a federal campaign to better coordinate transportation to social services and resulted in the WDOT

receiving \$120,000 for demonstration brokerages in two areas, Yakima County in central Washington and the combined counties of Island, San Juan, Skagit, and Whatcom in northwestern Washington. Both of these areas had smaller brokerages that were operating under the Medical Assistance Administration Program. DSHS negotiated contracts with each of these area's brokers to include services for all of its clients, except those with severe mental illness or criminal histories.

When a client asks to be certified, DSHS will identify and assess each client's transportation needs, determine his or her ride eligibility, and determine which program or programs will pay for the rides. After he or she is certified, the client or caseworker can call the broker to arrange the trip. The broker will verify the client's eligibility before authorizing the trip. If this trip is authorized, the broker will determine the client's appropriate level of service (e.g. whether he or she needs a wheelchair lift, escort, or interpreter) and match this level of service with an appropriate transportation provider. Once the trip is provided, the provider will bill the broker, who will verify the trip and bill DSHS. DSHS will pay the broker who will in turn pay the appropriate transportation provider.

Both of these demonstration projects provided greater satisfaction for all parties, an increase in trips, and a decline in trip costs. DSHS and the WDOT attributed this success to several factors. First, they left none of the brokerages' technical problems unresolved. Second, they worked closely with the brokerages so that there was no confusion about how to screen clients, bill invoices, or report results. And finally, they created a centralized planning office for brokerages, which clearly identified resources, enhanced key initiatives, and spoke to external agencies with one voice.

With the success of its demonstration brokerages, DSHS took several years to transform its other Medical Assistance Administration brokerages into larger brokerages that serve most DSHS clients. It issued a Request for Proposals for each of its brokerages, selected the operators, and gradually phased them in.

The Departments of Transportation and Social and Health Services for Washington State stated that they would ask the Federal government to make the following changes, if they were hypothetically to go through the brokerage implementation process again. First, they would ask the FTA and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to activate the federal regional coordinating councils. Second, they would ask the FTA and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to create a regional forum for talking about key issues and to determine responsibility for these issues. And finally, they would have the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services establish policy guidelines and require their grantees to report their fully allocated costs.

They also would upgrade the Novell Network System for each of their brokers, rewrite the software in a true, multi-user language (e.g. Clipper), and expand their software capacity to include the needs of other DSHS programs. These modifications would allow the brokers to better verify client eligibility, keep client transaction histories, and track vendor payments.

2.2.2 Fairfax County, Virginia

Since 1986, Fairfax County has operated FASTRAN, a paratransit bus and taxi system that transports senior citizens, people with disabilities, and human service clients to needed services. To qualify for this service, FASTRAN clients must have certification from an appropriate sponsor and live within Fairfax County or the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church. They can only use FASTRAN as a last resort. They should not be able to drive, find a ride, use Metro or Connector buses, or afford taxis.

FASTRAN owns three buses. One of these buses has 22 seats, another has 14 seats with two wheelchair positions, and the last has one seat and seven wheelchair positions.

A certified FASTRAN client can ask his or her sponsoring agency to request subscription trips on his or her behalf. These trips are automatically scheduled for the same time and location that was originally requested. If a client wants to individually schedule his or her trips, he or she should call the FASTRAN office within one to seven days of the requested date. FASTRAN provides these dial-a-ride trips on a first come-first served basis everyday between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The only exceptions to this rule are Critical Medical Care clients, who must undergo continuing dialysis, cancer treatments, or rehabilitative services. They may call on the same day and receive service, if space is available.

Most riders pay all or most of their fares through user fees for other human services that they receive. Senior citizen groups pay \$.50 each way on their group shopping trips because they paid part of their fares at the senior center. However, dial-a-ride users must deposit \$1.00-\$3.00 in the farebox each way, depending upon the length of the trip. Critical Medical Care clients also have to pay \$0.00-\$5.00 each way, depending on their income.

FASTRAN staff schedule their subscription trips into “tours,” which are vehicle assignments for picking up and dropping off riders at their homes and one or two other locations. These tours come together into manifests for each bus, which contain rider assignments for the morning and afternoon. They are created so that FASTRAN can accommodate the most riders with the least number of vehicle hours. FASTRAN staff will consider riders’ disabilities at this time in order to ensure proper placement.

In order to ensure a high level of productivity, FASTRAN reviews bus block summaries of the manifests, which show the daily and weekly number of hours that each vehicle would operate under the proposed schedule and depict where each vehicle would go. FASTRAN cuts these bus blocks into driver assignments called runs. Runs are used to achieve the following goals: to ensure that full-time drivers work 40 hours a week, to curb excessive overtime costs, and to allow drivers and standing order passengers to become comfortable with the bus, the route, and each other.

2.2.3 Kentucky

Under its Empower Kentucky initiative to improve statewide services, the State of Kentucky, created a Transportation Cabinet, which deals with the transportation delivery needs of the state's health, human services, and work force clients. It contracts with broker-operators that are assigned to one of 16 human service transportation delivery regions. These regions are based on the existing transit operators' service areas, current fleet sizes, and capacity utilization ratios. The broker-operators provide service directly or indirectly through other transportation providers.

These providers are divided into three categories in order to ensure easier tracking and funding allocations. These three categories are the following: larger for-profit and non-profit agencies that are not dependent on Medicaid, for-profit and non-profit agencies that are disengaging themselves from the Medicaid program, and smaller for-profit agencies whose major clients are Medicaid recipients.

Before it hired its broker-operators, the Transportation Cabinet worked with an independent financial consultant on its Request for Proposals. This consultant had the Transportation Cabinet agree to pay its broker-operators flat monthly fees with additional payments for special case rides. After selecting all of its broker-operators, it worked with them to finalize its guidelines and draw up written contracts. An Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from each of the affected state agencies monitors the Transportation Cabinet's progress, its brokers-operators, and other transportation operators.

Kentucky's broker-operators accept anyone who currently pays for state transportation services with Medicaid vouchers, who is a K-Tap recipient that receives transportation reimbursements, or who is a Vocational Rehabilitation or Department of the Blind service recipient. The broker-operators will determine service eligibility for its participating transportation providers.

If a transportation provider offers a ride, it is responsible for entering the rider into a recipient trip log, which contains his or her name, the trip time and purpose, and whether he or she took the ride that was offered. If a transportation provider offers a ride, which it later needs to decline, it is responsible for finding another transportation provider.

The Transportation Cabinet stated that it would make several changes to its system, if it hypothetically would have to implement another statewide brokerage system. First, it would develop a procedures manual that would describe how to handle situations that are likely to arise, such as dealing with problem clients. Second, it would create brochures and other marketing material that would educate the general public about its services, such as service areas and service hours. And finally, it would formally analyze operating data before and after implementation of the brokerages to determine if they are cost-effective.

2.2.4 Vermont

Like Kentucky, Vermont encouraged a multi-county approach to establishing brokerages. The Office of Vermont Health Access hired the Vermont Public Transportation Association to create and oversee its Medicaid brokerages. To create these brokerages, the Vermont Public Transportation Association divided the state into nine regions and competitively bid each of the nine brokerages. It has subjected these brokerages to service approval, claims processing, and productivity reviews. The brokers use taxis, buses, vans, and a network of nearly one thousand volunteers. In FY2002, the Medicaid brokerages provided 397,972 rides.

2.2.5 Oregon

In 2000, the Oregon Department of Transportation determined that one-third of the state's population depended on others to meet their daily transportation needs. This number will likely increase another 50% as the population ages over the next twenty years. The state's failure to meet this need has resulted in people being unable to reach jobs, educational institutions, and basic social services. To change this situation, the Governor created the Transportation Coordination Working Group, which is composed of senior representatives from all state agencies that provide or purchase human service transportation and many of their local partners. Under this initiative, the Transportation Coordination Working Group developed a framework for coordinating transportation programs and those state agencies that deal with transportation of social service clients. This framework is described in its report, "The Coordination Challenge."

In this report, the Transportation Coordination Working Group recommended ten coordination activities that should be given priority. First, the State of Oregon needs to mix passengers from its different programs in order to maximize productivity and minimize costs that may be associated with this action (e.g. higher insurance costs). Second, it needs to develop consistent standards for transportation services and planning among its agencies that provide transportation. Third, it needs to simplify and condense existing rules, where practicable. Fourth, it needs to promote brokerages since they can be highly productive. Fifth, it needs to develop consistent billing and tracking systems among state agencies in order to encourage operations that simultaneously serve people with different needs. Sixth, it needs to develop and maintain a consolidated inventory of Oregon's transportation funding resources, providers, and coordinated services. Seventh, it needs to maximize use of existing vehicles in community programs through shared use programs. Eighth, it needs to offer incentives to local jurisdictions for coordinating transportation programs. Ninth, it needs to create incentives for school districts that share their buses with other agencies. And finally, it needs to develop a program for monitoring and evaluating the coordination effort's effectiveness and progress.

To successfully implement these priority coordination activities, the State of Oregon has used its public and private resources to begin integrating its medical, social service, public transportation, and student transportation services. First, the Oregon Department of Human Services and the Oregon Department of Transportation have jointly deployed

technical assistance teams to help their partners and local communities identify and overcome coordination barriers. Second, the Oregon Department of Human Services and the Oregon Department of Transportation have been working with local governments and agency representatives to promote transportation brokerages in five additional Oregon communities. The Portland region currently has a brokerage operating under Tri-Met. Third, the Oregon Department of Transportation has committed Oregon Transportation Network funds to support local coordination efforts. These funds support transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. Fourth, the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Human Services have been jointly planning, developing, and submitting Job Access/Reverse Commute (JARC) applications for seven communities. Fifth, the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Education are looking at how they can remove barriers to coordinating students and the general public. Sixth, the State of Oregon has held several meetings for agency heads, federal program managers, and local officials to discuss coordination of transportation for veterans, dependents, and their survivors. And finally, interagency working teams have been developed to identify state transportation resources and to design a “virtual transportation network.” This network will allow agencies and individuals to make better choices about their trips.

2.2.6 Alaska

In October 2001, Alaska used a \$500,000 federal grant to establish its first coordinated transit system called the Central Area Rural Transit System, Inc. (CARTS). It is a door-to-door service that has a single dispatcher, who connects people needing rides with private transportation operators, including senior citizen centers and cab companies. During its first month, it provided 200 rides and an additional 200 rides in its fifth week alone. Its great success prompted the federal government to give CARTS a \$500,000 JARC grant for its second year of operation. It now receives a combination of federal, state, and local funds, such as federal rural transportation funds and funding from the Alaska Mental Health Trust.

The program, which is modeled on successful brokerages in the rural areas of the Lower 48, segments the central peninsula into 13 separate \$2.50 fare zones. People who want a ride within Soldotna, for example, pay \$2.50, but if they want to ride about 10 miles from Soldotna to Kenai, they cross three fare zones and pay \$7.50. It is approximately half the price of a regular cab ride in the area. Riders don’t pay cash when they hop into a participating car or taxi but rather use \$20 punch cards that they bought from the program or received from one of the social service agencies.

CARTS provides rides to anyone in the community. About 60% of their riders are welfare-to-work clients that use the brokerage to get to and from work. Other riders include people with disabilities, people who had their driver’s licenses suspended, and seriously ill patients who need rides to the clinic.

This state has taken a rather simplistic approach to creating a brokerage, given their sparse population. It uses private drivers with small vehicles as its only transportation

providers since big vans and bus lines would be infeasible or inefficient in such a sparse area.

2.2.7 Florida

In 1979, the Florida legislature mandated coordination of programs for the transportation disadvantaged, who were identified as people who need others to take them to their basic daily services. To carry out this mandate, the State of Florida identified the size and locations of its transportation disadvantaged population, its program expenditures for this group, and existing coordination strategies.

In 1989, the State of Florida created an independent Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, which has been responsible for development and implementation of coordination programs. This commission is funded through the state's transportation disadvantaged trust fund, which is derived from a portion of automobile registration fees (\$1.50), temporary handicapped tag fees (\$5.00), voluntary contributions from auto registrants, funding from participating agencies, and a 15% transfer from Florida DOT's public transit block grant funding.

The commission, in turn, created coordinating boards that include representatives of state and local agencies, coordinators, and consumers, which are entrusted with evaluating the system. It also appointed 54 community transportation coordinators throughout the state to act as brokers for the various participating agencies. Metropolitan planning organizations or agencies such as the Departments of Labor and Employment Security and Elder Affairs have recommended these coordinators. They schedule and procure transportation services, develop service plans, monitor transit providers, and pay providers' bills. They presently include private businesses; private, non-profit agencies; mass transportation districts; and governmental agencies. Each of these coordinators has an advisory board, which oversees its operations and performance. Table 2.1 shows the different types of service networks and organizations that these coordinators use.

Florida's Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged allocates its operating funds according to the county or region's total population, the total number of trips provided, the total number of miles reported, and the county or region's size in square miles. The rural community transportation coordinators believe that this formula is unfairly weighted against them since their providers carry individual clients over longer distances and thus have higher per-trip costs. Therefore, they have asked the commission to modify its allocation formula.

The research team cannot readily determine whether this system provides services in a cost-effective manner since the commission has not standardized the way its community transportation coordinators fully allocate their costs.

Table 2.1 Description of Florida's Brokerages

Description	Type of Network	Counties by Network Type
Complete Brokerages: CTC provides no transportation services, but contracts for services with multiple providers. In larger metropolitan areas, providers may have been selected through a competitive bid process; however, this is not required as the CTC is allowed to negotiate the price for services.	• Private non-profit • Private for-profit • Government agencies: MPOs - Other • Pubic transit agency	2 8 2 1 3
Partial Brokerages: CTC provides some transportation services, but also contracts with other providers to transport customers.	• Private non-profit • Government agencies: Transit divisions - Other	27 11 3
Sole Brokerages: CTC provides all the transportation for their area. Sole providers are generally found in the rural counties where multiple companies are not available to provide transportation services.	• Private Non-profit • Government agency: Transit divisions	9 1
TOTAL		67

The Florida Department of Transportation stated that it would like to make several changes to the existing system. First, it would like to eliminate or reduce the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. Second, it would like to develop stringent eligibility criteria for all transportation disadvantaged clients since each of the participating agencies currently develops eligibility criteria for its own clients. Third, it would like to eliminate conflicting policies that exist among the community transportation coordinators. Fourth, it would like to modify the funding allocation

formula to better serve rural areas. And finally, it would like to streamline the existing reporting and monitoring processes.

2.3 Benefits

The aforementioned states reported that they have received many benefits from the use of brokerages in rural areas. These benefits are listed in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2 Benefits

1. More user friendly	7. Reduction of eligibility barriers
2. Improved data distribution	8. Better matches of resources to needs
3. Decline in costs per trip	9. Dramatic reductions in passenger trip and vehicle-hour costs
4. Reduced service duplication	10. Greater efficiency
5. Standardization	11. Satisfied brokers, clients and taxpayers
6. Easier to control fraud	12. Increased ridership

2.4 Barriers

The following states also mentioned that they encountered several barriers during the implementation phase or infancy of their brokerages.

2.4.1 Washington State

The Washington State Department of Transportation and the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services stated that they faced the following barriers when they sought demonstration sites for their brokerages: a lack of transportation data, limited capacity in certain regions, lack of coordinated planning, few designated resources, program managers who were reluctant to make major changes on a demonstration project, insufficient and unstable funding sources, “dumping” (the practice of using one program’s resources to serve another program’s needs), existing service contracts, and no clear policies that define who has responsibility for providing services.

2.4.2 Oregon

Table 2.3 lists the many perceived or real barriers identified during Oregon’s brokerage implementation project.

Table 2.3 Oregon's Barriers

1. Turfism	9. Inconsistent Administrative Standards
2. Duplication of Services	10. Inadequate Resources and Incentives
3. Under utilization of vehicles	11. Insurance Requirement
4. Fragmented Funding	12. Planning Issues and Processes
5. Policy Vacuum	13. Lack of Information
6. Coordination Structure	14. Vehicle Specifications
7. Public Perceptions	15. Rural/Urban Differences
8. Funding Distribution	

2.4.3 Kentucky

Kentucky's Transportation Cabinet stated that their on-time performance decreased with the brokerages, possibly because they aggressively tried to maximize trips per vehicle hour. Moreover, Medicaid clients often were reluctant to change drivers because they were already comfortable with their existing ones.

2.4.4 Florida

The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged stated that it encountered several problems during its brokerage's infancy. First, some social service agencies were reluctant to have their clients use public transportation. Second, program monitoring and reporting activities were fragmented and resulted in increased costs and reduced accountability. And finally, service costs varied according to differences in the area's size, population, demographics, service levels, administrative requirements, and available community resources.

2.5 Conclusions

Many transportation providers fear a loss of their control and identity if they cooperate with larger entities. However, these studies show that agencies have been overcoming these concerns out of economic necessity and have been successfully and efficiently transporting more clients in larger and larger service areas.

Chapter 3 Illinois Paratransit Brokerage Case Studies

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research team presents several case analyses on paratransit brokers and transportation service providers within Illinois. These analyses are based on structured interviews with one or more top executives in each agency, and are supplemented by archives, reports, brochures, and websites. During the interviews, the research team asked these executives about their current operations, experiences, or plans for paratransit coordination; their perceived success factors and barriers in the process; and their attitudes toward a statewide coordination system. Four interviews were done on-site (First Transit, DuPage County, South Central Mass Transit District, and the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District), and two were done over the phone (RIDES and Rock Island Mass Transit District). Although these agencies vary in size, location, and progress toward paratransit coordination, they all showed interest in higher-level coordination and gave valuable suggestions.

3.2 Case Analyses

3.2.1 First Transit

3.2.1.1 Introduction/Background

First Transit acts as a full brokerage, partial brokerage, or consultant at numerous sites. This organization has recently established a true brokerage in Hartford, Connecticut and a partial brokerage in Arlington, Virginia, in which it does the legwork for paratransit providers. Unfortunately, no information is available at this time for these projects because of their recent implementation.

In Illinois, First Transit operates within Cook County and 52 other counties located in central Illinois. (A complete listing of these counties is shown in Table 3.1) First Transit deals with non-emergency medical transportation for public aid clients. Although it does not act as a true brokerage here, it offers many of the services that a paratransit brokerage would provide, such as acting as an administrator to ensure that guidelines are met and standards are upheld. According to First Transit's Program Manager, Pavel Lesho, First Transit is "an independent watch dog to all of the providers (that are) enrolled in the program."

First Transit authorizes and validates trips for 500-600 private transportation providers and human service agencies that take people to and from non-emergency, but medically necessary, health services. From its offices in Chicago, First Transit screens 1,200 calls per day and authorizes and validates between 900-1,000 trips per day in three regions of the state. Individual clients call their transportation providers to schedule their trips and set up pick-up windows. The transportation providers then send their requests to First Transit for review and authorization. If First Transit authorizes the trips, it will validate

them after they were taken and authorize the Department of Public Aid to pay the providers.

Since First Transit only works with private sector transportation operators and some not-for-profit human service organizations, it does not coordinate services with the Chicago Transit Authority or other public transit agencies. Although it serves 53 Illinois counties, it has most of its operations in Cook County and the East St. Louis metropolitan area. In Cook County, First Transit works with 250 private transportation providers, while it works with 100 to 150 private transportation providers in the East St. Louis metropolitan area.

3.2.1.2 Organization and Operation

Coordination and efficiency has become a growing topic within the transportation industry. There are several different strategies that public or private organizations have taken to better serve their communities, while allocating resources more wisely. The Illinois Department of Public Aid (IDPA), for example, has entered into a contractual relationship with First Transit, which was previously known as Dyntek. This contractual relationship has sought to achieve two objectives: 1) to determine who is responsible for giving prior approval to non-emergency, but medically necessary, requests for transportation, and 2) to identify possible resources for referral to the Department of Public Aid as a way to increase transportation resources.

Table 3.1 – Counties Covered by First Transit

Cook	Effingham	Macon	Putnam
Adam	Ford	Macoupin	Rock Island (City Only)
Brown	Fulton	Marshall	Sangamon
Bureau	Green	Mason	Schuyler
Cass	Hancock	McDonough	Scott
Calhoun	Henderson	McLean	Shelby
Champaign	Henry	Menard	Stark
Christian	Iroquois	Mercer	Tazewell
Clark	Jersey	Montgomery	Vermillion
Coles	Kankakee	Morgan	Warren
Cumberland	Knox	Moultrie	Woodford
DeWitt	LaSalle	Peoria	
Douglas	Livingston	Pike	
Edgar	Logan	Platt	

By achieving these objectives, the Illinois Department of Public Aid was able to achieve its ultimate goal of providing a standardized, statewide process for providing transportation. Through systems and technology improvements, First Transit was able to more efficiently use existing vehicles and personnel. Its transportation providers were allowed to have public aid clients on board with other clients and were able to transfer the reservation and routing functions to First Transit. This shift in functions led to a

reduction of case workers' responsibilities and the need for case workers. In Rock Island, the number of case workers, for example, was reduced from 15 to four. First Transit's ability to provide accurate, up-to-date information on transportation use has also led to a 30% reduction in fraud and abuse.

This collaboration among the Illinois Department of Public Aid, First Transit, and its transportation providers is referred to as the Non-Emergency Transportation Services Prior Approval Program. This program has created a comprehensive plan for receiving transportation requests and validating trips. The following list illustrates how this plan works:

- Riders must first request trips from their transit providers that are no later than two business days prior to the day of the trip and no earlier than seven business days. These riders must be current Medicaid recipients that are requesting Medicaid eligible services.
- The rider, the medical provider, or the transportation operator then can call First Transit to request authorization for a single trip. Only medical providers, however, can ask for standing orders.
- After it has received the request, First Transit will access the Department of Public Aid's eligibility database to verify the rider's eligibility for the requested trip time.
- First Transit reviews the information to determine if the trip request meets its Notice of Approval criteria. First, the trip should involve the least expensive form of transportation that can accommodate the rider's medical needs. (First Transit will not accept requests, where the rider has access to free transportation, i.e. through a friend, neighbor, or family member.) Second, the trip should take the rider to the nearest medical provider that meets his or her medical needs. Third, the Illinois Department of Public Aid should have certified the operator and the level of service that was requested. If the request meets these criteria, First Transit will enter this request into the Illinois Department of Public Aid's database.
- If the request is not approved, First Transit will either deny the request or appropriately hold it for further information.
- If the transportation provider asks for pre-approval on a ride request, the Illinois Department of Public Aid will directly notify the transportation provider.
- If a rider or the medical provider requested a ride that was approved, the Illinois Department of Public Aid will ask the transportation provider to furnish the trip. This request will come in the form of a letter, called the Notice of Approval.
- The transportation provider notifies the person making the trip request and receives all of the information that is needed from the rider.
- The transportation provider takes the rider to his or her medical appointment, if it receives a Notice of Approval.
- The transportation provider bills the Department of Public Aid, based on information contained in the Notice of Approval, and
- The Department of Public Aid pays the transportation provider, based on the information contained in its database. First Transit is not responsible for trans-

portation providers or their billing since the Department of Public Aid has only hired First Transit to approve transportation for non-emergency, but medically necessary services.

The rider can request a specific transportation provider, only if that provider is enrolled with the Illinois Department of Public Aid. In any event, the rider, medical provider, or transportation operator will need the following information at the time of the trip request:

- The name, address, and phone number of the person who needs a ride;
- The person's RIN from the medical or Kid Care card;
- The medical provider's name, address, and phone number;
- The date, time, and reason for the appointment; and
- The name of the company or person who the requester wants to provide the ride.

The only stipulation to this process arises when dealing with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Only a DCFS medical liaison can request transportation for DCFS wards.

The validation process is not as complicated. Three different validation processes exist. First, pre-evaluation occurs when First Transit contacts the medical provider to verify the appointment before approving the trip. Second, post-validation occurs when First Transit contacts the medical provider, transportation provider, and/or rider to verify the trip and the medical services provided. Third, mileage validation occurs when First Transit calculates mileage for every trip request, using nationally recognized mapping software that the Illinois Department of Public Aid has pre-approved.

3.2.1.3 Eligibility of Clients and Providers

First Transit conducts vigorous background checks on clients to determine whether they are eligible to receive service. It also checks on transportation providers to determine whether they are enrolled and in good standing with the Illinois Department of Public Aid. To determine a transit provider's good standing, First Transit will check out such things as the driver's licenses of the transportation providers, their vehicles, financial situations, and business reputation. If any provider commits fraud (such as making up clients and trips) and is caught, the Illinois Department of Public Aid will immediately eliminate them from the system. All issues of eligibility, rules, billing, rejected claims, and rates remain the Illinois Department of Public Aid's responsibility.

3.2.1.4 Establishment of Policy

The *Handbook for Providers of Transportation Services* or the *Handbook for Providers of Medical Services* contain policies that the Illinois Department of Public Aid has established for this service. These policies require First Transit to approve of necessary, non-emergency requests for medical transportation before a ride is given. However, circumstances exist when post-approval is necessary, such as when a hospital discharges

a patient at night or on weekends, or when urgent medical care is necessary, but not an emergency. First Transit must receive timely, post approval requests, according to the *Handbook for Providers of Transportation Services*. It will deny any requests that are not timely.

3.2.1.5 Level of Service Definitions

In its *Handbook for Providers of Transportation Services*, the Illinois Department of Public Aid has determined the conditions under which First Transit can have its transportation providers use a private automobile, taxicab, service car, medicar, non-emergency ambulance, or other transportation mode. These conditions are listed below:

- **Private Automobile** – Transportation by passenger vehicle of a patient whose medical condition does not require a specialized mode,
- **Taxicab** – Transportation by passenger vehicle of a patient whose medical condition does not require a specialized mode,
- **Service Car** - Transportation by passenger vehicle of a patient whose medical condition does not require a specialized mode,
- **Medicar** – Transportation of a patient whose medical condition requires wheelchair lockdowns and a hydraulic or electric lift or ramp; or transportation by stretcher when the patient's condition does not require medical supervision, medical equipment, the administration of drugs or the administration of oxygen, etc.,
- **Non-emergency Ambulance** – Transportation of a patient whose medical condition requires transfer by stretcher and medical supervision. The patient's condition may also require medical equipment or the administration of drugs or oxygen, etc., during the transport, and
- **Other Transportation** – Transportation by common carriers (train, bus, airplane, etc.).

Determining which mode of transportation to use is based on the rider's particular medical needs. It is not based on rider preferences, convenience, or availability of transportation equipment. First Transit employs a medical review nurse who helps it determine when a client will need medically-assisted transportation. Unless medical reasons prevent its use, riders who are ambulatory and have access to public or private transportation must make use of that transportation. First Transit refers ambulatory riders to the local Illinois Department of Human Services office for bus tokens.

3.2.1.6 Service Expansion and Barriers

First Transit does not currently serve some of Illinois' northern (e.g. Lake and Kane) and southern counties (e.g. Hardin and White). However, it plans to expand service throughout Illinois soon.

First Transit tries its best to lessen rider apprehensions when it expands to new regions. It always distributes brochures, performs road shows, and gives 60 days advance notice to existing transportation providers and the general public. It has also introduced service quality improvements, such as safety belts, wheelchair accessible vehicles, freedom to choose providers, and the ability to talk to dispatchers who speak a variety of languages, such as Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, and Spanish. Because of these and other initiatives, clients generally get used to First Transit quickly and without very much resistance.

However, transportation providers tend to dislike First Transit because they don't want to follow all of its strict procedures. Over time, First Transit has a history of persuading transportation providers, getting them certified, and trained into its network. So far, First Transit has no plan to "merge" its business with other transportation brokers (such as with local mass transportation agencies' dispatch centers). Since it provides pre-approval of medical transportation only, it wishes to remain independent from other agencies, but welcomes communication and information sharing.

3.2.2 South Central Transit

3.2.2.1 Introduction

While in the process of researching current brokerages within Illinois, the research team discovered that South Central Transit was operating a mini brokerage in Washington County, one of six counties that participate in a coordination effort in southern Illinois. South Central Transit is a highly sophisticated organization that is extremely eager to create and lead a full brokerage in its area. The following sections will document South Central Transit's capabilities and efforts toward establishing itself as a brokerage.

3.2.2.2 Organizational Description/Background

South Central Transit operates the following transportation services: demand responsive public transit service within Salem, Centralia, Nashville, Carlyle, Mt. Vernon, West Frankfort, and Benton; wheelchair accessible transportation and/or child transportation to and from local daycare centers, schools, homes, and babysitters; fixed route services from Marion and Jefferson Counties to New Baden in Clinton County; reverse commute service from New Baden to Salem, Centralia, Mt. Vernon, and Nashville; and shopping shuttle service to Mount Vernon. In 2003, South Central Transit had provided approximately 240,000 trips.

South Central Transit has its headquarters and regional maintenance facility in Centralia and satellite offices and storage facilities in Mt. Vernon and West Frankfort. In Centralia, it has medium-sized buses and minivans that carry up to 31 passengers. In Mt. Vernon and West Frankfort, South Central Transit has 15 and 14 vehicles, respectively. South Central Transit has an open eligibility process in which everyone is eligible. Its riders consist of one-third children, one-third seniors, and one-third of the general population, which falls between these ages. It performs its own maintenance, record keeping, billing, certification, and scheduling.

3.2.2.3 Coordination Efforts

South Central Transit has been coordinating its services with schools, rehab facilities, meal delivery services, and geriatric facilities that are located within its existing service area. It has contracted with the Centralia School District, Franklin-Williamson Human Services, and Jefferson County Senior Services to perform their record keeping, billing, certification, scheduling, dispatching, and transportation services.

South Central Transit entered into an intergovernmental agreement with St. Clair County Transit District to provide two morning and two afternoon fixed-route trips from Carlyle in Clinton County to the Shiloh MetroLink Station, with an intermediate stop in New Baden. It has operated this service since June of 2003.

South Central Transit has also tried to coordinate services in Jackson County, but was unsuccessful since IDOT's Division of Public Transportation had prohibited it from using an intergovernmental agreement to initiate service. Jackson County had issued a Request for Proposals instead and selected another agency to perform its services.

In Williamson County, South Central Transit wanted to establish a brokerage, in which it would use its computer assisted scheduling and dispatching system to schedule and dispatch for that county. However, Illinois state law prohibits transit agencies from providing services that are outside of its district boundaries, unless these services begin and end within the district's boundaries. South Central Transit, however, was not interested in providing this kind of service.

Washington County is an established mini-brokerage site that could be easily expanded beyond its existing borders. The county has already subcontracted with South Central Transit to serve the transportation needs of its senior center at \$5 per trip (compared to a previous charge of \$27 per trip). South Central Transit currently provides the county's dispatching service by daily faxing the schedule to Washington County's vehicle center. All participating providers are located within Washington County and are part of the same district. The only issue that would have to be dealt with is the legislative one of crossing district lines. This mini-brokerage tries to lower its overhead costs by providing public transportation services during off-peak hours and could contribute to the brokerage's overall cost savings.

3.2.2.4 Technology

South Central Transit uses a dial-up network connection to access its GIS system and a web-based, computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system called StrateGen. All of its employees are cross-trained for approximately six months so that they can perform call-taking, scheduling, administrative, and dispatching functions, including routing of quick shuttles. The administrative functions include record keeping, billing, and reporting of trips. They do not, however, use StrateGen to route most of their trips since they primarily operate within seven small-to-medium-sized municipalities.

Typically, South Central Transit uses two schedulers and one dispatcher each day at its Centralia office. The small staff allows for better control of information. Riders schedule their trips two weeks in advance of their desired trip dates and times and provide information to the schedulers while on the phone. The schedulers document this information in real-time, which increases their efficiency and eliminates time that was spent recording general information on repeat riders. Once a week, the schedulers or dispatcher run a route optimization report to improve scheduling efficiency and lower operating costs. A run sheet, or manifest, is developed daily.

After a client calls, the scheduler will either ask the driver to collect his or her fare or will assign a sponsor to the client, who will receive the rider's bill at the end of the month. StrateGen calculates the fare according to travel time or mileage.

If the client has previously taken South Central Transit, StrateGen will look at the client's preferred carrier for ride availability. If no rides are available, StrateGen will look at the other carriers. In either event, South Central's dispatcher will give the driver a 15-minute window to pick-up his or her rider. Riders are informed of this pick-up window when they make their ride requests.

To improve this system, IDOT may want to consider funding the purchase and installation of mobile data terminals, personal digital assistants, and/or automatic vehicle locators. However, South Central Transit believes that regular personal digital assistants may not be able to accommodate all of its data.

3.2.2.5 Funding

South Central Transit currently receives its funding from the State of Illinois and from 50-60 sponsors, which include local agencies, such as the RIDES Mass Transit District.

3.2.2.6 Barriers

South Central Transit believes that some existing federal and state policies harm its chances for becoming a brokerage. First, it believes that IDOT unfairly gives larger and smaller transit operators the same amount of vehicles. It believes that IDOT should allocate more vehicles to larger agencies like it and allow them to use some of their operating funds for coordinating services with agencies that have excess vehicle capacity.

Second, South Central Transit believes that IDOT should let it enter into intergovernmental agreements with other transit districts within the region, without having to go through competitive bidding. Third, South Central Transit wants to operate outside of its district boundaries without having to change the composition of its existing board. Fourth, it wants some flexibility with how it deals with certain federal and state programs, such as the Head Start Program and certain Illinois Department of Human Services programs. Under the Head Start Program, the federal government requires South Central Transit to use white school buses to transport its students, rather than public transit vehicles. It also prohibits South Central Transit from using these vehicles for other purposes when they are not being used to transport Head Start students. Likewise, the Illinois Department of Human Services requires that South Central Transit use separate vehicles to transport passengers who are enrolled in its different programs.

Table 3.2 - Barriers to Implementation

Fed. Problems: Head Start Program: use of school buses that sit for eight hours a day	If done through DHS, South Central Transit has no reimbursement
State and policy contradiction	Restrictions (detail provided below)
Head change at IDOT's Division of Public Transportation	Need a good policy procurement plan: small agencies get the same number of vehicles as large agencies
State Policy: Have to spend operations money on leasing a vehicle instead of coordinating with those who have sedentary vehicles	

3.2.2.7 Success Factors

South Central Transit is a very efficient operation that uses an entire fleet of small- to medium-sized vehicles to achieve an average vehicle productivity of 5.7 riders per hour. It owns and operates a maintenance garage that is attached to its headquarters. This garage provides maintenance for providers and their vehicles within a 70-mile radius. It is also building a technical center that will have advanced computer labs modeled after those found in Galesburg. These labs will host National Transit Institute workshops and will provide long-distance training for dispatchers and schedulers in other areas.

South Central Transit's computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system is so highly evolved that it has 50-60 sponsoring agencies that are billed through this system. Backing up the system are knowledgeable employees who are well-trained on the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system and are familiar with the region. It believes that this computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system and its strong support network are keys to South Central Transit's success. Table 3.3 summarizes these

and other factors that South Central Transit believes make it a successful candidate for running a brokerage:

Table 3.3 - Success Factors

1. Use of an Attached Maintenance Garage	5. Lower Costs
2. Development of a Technical Center	6. Non-Union Employees
3. Long Distance Training	7. Use of a Computer-Assisted Scheduling and Dispatching System
4. Cross-Trained Employees	8. Good Support for the Computer
	9. Assisted Scheduling and Dispatching System

3.2.2.8 Proposed Necessary Conditions

The interview with South Central Transit provided the research team with a set of steps for developing a possible brokerage system in their area.

These steps are:

- 1) Identifying the vehicles and agencies that exist within the area,
- 2) Implementing GIS and automatic vehicle locator systems,
- 3) Identifying the services that existing agencies provide, and
- 4) Determining whether any of the existing agencies are willing to join its brokerage.

3.2.2.9 Opportunities

An initial study that was performed under the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC) identified opportunities and challenges that South Central Transit faced when it set up the Washington County mini-brokerage. It found that South Central Transit's use of JARC funding increased peoples' awareness that public transit is important to rural communities. JARC funding allowed South Central Transit the opportunity to leverage the resources of rural organizations that have similar missions and overlapping clientele in the region. To capitalize on this leverage, South Central Transit bolstered its image among potential transportation providers and human service agencies in Washington County.

3.2.2.10 Challenges

While the JARC program provided South Central Transit an opportunity for growth and greater recognition, it provided several challenges, which are the following:

1. The JARC Program's application process provided a narrow window of opportunity for implementation, which limited South Central's ability to collect data and build partnerships.

2. Since funding disruptions at the federal, state, and local level made the brokerage appear unreliable and unsustainable, some employers were reluctant to participate in South Central's JARC program.
3. Federal, state, regional, and local changes to transit, welfare, and workforce training caused frequent staff turnover. This staff turnover resulted in a loss of institutional memory and inconsistent operating procedures.
4. The lack of standardized reporting procedures caused confusion, frustration, and delays for the mini-brokerage's transportation providers.
5. Electronic reporting systems were not always compatible with staff training or readily available telecommunications access.
6. Privacy concerns prevented some human service agencies from providing transit providers with lists of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program) recipients.
7. Lack of client familiarity with transit procedures and job practices created confusion and conflicts.
8. And general challenges to providing rural transit – long distances, light population densities, and high per-rider costs – created barriers to program implementation.

3.2.3 DuPage County*

3.2.3.1 Structure of DuPage County's Coordinated Paratransit Program

DuPage County is currently leading a committee of transportation providers, human services agencies, and municipalities, to help it determine how to implement, maintain, and expand coordinated paratransit services within the county. Its responsibilities include: obtaining and delivering the necessary equipment to providers; creating a structure for the client ID system; establishing standards for participating organizations; developing a cost model for back-end processing; and drafting contracts to establish the maximum and minimum number of trips per day that transit providers can make.

With the consent of its committee, DuPage County has entered into a contract with Pace, the Regional Transportation Authority's Suburban Bus Division, to set up and operate its proposed Scheduling & Dispatching Center. Pace's primary responsibilities will include managing trip requests that riders or their sponsors will make through a centralized phone number; scheduling trips; dispatching vehicles; answering customer service inquiries; and performing administrative, financial, and reporting tasks. Its other responsibilities will include managing client registration and a client registration database; keeping an inventory of client identification cards; coordinating rules for establishing carrier performance measures and scheduling; ensuring installation and safety standards for on-board equipment; contracting for maintenance support of on-board equipment; and providing technical support to all organizations concerning hardware, software, and system functionality.

* Milicia Juric and Ashley Kim provided the research for this section of the report.

The participating human service agencies or sponsors will submit client records through the Internet to the client registration database; conform to all reporting, operating, and performance standards; keep fare requirements up-to-date with the Scheduling & Dispatching Center; teach their clients how to use the new system; and perform other customer service duties.

DuPage County will require its transportation providers to operate safe and efficient transportation in a courteous manner. Their other responsibilities will include: helping integrate their equipment with the Scheduling & Dispatching Center; conforming to all reporting, performance, and operating requirements; communicating with the Scheduling & Dispatching Center about schedules and driver-vehicle combinations; assigning the proper vehicles and drivers for each trip; and promptly submitting accurate trip completion reports.

3.2.3.2 Transportation Providers

This program will have three types of transportation providers, which are the following:

1. Public Transit Agencies – The largest public transit agency in DuPage County is Pace. It is responsible for providing paratransit services for people with disabilities that complement its fixed bus routes and for funding and overseeing some local paratransit systems and dial-a-ride services.
2. Human Service Agencies – These human service agencies consist of public or private, non-profit agencies that use their own vehicles to serve the elderly, the poor, and people with disabilities. They could use the coordinated paratransit program as a way to generate additional revenue.
3. Taxi companies- DuPage County currently runs a program called PILOT II, in which ten different taxi companies accept the county's vouchers. Although trip coordination currently exists, DuPage County will incorporate the Pilot II program into its coordinated paratransit program. DuPage County intends to replace PILOT II's paper vouchers with client ID fare cards.

3.2.3.3 Technology Issues

To implement coordination, DuPage County will need to purchase and install software that will integrate reservations, scheduling, dispatching, and client information as well as back office functions. Its consultant, Transystems, suggested that DuPage County hire someone to customize its commercially available paratransit software program to include a geographic information system, which should minimally include current maps of streets, landmarks, and sponsor facilities.

DuPage County will also need to have Pace purchase and install a digital, computerized phone system that will support the county's one phone number concept. This system should have an attendant menu with fewer than four options to route calls to their appropriate destinations. Using more than four options is not recommended because

clients could become confused. This system should also support TTY/TDD users and have a caller ID screen that would display clients' phone numbers. Implementation of this system will allow Pace to generate reports that measure dropped calls, time needed to answer calls, and call duration.

Mobile data terminals and automatic vehicle locators that are on board vehicles should support DuPage Counties' same day scheduling, dispatching, and customer service functions because they use a global positioning system (GPS). When the mobile data terminals and automatic vehicle locators are integrated with the computerized dispatch portion of the paratransit software's dispatching functions, it would allow coordination through real-time trip reporting, transmission of trip completion records, and updates of vehicle locations.

Integrating mobile data terminals and automated vehicle locators with client ID cards will enable the mobile data terminals to read client ID numbers and trip information when riders swipe their cards. The client ID cards would eliminate vouchers, allow for use of alternative sponsors, and help Pace manage its back office reconciliations. The client ID cards will have magnetic strip technology and include each client's picture and identification number so that Pace can create a client registration database.

With this integrated system, clients could check their account balances, add card value, and use cash to pay for their rides. Once the client is in the vehicle, the driver would press the cash or account button and swipe the card. The mobile data terminal would process the client number and retrieve his or her trip record from the manifest. At the end of the trip, a drop-off event report would generate a trip completion record in the mobile data terminal.

An important element of the coordinated system is the universal registration system that would allow clients to register directly with sponsors and would provide a web-based user interface for entering, reporting, and retrieving registration information. It would generate paratransit-related client information to its centralized paratransit client database. Pace will put security measures into place to ensure that providers would not be able to view client information from other providers. Internet transmission would occur through a virtual private network that would ensure security.

3.2.3.4 Barriers and Possible Solutions

Although DuPage County has overcome many hurdles in its paratransit coordination effort, it still has to overcome the following problems: working with multiple funding sources and their attendant requirements, modifying taxi regulations, minimizing rivalries between paratransit providers, and dealing with rider anxieties over the coordination effort.

Since every funding source has its own criteria and priorities, working with multiple funding sources is a substantial hurdle to coordination. DuPage County will need to work with its funding agencies and participating operators to strike a balance between its funding source requirements and its goal of increasing mobility for senior citizens and people with disabilities. For example, DuPage County would need to require drug testing for cab companies who want to participate in its brokerage. Currently, cab companies are not required to test their drivers for drugs.

Besides funding constraints, DuPage County must work with its municipalities to modify taxi regulations. Taxi companies currently have to register with each municipality where they want to provide service. If taxi companies wanted to operate throughout DuPage County, they would have to register with each of the county's 37 municipalities and pay each of their registration fees. Since this is financially infeasible, DuPage County should work with all parties to eliminate the municipal registration process. Some smaller transportation operators may also worry that the brokerage will give some of their business to larger operators who have more capacity. Although this may happen, smaller transportation operators who provide very good service will have an expanded market of clients under the brokerage and therefore may get more opportunities for increasing revenue. Under DuPage County's Pilot II Program, the clients can tell the broker, which operators they refuse to ride with. Operators, therefore, who meet their clients' needs, will have increased their chances of generating more revenue.

Riders may also be apprehensive during the early stages of the brokerage's formation because they fear the unknown. To help minimize this apprehension, DuPage County will need to teach its riders how the brokerage can sufficiently lower costs, so that its clients can potentially receive more rides. It will also need to identify the new brokerage with its participating operators through use of a uniform logo. This logo can brand the two entities together to show riders that their existing operators will still serve them and that new operators will be available to help them.

3.2.3.5 Costs and Benefits

To calculate the costs of implementing its brokerage, DuPage County assumed that it will initially have 17 Pilot II participants, three sponsors, two sponsor/providers, and two private carriers in its brokerage. These participants currently have 102 ADA-compliant vehicles that can provide approximately 763 trips each weekday or an estimated 212,000 trips annually after full implementation. It will likely have a productivity ratio of 2.5 trips per vehicle hour in the beginning.

The Scheduling & Dispatching Center will initially have one manager, three customer service representatives, two-and-a-half dispatchers, a scheduler, a technical support specialist, and two administrative staff. These projections are based on a 16 hour workday Mondays to Fridays and an eight hour workday Saturdays and Sundays. The Scheduling & Dispatching Center will likely receive 114 peak hour calls and 763 total calls an average weekday once the brokerage reaches full implementation.

DuPage County calculated its on-going maintenance costs as a percentage of initial costs. These costs were 15%, 10%, and 8% for software, fixed-end hardware, and in-vehicle hardware, respectively.

The brokerage will likely use commercial off-the-shelf paratransit software, which it will need to customize, including the addition of a business management software package, if one is not included in the initial software purchase. The software and its modifications will cost approximately \$320,000 to implement and approximately \$48,000 annually to maintain. (Please see, Table 2.3 for details). For the Internet-based client registration system, the one-time capital expenditure is approximately \$243,000.

In addition to the brokerage's technological needs, the coordinator will need system software and hardware that will include a local area network for his or her office, computers, a telephone system, office machines, and power protection equipment. It will cost approximately \$200,000 to purchase and \$12,423 annually to maintain. These figures came from Internet sites of business suppliers and resellers of computer equipment.

The coordinator will also require office space and communications equipment. Rent is based on 2,500 square feet of floor space at \$15 per square foot. Communication expenses include wireless data communication between the coordinator and vehicles, wireless voice communications between all participants, and high-speed Internet connections between the coordinator and all participants. These expenses will cost approximately \$137,500 to purchase and \$183,180 annually to maintain.

Additional costs include hardware, software, and associated maintenance costs for the 22 sponsors who will initially participate in the brokerage. Each of these sponsors will need a computer workstation with Internet access, a digital camera for taking ID pictures, and Internet access for each of the sponsors. Costs total \$30,985 for the initial capital investment and \$3,001 for annual maintenance costs. These costs are based on information found on supplier Internet sites.

Hardware and software are also required for the two participating sponsor/providers and two private carriers. These costs total \$42,355 for capital and \$4,236 for annual maintenance.

Vehicle-based equipment costs cover the supply of on-board equipment for the initial 102 vehicles. It will cost \$765,000 to purchase and \$61,200 to annually maintain.

Staffing presents a cost in itself. The two lead agency staffing positions are manager and technical specialist with a combined annual salary of \$123,500. Coordinator staffing costs include the projected initial staffing and general office expenses, and a 7.5%

management fee for the firm that performs the coordinator function. Total annual operating costs are \$486,875. Table 3.4 summarizes all of these expenses.

Table 3.4 – Estimated Expenses for DuPage County Paratransit Coordination

Expenditure Item	Capital	Annual maintenance
Software with modifications	\$320,000	\$48,000
Internet-based registration system	\$243,000	
Coordinator hardware & system software	\$200,103	\$12,423
Office space, furniture, and communications	\$137,500	\$183,180
Costs for sponsors	\$30,985	\$3,001
Costs for providers and private carriers	\$42,355	\$4,236
Vehicle-based equipment	\$765,000	\$61,200
Lead agency operating costs		\$123,500
Coordinator operating costs		\$486,875
Total	\$1,738,943	\$874,415

3.2.3.6 Timetable

The anticipated roll out should begin at the end of 2004. Pace will outfit its vehicles with mobile data terminals by the end of this year and will have its modified software shortly afterwards. The current taxi and paratransit contracts expire at the end of December and PILOT II contracts expire at the end of January.

3.2.3.7 Summary

In closing, the coordinated paratransit program of DuPage County is currently in the planning process, with an anticipated timeline of December 2004. The county has gained valuable experience with its Pilot II program and will use this knowledge to help implement its new program. While much of its technological issues are under control, it continues to have problems with funding.

3.2.4 RIDES

RIDES Mass Transit District serves nine Southeastern Illinois counties using a demand-response system and established deviated routes. RIDES reserves the right to mix its clients in order to maximize vehicle use and provide a more cost effective service.

3.2.4.1 Service Area

RIDES operates in Edwards, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Pope, Saline, Wabash, Wayne, and White Counties. These counties cover 3,361 square miles and consist of hills and flat

farmlands, with Shawnee National Forest covering much of Harden and Pope Counties. These counties have an average density of 31 people per square mile and a combined population of 103,482 in 2000. Twenty-four percent (24%) of these people are elderly and twenty-one per cent (21%) of them have disabilities, according to Illinois Department of Health, Education, and Welfare estimates.

Harrisburg, the largest town in Saline County with a population of 9,860, contains most of the shopping centers, government offices, and medical services available in the southern half of RIDES' service area. Mt. Carmel, Carmi, and Fairfield are similar communities in the northern half of RIDES' service area. For many rural residents, getting to essential community services means traveling long distances often on gravel or dirt roads to these communities. Some medical specialists have recently begun service in Harrisburg; however most specialists are in Evansville, IN; St. Louis, MO; or Paducah, KY.

Mining and services are the major job occupations in RIDES' service area. Saline County has several coal mines and Hardin County had the only active fluorspar mine in the nation until it was closed in January 1996.

3.2.4.2 Operations

RIDES operates from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Mondays to Fridays in all counties. It operates Saturdays in Saline County from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and in Hardin and Wayne Counties from 5:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Last year, RIDES provided approximately 250,000 trips.

RIDES asks its riders to reserve their trips 24-hours in advance so that its dispatcher can coordinate its trips and fill its buses as much as possible in order to keep costs down. Same day requests for service are honored, when possible. RIDES does not subcontract its services.

In 1994, RIDES implemented a new service called "The Residential," which circles around the City of Harrisburg every hour with stops at all the major shopping centers and medical facilities. Passengers must call in and ask for this service an hour prior to the bus' arrival in their area. If the passenger successfully reserves a ride, the bus will meet them at their residence. To return, the passenger will have to reserve another ride, unless he or she lives at one of the route's major stops. The bus will stop at every major stop within the hour. RIDES has implemented similar service in Carmi, Fairfield, and Mt. Carmel. This service has proven so successful that other agencies have inquired about it.

The following table shows RIDES' fleet composition for FY03.

Table 3.5 - Fleet Composition for FY03

In Fleet	Type
5	Mini Vans
8	Modified Mini Vans
5	Raised Roof Vans with Lifts
30	Body on Chassis with Lifts
4	Body on Chassis
2	Flexible Coach - 45 Pass. Two wheelchairs
1	School Bus - 32 Pass.
Total vehicles in Fleet: 55	

Coordination of Agency Contracts and Special Programs

RIDES provides transportation for many of the area's human service agencies and coordinates transportation for seniors, people with disabilities, and the general public. To eliminate deadhead miles and empty vehicles, RIDES reserves the right to mix clients on its routes. RIDES, for example, will deviate its nutrition route to pick up public aid clients who are traveling to their doctor or teenagers who are traveling to their work programs. To encourage coordination and cooperation, RIDES teaches the social service agencies about its system's capabilities, supplies them with financial and operating information, and delivers services that it promised. Satisfied agencies are RIDES' biggest promoters.

RIDES has service contracts with federal, state, and local agencies which include the following: the Illinois Department of Aging; the Illinois Department of Public Aid, Division of Rehabilitation; Wabash Special Education; Coleman Tri-County Services; Golconda Job Corps; Family Counseling; JPTA; Golden Circle Nutrition; Adult Day Care; Project Success; Career Development; Upward Bound; Princeton Insurance Co.; and the United Mine Workers of America. Purchase of service agreements and contracts are negotiated in several ways, depending on the number of clients, the number of miles, trip times, and the potential for scheduling general public riders on the same trip. The CEO of RIDES reserves the right to re-evaluate and renegotiate contracts. The addition of a client could add up to 15-20 miles a day on a given route.

RIDES provides Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) trips. The JARC program is designed to give low-income people rides to and from work. Riders can sign up at RIDES' offices or receive referrals from any of RIDES' agency partners. They must, however, show proof of their income. RIDES provides JARC service anywhere within its service area; to Marion or Flora, Illinois; or to Princeton, Indiana. These cities are employment centers for residents who are in RIDES' service area.

RIDES also provides transit services that impact economic development and tourism in the area. RIDES provides general public access to many areas of the Shawnee National Forest and operates the Shawnee Queen River Taxi between four communities on the Ohio River. These are practical public transportation applications that also meet tourism needs.

3.2.4.3 Barriers

Fare revenue covers approximately 3-4% of RIDES' costs; other funding comes from Federal Section 5311, Downstate Operating Assistance (Illinois) funds and local tax equivalent funds from social service agency contracts. Although RIDES doesn't think that its current funding is adequate, it will work with what it has been given.

State funding programs have restricted mass transit districts from regularly providing service outside of their district boundaries. A mass transit district can only operate outside of its boundaries if it is providing incidental service. Since rural federal programs have no such restrictions, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) should review the impacts of changing its funding provisions and seek to have them conform to federal policy.

Since system-to-system coordination has not occurred in rural Illinois, IDOT should encourage information sharing and shared infrastructure. As part of this effort, IDOT should fund and build a transit software/database platform for all Illinois transit operators or require all operators to purchase software in the future that will conform to a specific standard and allow information to become available online, so that regions or systems could share information with each other. In the future, an agency or customer could search the web to find available routes and providers and contact the local dispatch center to arrange for the trip.

However, the need for shared infrastructure does not mean that IDOT should fund or build a single dispatching center for the State. This project would cause more confusion than it would reduce and highlight differences in its transit providers' labor agreements. Currently, RIDES has four dispatching centers to serve customers in its nine-county service area. These dispatching centers offer valuable employment opportunities in the area and appear to serve its riders well.

3.2.5 Rock Island

3.2.5.1 Introduction

The Rock Island County Mass Transit District or MetroLINK serves the eight Northwestern Illinois communities of Carbon Cliff, Colona, East Moline, Hampton, Milan, Moline, Rock Island, and Silvis. On December 1, 1992, MetroLINK initiated paratransit service to complement its accessible, fixed-route bus services. This service operates "curb-to-curb" and is limited to areas that are within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of the fixed routes. It is available to people who cannot functionally ride the fixed route buses.

3.2.5.2 Operation and Coordination

MetroLINK has contracted with Community Transportation Development, a not-for-profit agency, to provide its complementary paratransit service. Community Transportation Development has two dispatchers and four drivers and provides approximately 12,000 trips annually using MetroLINK vehicles. It operates Mondays through Fridays from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., on Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Sundays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

To determine rider eligibility, MetroLINK reviews each applicant's completed "Paratransit Eligibility Certification Form," which gives riders an opportunity to clearly state why they cannot use MetroLINK's accessible fixed route buses. MetroLINK has these forms available in several accessible formats at its headquarters and at many township offices. Within twenty-one days of receiving this form, MetroLINK will notify the applicants whether they can use the paratransit service. At this time, it will teach eligible riders how to receive their eligibility card. MetroLINK has digital cameras at several locations for taking photos and produce rider identification cards. People with pending applications will be able to ride paratransit buses throughout the certification period. Denied applicants can ask to have their eligibility reviewed again. People who are eligible for other paratransit systems can use MetroLINK's paratransit service.

To arrange a paratransit ride, riders can call MetroLINK up to two weeks in advance. They can also call the day before or even the same day, if they want to see if space is still available for a last minute ride. MetroLINK does not limit the total number of trips an eligible rider can take, nor does it question riders about the reason why they are traveling (e.g. shopping, working, visiting friends, medical, entertainment).

A personal care attendant can travel with an eligible rider, if necessary, but his or her reservation must be made at the same time as the rider. If space is available, one guest is also allowed. A one-way trip on MetroLINK's paratransit service is \$1.60 for an eligible rider, while personal care attendants ride free. Guests pay \$2.00 one way.

MetroLINK cooperates with other social service agencies such as ARC, Public Aid, and the Robert Young Health Center to provide transportation to their clients. Currently, there is not too much of a "mix" between agency clients. But MetroLINK is interested in integrating those services to make the best use of its vehicles.

3.2.5.3 Barriers

Funding is a major concern for MetroLINK because it wants to resume RuralLINK, which provided public transportation to Henry, Mercer, and northern Rock Island Counties. This service was discontinued in October 2002 when its funding from the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICDD) ran out.

RuralLINK was designed as a pilot project that responded to the growing demand for transit service in Henry, Mercer, and northern Rock Island Counties. Its hours and

service type varied according to rider demand. Riders could travel anywhere in the RuralLINK area or could connect with MetroLINK in downtown East Moline or the South Park Mall.

Since its discontinuation, MetroLINK has worked with the Illinois Department of Transportation to find a new funding source. IDOT has allocated more Section 5311 money for Henry County, but has not been able to secure all of the money that MetroLINK seeks. IDOT may thus have to work with the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities to see if both agencies can get more funds for this program.

Multiple funding sources may also be a problem. MetroLINK wants to broaden its ridership base, rather than restrict eligibility so that it can pick up more riders on its routes and better serve its communities. That is what it did with RuralLINK, which was primarily designed to transport developmentally disabled people. It was later expanded to include the general public and successfully attracted a mix of riders. Sixty-seven percent of its riders came from the general public and 33% of its riders were developmentally disabled.

Resumption of funding for RuralLINK would greatly benefit those living in Henry, Mercer, and northern Rock Island Counties. Transitions Mental Health Rehabilitation, for example, has several potential clients living in Mercer County that could use RuralLINK to go to and from work in one of Transitions' four enterprise activities. Senior citizens would have access to meal sites in such places as Aledo and Kewanee. People living in rural towns would have access to shopping and medical facilities in the larger areas, such as Aledo, Kewanee, Monmouth, and the Quad Cities. Finding a new funding source, which will allow MetroLINK to operate RuralLINK in this open-ended manner, is challenging, however, but not impossible.

Crossing district boundaries may also be a problem, because IDOT wants MetroLINK to operate solely within its current district boundaries, while its customers demand trips beyond those boundaries to such places as Henry and Mercer Counties. Traditionally, people with disabilities either stayed home and faced unemployment, or relocated from their rural communities to areas with larger populations, which have public transportation. MetroLINK has sought to expand its boundaries so that it can serve these people. It wants IDOT's approval to leverage the downstate reimbursement in MetroLINK's "service area," instead of its current district boundary.

As for technology, MetroLINK has substantially invested in dispatching software and on-vehicle equipment, such as automatic vehicle location systems and global positioning systems. Some mass transit districts in Illinois, like Champaign, are using the same dispatching software, but others, like South Central Transit and RIDES, are using a different technology. If IDOT wants a single technology platform in Illinois, then some of the areas will have to spend time and money to switch their technology. MetroLINK, however, wants to keep its existing technology, but would like to interact with other transit providers, given IDOT's help.

3.2.6 Peoria

The Greater Peoria Mass Transit District provides fixed route, door-to-door, and charter services within East Peoria, Peoria, Peoria Heights, and West Peoria. In the late 1990s through a fair bidding process, the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District selected Door to Door, Inc. as its first regional paratransit provider. Door to Door, Inc. was a local private paratransit provider that was established in Peoria. It had twenty-five vehicles, including nine that the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District provided. It employed twenty drivers, four dispatchers, four administrative staff, and six part-time employees. It lost its bid to continue operating Greater Peoria Mass Transit District's paratransit operations in 2001.

MV Transportation, Inc. won that bid. It was founded in California in 1976, when it used Medicaid funds to lease a van for transporting people with disabilities to medical appointments. When the transportation industry was consolidating in the mid-1990s, MV Transportation, Inc. decided to become a national provider of transportation contract services and attracted the best paratransit and fixed route operations managers. It currently operates 73 contracts from 55 operating divisions in 17 states. It has 30 drivers, three dispatchers, and three managers in greater Peoria. As part of its agreement with the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District, it operates 23 vehicles, which the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District provides and services.

Table 3.6 summarizes information about Greater Peoria Mass Transit District's paratransit operations.

Table 3.6 - Characteristics of the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District

Category / Name	Values	Explanations	Observations
Vehicles	21	19 vans + 2 buses with no lift capabilities	17 vehicles are always dispatched
Rides	388.6 trips/day	118,526 trips/year	Considering 305 days/year
Fixed Costs	\$35,000/mo.	No breakdown available	Per month for salaried staff
Variable Costs	\$16.10	Hourly rate for drivers	MV Transportation retains \$1.50 fare
Total Costs	\$100,000/mo.		
Employees	36	30 drivers, 3 dispatchers, 3 managers	

3.2.6.1 Operations Analysis

In 1998, IDOT selected the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District as its first demonstration site for computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software. This software was used for eight months, from December 1998 to July 1999. Researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago closely observed Greater Peoria Mass Transit District staff and conducted pre- and post-implementation studies.* They identified common efficiency and effectiveness measures, collected the necessary data for pre- and post-implementation analysis, and compared the two sets of data in order to determine the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software's impacts on the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District's operations and coordination capabilities. They also identified several reasons why the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system implementation failed. This failure caused Door to Door, Inc. to lose its bid to continue running Greater Peoria Mass Transit District's regional paratransit service.

When it won the bid, MV Transportation Inc. took over Door to Door's hardware and software and hired most of its drivers and dispatchers. MV Transportation also used the vehicles that the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District supplied. People from IDOT, the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District, and customers from the Peoria area generally believe that operations improved and were successful. To ascertain this success, researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago compared efficiency and effectiveness measures between Door to Door, Inc. and MV Transportation, Inc. They

* Pagano, A. M., Metaxatos, P., & King, M. (2000). "Computer-Aided Scheduling and Dispatching System: Impacts on Operations and Coordination". Project IVA-H1, FY98. Report No. ITRC FR 98-3.

also interviewed people from both MV Transportation Inc. and the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District, collected data, and compared it with existing data from the previous study (Computer-Aided Scheduling and Dispatching System: Impacts on Operations and Coordination; October 2000).

The collected data spanned from July 2001 to June 2002, and represents two categories:

- Financial data (Contained in Table 3.7 Driver Cost, Insurance, Safety/Training, Facility, Support Services, and Interest/Taxes); and
- Non-financial data (Contained in Table 3.8 Total Ridership, Vehicle Miles, Total Vehicle Hours, Revenue Hours, Vehicle Productivity, On-Time Performance, Operating Days, Complaints, and Compliments)

The financial data, which the research team collected, did not match existing financial data from Door to Door, Inc. It was, therefore, impossible to financially compare the two companies. The results of the analysis for the non-financial data did not make any sense at first because the data in both cases was cumulative and did not reflect changes in the number of dispatched vehicles. The research team, therefore, standardized the data, so that it reflected the average number of vehicles per month. For MV Transportation, Inc., this average was computed for a twelve month period from July 2001 to June 2002. For Door to Door, Inc., the average represented the six month post-implementation period from August 1999 to January 2000.

Table 3.7 - MV Transportation (CityLift) Operating Costs

	Jul-01	Aug-01	Sep-01	Oct-01	Nov-01	Dec-01	Jan-02	Feb-02	Mar-02	Apr-02	May-02	Jun-02
Driver Cost **	48569	42322	39242	44276	42357	45220	45596	41474	46382	49899	48381	46716
Maintenance **	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Insurance **	3869	2102	1373	1833	4313	1772	1790	1661	1986	2105	1943	1544
Safety/Training **	30	207	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	358	482	847
Facility	1721	886	910	910	910	910	910	910	910	1091	910	910
Support Services **	22436	19688	20708	20174	21786	20011	18067	39546	18969	13168	15610	18270
Interest/Taxes **	1733	1529	1808	1479	1489	1789	758	907	948	968	960	912

**Driver Cost includes: wages, benefits, uniform costs, drug screens, worker's comp insurance, payroll expenses/taxes, etc.; **the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District maintains MV Transportation's vehicles. **Insurance Cost includes: vehicles, general insurance, and claims expenses; **Safety/Training costs include: recruiting, incentives, special trainings, etc.; **Support Services costs include: administrative salaries, benefits, payroll expenses/taxes, office supplies, telephone/Internet, etc.

Table. 3.8 - MV Transportation (CityLift) Non-financial Information

	Jul-01	Aug-01	Sep-01	Oct-01	Nov-01	Dec-01	Jan-02	Feb-02	Mar-02	Apr-02	May-02	Jun-02	TOTAL	Average
Total Ridership	10,105	10,957	9,058	10,911	9,641	8,971	9,440	9,553	9,156	10,806	10,146	9,782	118,526	9,877.17
Vehicle Miles	48,718	53,431	41,645	50,219	50,257	44,767	50,764	47,182	50,298	53,052	51,744	50,192	592,269	49,355.75
Total Vehicle Hours	3,837	3,633	3,032	3,797	3,486	3,311	3,687	3,342	3,417	3,767	3,745	3,452	42,505	3,542.10
Total Billing Hours	3,161	3,204	2,695	3,405	3,128	2,956	3,301	3,011	3,069	3,298	3,311	3,076	37,615	3,134.56
Productivity (avg. pass. per hr.)	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.1	3	2.9	3.2	3	3.3	3.1	3.2	38	3.17
On-time (Systemwide)	84.6	91.5	91.3	91.4	96.2	91.3	94.7	93.4	93.4	90.35	90.7	90.7	1,100	91.63
Late only	92.8	96.1	95.6	97.2	99.6	96.0	99.0	97.9	97.2	94.9	97.2	97.0	1,160	96.70
Late only (missed)	7.3	3.9	4.4	2.8	0.4	4.0	1.0	2.1	2.8	5.1	2.8	3.0	40	3.30
Early only	91.9	95.4	95.7	94.2	96.6	95.3	95.7	95.5	96.2	95.4	93.5	93.7	1,139	94.93
Early only (missed)	8.2	4.6	4.3	5.8	3.4	4.7	4.3	4.5	3.8	4.6	6.5	6.3	61	5.07
Operating Days	25	27	24	27	25	24	26	24	26	26	26	25	305	25.42
Weekday	21	23	19	23	21	19	22	20	21	22	22	20	253	21.08
Saturday	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	52	4.33
Complaints	1	3	4	4	2	2	0	0	2	0	2	2	22	1.83
Compliments	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	4	11	0.92

3.2.6.2 Ridership

Ridership is a major measure of a successful transit system and reflects the number of one-way trips that the transit operator completed. Table 3.9 shows average monthly ridership.

Table 3.9 – Ridership

	One way trips	# of vehicles	Trips per month per vehicle	Percent Change
Door to Door, Inc.	11,021.00	20.00	551.05	
MV Transportation, Inc.	9,877.17	17.00	581.01	5.44%

As we can see from the above table, actual ridership increased by 5.44 percent.

Even though the actual numbers were higher for Door to Door, Inc., the increase is significant when computed per vehicle. Since the service area was reduced by 12% after MV Transportation, Inc. took over and since the demographics did not substantially change over the year, the service area reduction would likely have brought a ridership decrease. It is therefore safe to say that ridership increased due to improved paratransit services.

3.2.6.3 Vehicle Miles

Vehicle miles represent the total odometer miles that all drivers report monthly on their trip manifests (Table 3.10).

Table 3.10 – Vehicle Miles

Vehicle Miles	Miles	# of vehicles	Miles per month per vehicle	Percent Change
Door to Door, Inc.	39,532.00	20.00	1,976.60	
MV Transportation, Inc.	49,355.75	17.00	2,903.28	46.88%

It is interesting to note that vehicle miles have increased by almost half, in real terms. An increase in ridership and a change in vehicle type may have caused this dramatic increase. Door to Door, Inc. used more high capacity vehicles, such as buses, in their operations, whereas MV Transportation, Inc. used more vans, which carry fewer passengers.

3.2.6.4 Revenue Hours

Revenue hours are used to measure the amount of time that vehicles are used to serve customers. They are an important measure because they reflect the time that vehicles are producing revenue. Higher revenue hours mean better vehicle utilization.

Table 3.11 – Revenue Hours

Revenue Hours	Hours	# of vehicles	Hours per month per vehicle	Percent Change
Door to Door, Inc.	3,188.00	20.00	159.40	
MV Transportation, Inc.	3,134.56	17.00	184.39	15.67%

Revenue hours increased 15.67% (Table 3.11), which shows that vehicle utilization increased considerably. More efficient trip scheduling and dispatching, possibly through better use of the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software and its trip optimization functions, may have caused this increase. These trip optimization functions include complex algorithms that are built into the software, which use geographic files to compute the shortest distances so that the same vehicle will pick up neighboring customers.

3.2.6.5 Productivity

Productivity is obtained by dividing the number of trips per month with the number of revenue hours. It thus shows the number of trips served within an hour.

Table 3.12 – Productivity

Productivity (trips/hour)	Trips per month per vehicle	Hours per month per vehicle	Productivity	Percent Change
Door to Door, Inc.	551.05	159.40	3.46	
MV Transportation, Inc.	581.01	184.39	3.15	-8.85%

Productivity decreased 8.85% (Table 3.12) possibly because of a change in vehicle type. This change is not as significant as the change in vehicle hours, because increased ridership and revenue hours offset it.

3.2.6.6 Mean Passenger Ride Time

The underlying data for mean passenger ride time comes from the drivers' manifests and is computed by subtracting the actual passenger drop-off time from the actual passenger pick-up time.

Table 3.13 – Mean Passenger Ride Time

Mean Passenger Ride Time	Ride time in hours	Percent Change
Door to Door, Inc.	0.73	
MV Transportation, Inc.	0.40	-45.21%

Since the data is captured in the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software, not much computation is needed, other than transforming minutes (as the software stores the data) into hours. Passenger ride time decreased 45.21% (Table 3.13). Because there were fewer passengers per vehicle, passengers arrived at their destinations faster. Although the efficiency indicator decreased (less passengers per mile), the quality indicator increased (passengers reach their destinations quicker).

3.2.6.7 On-Time Performance

On-time performance measures deviation between promised and actual pick-up and drop-off times, which are found on the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software and drivers' manifests, respectively. The research team analyzed the system's on-time performance, which combined on-time performance for pick-ups and drop-offs. It is important to note that pick-ups or drop-offs are on-time, if passengers are within 15 minutes of their stated times.

Table 3.14 – On-Time Performance

On-Time Performance	Early	On-time	Late	Percent Change (On-Time)
Door to Door, Inc.	12	80	8	
MV Transportation, Inc.	5.07	91.63	3.3	11.63%

On-time performance increased 11.63% (Table 3.14), probably because the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software allowed for better trip scheduling and vehicle dispatching. This increase shows a significant improvement in service quality because customers wait less to get their rides.

3.3 Conclusions

As the previous pilot study concluded, “most operators do not use one of the most lauded features; optimization. It is evident that many operators have transitioned to computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching technology in a way that does not position the organization to take full advantage of the newly acquired technology.” Door to Door's failure to use the new computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software was multifold.

First, as with other software implementations that can change daily processes, management needs to become the primary force of change. Management must fully understand all of the implications of switching to a new system, including the costs involved, realistic goals that can be achieved, limits to achievement, and time needed for implementation. Based on this understanding, management should decide whether it should phase the conversion, make all of the changes simultaneously, or conduct a limited conversion, and set expectations. If employees' expectations of the new system are too high, they will regard the smallest setback as a failure. If expectations are too low, employees may not get the full benefit of the new system that they are using.

Second, management should train themselves and their employees. Since this implementation deals with software, management must ensure that all of their employees know computer basics and the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software. Considering that computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software is fairly complex, it requires a basic understanding of computers, such as opening and closing windows, copying and pasting information, and running several applications simultaneously. Such basic computer training must be administered prior to training on the computer-assisted-scheduling and dispatching software; otherwise the latter training would be in vain. Although, the vendor completed the necessary training in Door to Door's case, it appears to have failed because Door to Door's employees did not have a basic understanding of computers and their operations.

Third, management and other interested parties must plan for the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system's implementation. They must identify demanding activities and, if necessary, bring in extra help to temporarily handle the additional burden. Computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software has an underlying database that needs to be populated. If clean data was already available in the proper format, vendors would likely transfer the data automatically. In normal circumstances, 70% to 80% of the data can be transferred automatically. The remaining data must be cleaned and input manually. Clearly, the operation requires extra help, such as part time employees, to assist in the data conversion. This was not done at Door to Door, Inc. Existing personnel, who were already pressured by the need to learn the new computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system, instead, were expected to carry out all of the operations in the transition phase, while fulfilling their regular activities. One of the results was that "dirty" (e.g. duplicate, incomplete) data was entered into the system, which had a disastrous effect on subsequent operations. All these problems led to the new system's failure, which eventually triggered the complete failure of Door to Door, Inc. After realizing these consequences, the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District organized a new bid, which MV Transportation, Inc. won. They took over the hardware, software, and personnel, while the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District provided the vehicles and their maintenance. The Greater Peoria Mass Transit District also named a person to oversee the new service provider's operations.

Being a national transit service provider, MV Transportation, Inc. has the necessary expertise and human resources to successfully carry out paratransit operations. The firm actions taken by MV Transportation, Inc. led to improvements in regional Peoria's

paratransit operations. Although some of Door to Door's employees remained with MV Transportation, the company appointed an experienced manager to lead the transition. Clearly, by 2001, all of the employees had more experience in computers. MV Transportation's next step was to completely clean the existing data, eliminate duplicate records, complete partial records, consolidate agency codes, and upgrade geographic files. It also brought in Door to Door's software vendor to provide new training for its employees and reduced the service area by 12%, which eliminated trips to destinations outside the service area. This service cut eliminated confusion over who should pay for trips outside the service area. Overall, MV Transportation, Inc. and the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District took a number of steps, when combined with experience and professionalism, led to significant improvements in regional Peoria's paratransit operations.

Chapter 4 A Consolidated Set of Brokerage Barriers and Success Factors

4.1 Introduction

The first three chapters focused on brokerage literature, programs implemented in other states, and case studies of brokerages or attempted brokerages in Illinois. This chapter builds on their conclusions and consolidates the set of national and Illinois brokerage barriers into a uniform set of brokerage barriers and success factors. It also contains specific recommendations for changes in policies and regulations that can help brokerage development.

4.2 Barriers

- 4.2.1 Since **Agency coordination** is critical and difficult, the coordinating agencies will need to determine how many agencies should ideally participate in the brokerage, identify their roles and responsibilities, and define a common terminology. Since coordination is long-term, systematic network communication and coordination is necessary. Any policy or personnel change during the coordination process may negatively impact it.
- 4.2.2 A transportation brokerage must rely on a variety of **funding** sources, which usually carry restrictions (e.g. rider eligibility or service area requirements). When an agency violates these restrictions, it will likely jeopardize its funding sources. However, when it complies with these restrictions, it will likely limit the role it can play within a brokerage. Without a variety of funding sources, the brokerage will allow itself to become subject to the fluctuations of its limited funding sources and may become financially unsound.
- 4.2.3 Rural areas often are lacking in technology. A successful brokerage will require employees who are technologically literate and therefore will require funding to purchase technology and employee training. It will also force the coordinating agencies to standardize and upgrade their technology to the brokerage's standards.
- 4.2.4 Perceptual constraints are difficult to assess and overcome. Concerns or worries over turf, privacy, preferential treatment, and mixing of different passenger types can curb enthusiasm and cause conflicts when coordinating agencies are creating a brokerage. Since brokerages are a relatively new concept, coordinating agencies have few role models that can help them become more comfortable with this process.
- 4.2.5 Different agencies and providers likely have their own methods for conducting their operations, meeting their routing and scheduling needs, and efficiently keeping their records. Breaking this status quo and establishing a universal system may pose problems for existing partnering agencies and providers.

- 4.2.6** Public transit agencies may argue with other transit agencies over their district boundaries because they are trying to protect their domain of power. Without a brokerage mandate, some of these agencies would not participate in or be committed to the brokerage.
- 4.2.7** Brokers can become confused and discouraged by requirements and procedures for procuring and maintaining vehicles, licensing, and certification. Since a brokerage will serve many different types of riders (e.g. the elderly and people with disabilities), it will need to have vehicles and certifiably trained personnel who can handle all of them.
- 4.2.8 Labor issues.** Since the brokerage will bring workers from many different agencies into close contact with each other, it can potentially expose differences in procedures, salary compensation, and benefits that can cause substantial friction between participating agencies. The creation of the brokerage can also create efficiencies that will cause some workers to lose their jobs and create discontent among those who remain.
- 4.2.9 Crossing District Boundaries** is a problem in Illinois. Mass transit districts and taxi companies can only provide incidental trips outside of their service areas. Given these boundaries, the brokerage will have to determine how to allocate its costs when its service providers make incidental trips, which are outside of the normal service area.
- 4.2.10 Vehicle Use Restrictions.** Brokerages face a myriad of restrictions that are tied to governmental funding programs. Federal and state funding programs prohibit vehicle leasing, even though brokerages may save money by leasing their vehicles. The Federal Section 5311 funding program prohibits brokerages and other agencies from mixing Section 5311 funds with other funds to purchase vehicles. It also prohibits brokerages and other agencies from using urban vehicles to pick up passengers in rural areas. The Federal Head Start Program, on the other hand, requires agencies to use white school buses to pick up their program's participants.
- 4.2.11 Other Governmental Restrictions** can also add to the cost and complexity of creating and operating brokerages. Illinois law prohibits agencies from entering into intergovernmental agreements to create brokerages. Instead, these agencies will have to issue a Request for Proposals to find a suitable broker.

4.3 Success Factors

- 4.3.1** The brokerage should have an **advisory board or committee**, which consists of members from each participating agency, to meet regularly to discuss important issues and solve difficulties incurred during the coordination process. This board or committee should establish fundamental guidelines through internal and external agreements and make decisions for non-routine problems. (It should

let the broker handle the brokerage's day-to-day operations, however.) By giving each participating agency an opportunity for input, the advisory board will also increase the commitment of all of the parties, and foster implementation of the board or committee's policies and decisions.

4.3.2 The following section discusses what types of agreements need to be drafted between agencies that are involved in the creation of a brokerage and what needs to appear in each of these agreements. The first agreement that needs to be drafted will involve the FTA, IDOT, and IDHS. This agreement will provide important visions and guidelines for the brokerage's day-to-day operations and should address the following issues:

- *Goals.* Achieving goals is the ultimate reason participating agencies have for creating a brokerage. The agreement should clearly specify why the paratransit brokerage is necessary, and what interests the brokerage can achieve after it is established. It provides a vision for all of the participating agencies as well as for the general public.
- *Expectations.* Expectations refer to more concrete and detailed descriptions of paratransit benefits and are based on stakeholders' perspectives. They can be described in a step-by-step way so that people can more realistically understand why a brokerage is necessary and desirable.
- *Clearly Defined Terminology.* Clearly defined terminology refers to clauses that identify and define basic concepts and standards. It is important that all of the parties involved use the same terminology in order to have a clear and accurate understanding of what is happening with the brokerage.
- *Responsibilities.* Responsibilities refer to each agency's roles within the brokerage. Explicit descriptions of these responsibilities will help reduce role ambiguity and increase implementation efficiency. Funding, monitoring, advising, leading, and information sharing are some of these responsibilities.
- *Service standards.* The FTA, IDOT, and IDHS should develop service standards for measuring the quality of the brokerage and its paratransit operators. The brokerage and its paratransit operators should comply with these standards when they serve their clients and the general public. The FTA, IDOT, and IDHS should also clearly define the standards that take precedence when the brokerage and its paratransit providers face conflicting standards.
- *Brokerage participants and brokerage structure.* The FTA, IDOT, and IDHS need to define the brokerage's structure, its key participants, and the roles that each of its participants should play.

- 4.3.3 Agreement between the broker(s) and IDOT.** This is the second level of agreement. To assure the brokerage's success, IDOT will need to specify the brokerage's responsibilities and authorities at each stage of its development. These specifications will clarify each party's expectations and help IDOT oversee the brokerage's performance. IDOT should consider many factors when drafting its agreement with the brokerage, including the brokerage's past successes or failures, its proposed service area, its funding situation, its participating agencies' experiences and attitudes, and other available resources.
- 4.3.4 Agreement between the broker(s) and transportation providers.** This is the third level of agreement, and it involves important, but routine operational definitions and requirements, such as ridership eligibility and procedures for service, dispatching, billing, and reporting. Before a broker enrolls its transportation providers, it should inspect their vehicles, check their staffs' qualifications, and verify their reputations for quality service. It should also clearly specify its investigative procedures and develop a set of disciplinary actions for fraudulent practices and poor quality services.
- 4.3.5 Strong political support from local governments.** Local governments can teach local residents about the brokerage and its new policies and procedures, subsidize part of the brokerage's expenses, share information, and encourage other agencies to help or join the brokerage.
- 4.3.6 Stable public and private funding sources** for such items as vehicles, training, and technology. These funding sources may come from federal, state, and local governments, social agencies, and transit fares.
- 4.3.7 Standardized and compatible computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching technology.** To cope with a brokerage's complexities and to increase communication and coordination, all parties within the brokerage should have their computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching technology standardized and integrated into one system. It is desirable to have coordinating and dispatching staff that are familiar with computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems and that have had successful experiences with computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching technology.
- 4.3.8 Computer training.** The brokerage and its participating agencies will need management and staff who know how to skillfully use computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching technology. These skills include day-to-day use of the software and its reporting functions. The brokerage and its participating agencies may train their management and staff at a community college for basic computer skills or through in-house training for a more specialized education. The type of training will depend on the person's existing skills.
- 4.3.9 Rider education.** The brokerage and its participating agencies should educate their riders about the benefits of creating a brokerage. They should also minimize

riders' fears that service quality will decrease by taking some of the following measures: posting universal signs on all brokerage vehicles, using standardized service procedures, and distributing brochures about eligibility and calling procedures.

- 4.3.10 Labor issues.** A skilled workforce with positive attitudes and high morale is indispensable to a successful brokerage. Negotiations are, therefore, needed before the brokerage begins, on such issues as relations between unionized and non-unionized workers, unequal pay between agencies, and possible layoff plans after the brokerage begins operations.

4.4. Possible Brokerage Benefits

- 4.4.1 Service quality.** Computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching technology can improve service quality, as demonstrated in Peoria (please see, Section 2.6 of Chapter 3). On-time performance there increased 11.36%, and the mean time for a passenger riding on the vehicle dropped 45.21%.

- 4.4.2 Efficiency.** Transportation service efficiency improved, as evidenced by South Central Transit's mini brokerage (please see, Section 2.2 of Chapter 3). Previously, South Central Transit's employees spent approximately 2.5 months to manually input data on all of their clients and sponsors. With their computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system, South Central employees document client information in real-time.

- 4.4.3 Overall financial savings.** Brokerages are implemented mainly to save money on operating costs. However, no systematic pre-brokerage, post-brokerage comparison data is available since few brokerages exist and since many transportation operators and human service agencies have failed to systematically record their financial data in the past. However, DuPage County in Illinois may provide such information after its paratransit coordination project begins at the end of 2004.

4.5 Types of Possible Brokerages

The research team has found five possible brokerage types, which are the following: *Consolidated Brokerage*, *Full Brokerage*, *Administrative Brokerage*, *Call-Center Brokerage*, and *Partial Brokerage*. Each of these brokerage types highlights different functions that previously belonged to individual transit operators or social service agencies. These functions are listed in Table 4.2 and are correlated with the aforementioned brokerage types listed in Table 4.1.

The first brokerage type that is listed in Table 4.1 is the *Consolidated Brokerage*. In this type of brokerage, the broker takes on all the functions in Table 4.2. Social service agencies and providers play no role in the brokerage, other than possible sponsorship.

The brokerage takes full responsibility and authority for everything, including the provision of transportation, dispatching, billing, and financial reporting.

The second type, *Full Brokerage*, leaves most or all of the transportation function to professional transportation providers or social service agencies. The broker handles all of the administrative functions and may provide some of its transportation as well. The brokerage that is being formed in DuPage County is a good example of this type of brokerage.

In an *Administrative Brokerage*, the brokerage does not handle scheduling/dispatching, actual transportation, or billing. It only performs administrative tasks, such as management and training, checks on ridership eligibility, and database maintenance. First Transit operates this type of brokerage in many areas of Illinois. Without the scheduling and dispatching function, this type of brokerage may not appear as a “brokerage” in the strict sense.

In the fourth type, *Call-Center Brokerage*, the brokerage acts as a call-center by taking clients’ calls, checking clients’ eligibility, approving trips, conducting trip verification, and scheduling/dispatching trips. This brokerage type requires that the brokerage’s staff is well trained in computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching technology and procedures. The system in Fairfax, Virginia is an example of this brokerage type.

In the last type, the *Partial Brokerage*, the sponsoring agencies retain many of their own functions. They take calls from their clients, check their eligibility, approve trips, forward their clients’ requests to the brokerage for service, verify trip completion, and pay the brokerage accordingly. The brokerage does the scheduling and dispatching and provides transportation. Sponsoring agencies maintain their own database and train their staffs according to their own unique needs. Since the brokerage schedules and dispatches trips, the sponsoring agencies do not need to buy computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching equipment or provide training on this equipment. The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) exemplifies this type of brokerage.

There are many variants to these five basic brokerage types. The participating operators and other agencies will select a brokerage type when they determine which functions they want to retain or give away.

Table 4.1 Brokerage Types and Their Functions

Types	Functions	<u>Other Agency Functions</u>
1. Consolidated Brokerage	1-9	
2. Full Brokerage	1-7, 9, (8)	(8)
3. Administrative Brokerage	1, 3-7	2, 8, 9
4. Call-Center Brokerage	1-3, 7	4-6, 8, 9
5. Partial Brokerage	1, 2, 8	1, 3-7, 9

Table 4.2 Numbers and Corresponding Functions

1 = Receiving Calls
2 = Scheduling & Dispatching
3 = Determining Eligibility
4 = Providing Management & Training
5 = Reporting Data
6 = Maintaining a Ridership Database
7 = Approving and Verifying Trips
8 = Providing Transportation
9 = Billing

4.6 The Brokerage's Organizational Requirements

4.6.1 Who Should Operate a Brokerage?

A successful brokerage will require many different qualities. To be considered as a broker, a qualified operator will need to meet the following minimum, key requirements.

- 1) Daily involvement with transportation and experience with agency coordination,
- 2) Knowledge of computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching technology and use of that system in its daily operations,
- 3) Experience with planning, organizing, dispatching, and transporting of large volumes of passengers, relative to other organizations in the area,
- 4) Sufficient size so that it can demonstrate large-scale economies (medium-sized, 11-30 vehicles, or large-sized, 31-58 vehicles), and
- 5) Good rapport with the area's social service agencies and transportation providers, since the qualified operator will have to enter into agreements with organizations that want to participate in the brokerage.

4.6.2 Participating Organizations

The brokerage should include a variety of organizations, such as human service agencies, mass transit districts, cab companies, and other private transportation providers. This variety will allow the brokerage to have enough flexibility to handle many different situations.

The brokerage should also establish minimum hardware and software requirements for each of its sponsoring agencies and train their managers and staff so that they are comfortable with the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system.

4.7 Steps to be Taken for Brokerage Implementation

4.7.1 Regulations and Barriers

Before undertaking this highly complex task, IDOT will need to review its regulations to determine if they pose any barriers to successfully implementing a brokerage. If there are any barriers, IDOT should try to eliminate them. The research team suggests the following:

- 1) Create an Advisory Board to address various agency concerns in a written agreement that includes the following items:
 - a. **Clearly Defined Terminology.** Clearly defined terminology refers to clauses that identify and define basic concepts and standards. It is important that all parties involved use the same terminology in order to have a clear and accurate understanding of what is happening with the brokerage.
 - b. **Goals.** The brokerage's goals should be specifically outlined, defined, and communicated through a top-down approach so that all parties involved are working to achieve the same results.
 - c. **Responsibilities.** The Advisory Board should address each agency's responsibilities so that everyone is aware of what it needs to do and what other agencies are expected to do. Clearly defining these responsibilities will help eliminate role ambiguity and conflict.
 - d. **Liabilities.** Cab companies that would like to be involved in a brokered system, but do not have enough resources to deal with a brokerage's labor issues and insurance would like to have these issues addressed. The brokerage or IDOT should bear responsibility for the cab companies' liability concerns.
 - e. **Expectations.** Expectations and perceptions are two concerns that add to the stress of implementing a brokerage. The Advisory Board will need to address these concerns in order to acquire support from participating agencies.
- 2) Provide additional federal, state, and local funding that has fewer restrictions so that the brokerage can more freely mix vehicles and riders.
- 3) **Other:** The Advisory Board must deal with several other areas of concern, such as insurance, service area, eligibility, system requirements, and training in order to create a functional and efficient brokerage.

4.7.2 IDOT Involvement

This report recommends that IDOT play a major role as a supporting organization and serve as an information source for all participants before, during, and after the brokerage's implementation. This can be achieved by doing the following:

- 1) IDOT should obtain a brokerage mandate from the Illinois state legislature that would authorize it to pursue brokerage strategies, wherever feasible,
- 2) IDOT should establish an Advisory Board that would bring together all of those parties that would be involved in the brokerage's implementation and use. Such agencies would include different divisions of IDOT, human service organizations, transportation providers, sponsoring agencies, and some transportation experts from universities or consulting companies,
- 3) IDOT should reach an agreement with FTA and IDOT so that funding can be guaranteed and some basic requirements set,
- 4) IDOT should draft agreements with the broker in order to set the "rules of the game,"
- 5) IDOT should try to update technology throughout the state so that computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems are compatible everywhere. IDOT should fund the entire cost of computer hardware, software, maintenance, and data conversion that agencies' incur,
- 6) IDOT should work to reduce barriers associated with state law and agency procedures, and
- 7) IDOT should establish an agreement with IDHS on the mixing of passengers, funding requirements, and vehicle uses.

4.7.3 Recommendation

IDOT should try to implement a hybrid computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching program in Illinois and establish several regional brokerages. It would allow these regional brokerages to expand their service areas once they have initially succeeded. The best approach would be to start some Call-Center Brokerages that can eventually be upgraded to Full Brokerages when their employees and riders are familiar with the changes and have the capability to maintain a more sophisticated system. This would only apply to several areas and organizations, since the majority of operators would not meet the requirements for implementing such a large strategy.

Other operators, such as South Central Mass Transit, could easily implement a Full Brokerage. They currently have all of the technology needed and are eager to develop their program into other service areas. They have begun some coordination with other counties and organizations and would be able to sustain the impact of implementing such a high level strategy.

Chapter 5 Plans for a Model Brokerage in Illinois

5.1 Introduction

Peoria, Macomb, and South Central Transit could benefit from a brokerage system and already have the minimum necessary requirements to establish a brokerage. Peoria has a well established paratransit system operating in Peoria County. Macomb is located in the western part of the state, and South Central Transit maintains the largest service area in a six county district near Marion, Illinois. These sites and their model brokerages will be discussed further in the following sections.

5.2 Peoria

The City of Peoria was chosen for further study for the following reasons. First, IDOT has already tried to establish a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system to coordinate the services of Peoria's existing transportation providers. Second, several agencies in Peoria need coordination and are willing to participate in the brokerage's implementation. Third, the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District (also known as CityLink) is willing and able to act as a broker for the Peoria area. This organization works closely with a private company called MV Transportation, which currently schedules and dispatches CityLink's paratransit services. CityLink provides vehicles for MV Transportation. By combining these selling points, the City of Peoria offers IDOT a great location for implementing a workable brokerage system.

5.2.1 CityLink – Description of Organization

CityLink is regarded as technologically sophisticated and able to maintain a large volume of fixed-route, door-to-door, and charter services. It typically provides 5,000 round trips per month, which are made possible through a fleet of 19 vans, one coach, and 22 passenger buses. CityLink provides service to Peoria, West Peoria, East Peoria, and Peoria Heights. It generally stays within its district boundaries, except to travel to Bartonville, Washington, and the Morton Park District.

CityLink and MV Transportation provide service to riders with disabilities or special needs as well as those people who have medical appointments. These disabilities include all physical and cognitive disabilities. All of its paratransit and fixed route vehicles are therefore equipped with wheelchair access. However, CityLink has reported that demand for its paratransit services has been declining, but the need for its fixed services has increased. This situation requires a coordinated effort in the area.

CityLink wants to serve the entire district soon, but still cannot provide Sunday or holiday service. It might therefore maintain service to its existing clients, while capturing a new market by offering a transfer service with other agencies on its district boundaries. Although this new service would likely require increased pay for union workers who work on this route, it could potentially provide many more riders. This would offset the cost, if expansion were implemented.

Service is provided to the aforementioned areas through the relationship CityLink has established with MV Transportation, which is located just a few blocks from its headquarters. These two entities have a symbiotic relationship since they function individually, but rely on each other for specific responsibilities. CityLink provides the vehicles and maintains them, while MV Transportation operates the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system, acts as the dispatching call center, and runs the vehicles.

Since the creation of their working relationship, both of these entities have experienced higher revenue hours, less mean passenger ride time, and higher on-time performance. Peoria's financial information for the end of FY2002 and the beginning of FY2003 is in Appendix II.

Currently, there is a good working relationship between CityLink and the Pekin Municipal Service. CityLink meets Pekin's buses at the city limits and charges their riders \$1.00 per ride, each way.

5.2.2 We Care, Inc.

The research team chose to interview We Care, Inc. because of its large fleet and its ability to provide 100-200 daily trips. This agency may participate in the brokerage on an as-needed basis.

5.2.2.1 Agency Description

Woodford and Tazewell Counties have contracted with We Care, Inc. to provide service to people who live within these counties. We Care, Inc. provides local service within these counties and takes people to and from Pontiac, Bloomington, and Lincoln. The Area Agency on Aging contracts with We Care, Inc. and local taxicab companies, such as Barry's Taxi, to serve most of its transit needs. Unfortunately, given the layouts of We Care and CityLink's districts, outlying areas such as Creve Coeur remain underserved.

We Care, Inc. operates a fleet of 24 vehicles, including four cars and 14-passenger medium duty buses, four of which are lift equipped. All but the cars have wheelchair access. Its one-way ridership consists of 200 wheelchair users per day, which is approximately 70,000 wheelchair users annually. This number actually represents a ridership decline, given We Care's inability to replace vehicles. Appendix III contains one-month's financial information for We Care, Inc.

Its current overall ridership consists of 40-45% senior citizens, 50% people with disabilities, and roughly 5% who have suspended or no driver's licenses. The disabled riders who use the service have minimal to profound handicaps. We Care makes no distinction between riders with mental or physical disabilities. It has contracts with Tazewell and Woodford Counties, Public Aid, Apostolic Timber Ridge Senior Home, IDOT, and two individual workshops. Since most of its riders are elderly or disabled, We

Care, Inc. receives most of its funding from Public Aid and senior centers. All of the record keeping is maintained on computers and billed to the appropriate sponsors.

5.2.2.2 Training

We Care, Inc. extensively trains their employees for approximately two weeks. Its training program consists of the following programs:

- Drug testing,
- Background checks,
- Ride-along training,
- Seven to eight hours of viewing tapes,
- Sensitivity training,
- Equality training,
- Additional training from Apostolic Timber Ridge Senior Home, and
- Additional computer software training for managers.

After this training, We Care's transportation manager will familiarize his or her new employees with such things as the agencies' vehicle maintenance program, trip sheets, skills assessments, and Safety Commissioner ride-alongs. Although the entire orientation time takes 90 days, most drivers are adequately trained within 30 days. The Safety Commissioner, who is appointed and affiliated with Tazewell and Woodford Counties, certifies the drivers after completing their orientation.

5.2.3 Other Participating Agencies

Several smaller agencies would like to participate in a brokerage. These agencies are Fulton County Red Cross, Rural Peoria Council on Aging, Peoria Area Blind Center, Lutheran Social Services, Spoon River Home Health Care, and Central Illinois Agency on Aging. All of these agencies have small ridership numbers, and the focus of their services does not include transportation. CityLink provides vehicles to half of these agencies and offers transportation service to the other agencies through MV Transportation. These agencies would be the coordinating agencies in the consolidated brokerage. Their needs are minimal since they would need updated hardware and software as well as training on the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system.

5.2.4 Fears, Perceptions and/or Problems

5.2.4.1 Potential Implementation Issues

Brokerage implementation can cause anxiety and uncertainty among its potential providers. This is largely due to the many changes that accompany such an endeavor. The interviewed agencies expressed an overall concern that IDOT and other agencies give the brokerage enough funding to adequately support its implementation and operation. In order to reduce some of these expenses, one of these agencies noted that smaller agencies (i.e. those that provide 150 trips or less per day) cannot justify the cost

of a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system. Another major concern was that the brokerage may result in longer trip times or reduced levels of service, if the services were blended. These longer trips times can result when a rider who is picked up first on a heavily used vehicle is dropped off last. One suggestion for avoiding the chances of an extremely long ride is to coordinate service between Peoria and Bloomington, which is approximately 20-30 miles. Table 5.1 outlines these and other fears and perceptions that the interviewed agencies expressed.

Table 5.1 Fears and Perceptions

• Longer ride times • Little support at Federal and state levels • Pay differences among for-profit and non-profit agencies, and municipalities • Younger workers with higher pay than older workers • Funding dispersion issues (taxes from one county can't be spent in another) • Each agency will likely advocate for its clients first • Quality of service depends on who is doing dispatching	• Ridership drop in rural areas • Skepticism over funding increases • Union vs. non-union issues • Little or no justification for a CASD system • The broker might keep most of the funding • Little political support
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Many positive and negative issues arise when one seeks to implement a brokerage. Table 5.2 lists the potential problems and benefits to expanding and/or coordinating services among agencies. Creating an Advisory Board and a good communications network should lessen many of the fears or ill-conceived perceptions that agencies might have.

Table 5.2 Positives and Negatives to Implementing a Brokerage System

Problems/Fears	Benefits
• Inability to provide service after hours • Increased payroll costs • Use of urbanized vehicles in non-urban areas • Problems with restrictions that are tied to funding programs • Lack of patience for ADA riders from the general public	• Transfer/connectivity between systems • More opportunities for union workers • All agencies would provide either door-to-door or curb-to-curb paratransit service.

5.2.4.2 Potential Legislative Issues

No intergovernmental agreements currently exist among the area's providers. However, it is not impossible to enter into intergovernmental agreements in the future. As Jim Reinhardt from CityLink said, "There is a need for more (political) support (for system coordination), rather than a need for more funding."

5.2.5 Suggested Model Brokerage for the Peoria Area

Choosing a brokerage model for Peoria was not difficult because MV Transportation and CityLink currently exhibit a brokerage's qualities. Table 5.3 lists these agencies' current functions.

Table 5.3 Current and Future Functions of GPMTD and MV Transportation

MV Transportation's Current Functions	CityLink's Current Functions
• Call in-take • Scheduling/dispatching • Training* • Reporting for CityLink and its sponsors: productivity, on-time performance, billing, etc. • Billing • Database maintenance • Transportation	• Eligibility screening • Management • Trip approval and verification • Vehicle maintenance • Database maintenance • Ownership of Rolling Stock

* MV Transportation provides training on the following topics: vehicle inspection, wheelchair tie-down procedures, HAZMAT, ADA, empathy, record keeping, fare counting, behind-the-wheel training (40 hrs.), drugs and alcohol, SMITH Driving System training, and driving with another driver.

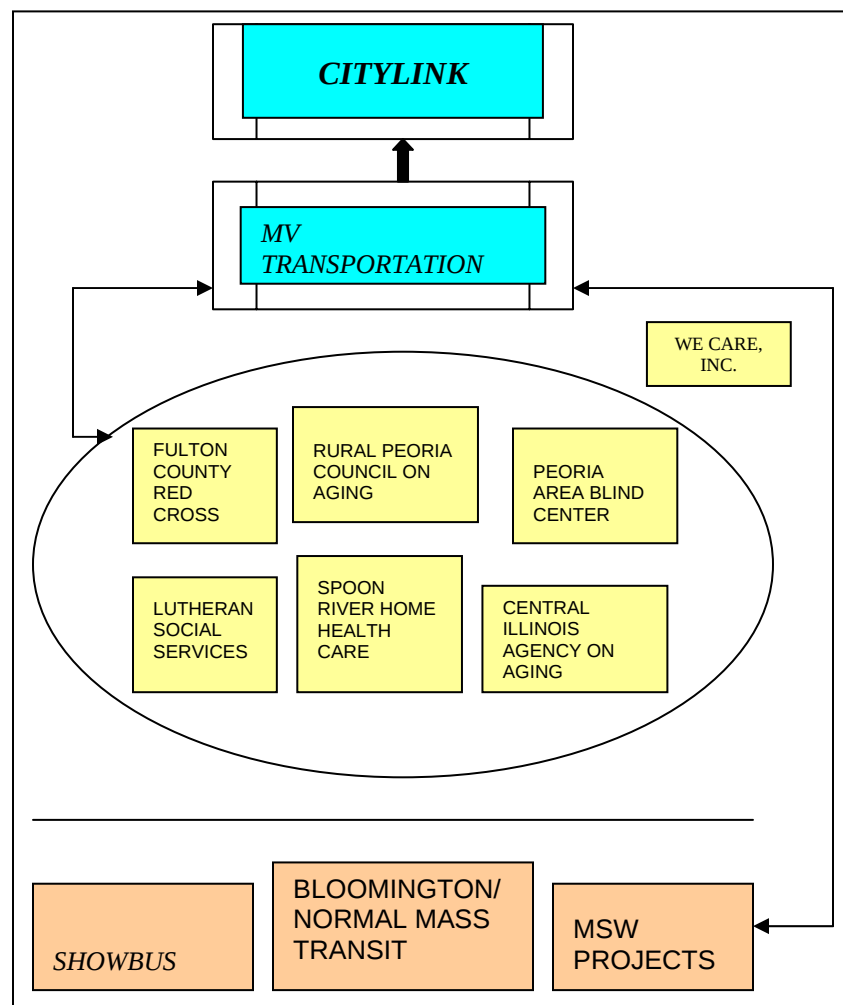
Since MV Transportation and CityLink provide all of these functions, the logical brokerage type for Peoria would be the consolidated brokerage model. The actions of the broker and its participants can determine the functions of a consolidated brokerage; however, the broker is usually responsible for providing the following services:

1. Receiving calls,
2. Scheduling/dispatching,
3. Determining eligibility,
4. Providing management and training,
5. Submitting reports,
6. Updating and maintaining the database,
7. Providing trip approval and verification,
8. Procuring transportation and providing vehicles, and
9. Billing.

However, Peoria has a unique situation, whereas MV Transportation currently acts as the broker and CityLink acts as the administrator. Since Peoria already has two organizations that perform in such a way, they would act as one agency and all of the others would be considered participants. These participants could include the following: Central Illinois Agency on Aging; Fulton County Red Cross; Lutheran Social Services; Pekin Municipal Service; Peoria Area Blind Center; Rural Peoria Council on Aging; Spoon River Home Health Care; and We Care, Inc.

Other suggested coordinated efforts may include forming a relationship with the Bloomington /Normal Mass Transit District, Show Bus and MSW Projects, which are located in the Bloomington/Normal service area. These agencies could participate as a regional brokerage that would use high speed Internet connections to coordinate transfer trips with Peoria's consolidated brokerage. Vehicles from the Bloomington area therefore could connect with vehicles from the Peoria area at a mutual border to transfer riders and take them to their respective destinations. Figure 5.1 shows the linkage between all of these potential participants.

Figure 5.1 Linkages Between Participating Agencies



5.2.6 Recommendations

The consultant team recommends that Peoria's brokerage standardize vehicles, operations, staff attire, and safety requirements for each of its transportation providers. This will eliminate many of the existing service inconsistencies, reduce passenger apprehension over new drivers, improve personnel qualifications, and increase the brokerage's ability to stay current on drivers' safety records. In order for this to work, the participating transportation providers must agree to and enforce standardized requirements and involve the unions from the beginning so that the brokerage and the Amalgamated Union can grow. The brokerage must convince the union that no jobs will be lost and that additional routes and/or expansion will lead to more work for union members. Any cost savings resulting from the brokerage should go toward expanding the service.

IDOT should require that the brokerage have an Advisory Board that is comprised of the following people: one of the brokerage's drivers, representatives from each of the agencies involved with Peoria's brokerage, representatives from each of the counties within the service area, several current consumers, and IDOT staff. CityLink has also suggested that Mr. Ed Griffen act as a third-party facilitator since he has significant experience with implementing brokerages. This board would ensure that all of the participating transportation providers are treated fairly and that riders are treated well.

In order to allay riders' fears and ill-conceived perceptions, the brokerage will need to have centralized auditing and control, to educate its riders, to assure them that its drivers are competent, and to ensure that its participating agencies are able to comply with the brokerage's statutory requirements.

5.3 Macomb

Creating Macomb's brokerage model is slightly more difficult than that of South Central Transit and Peoria because it has a smaller population, fewer agencies that provide public transportation, and a service coverage area that is widely scattered across McDonough County. Although very little coordination is currently taking place in Macomb, Western Illinois University is supporting an initiative to create a brokerage in the Macomb area. An initial study was conducted which showed that approximately 500,000 trips annually are unmet in the City of Macomb. Western Illinois University is therefore in the process of hosting a collaborative meeting, consisting of agencies that could be affected by a Macomb area brokerage.

Representatives from the participating agencies will be invited as well as potential riders, sponsors, IDOT, Western Illinois University, the Regional Planning Committee, and all other interested parties. The Regional Plan Committee has been an advocate for brokerage implementation in this area and is the front-runner for gaining support from the area's participating agencies. The following sections will describe agencies that would likely participate in this area's brokerage.

5.3.1 American Red Cross

This organization has a total of seven vehicles, which provides over 4,000 riders per month to the area's senior citizens. Its technology use is limited and many of its operations, such as data recording and scheduling, are done by hand. It also has no knowledge of computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems.

5.3.2 Barry's Taxi

Like the American Red Cross, Barry's Taxi is a small transit operator. It provides slightly over 5,000 riders per month using three vans and three cars. Unlike the American Red Cross, it operates a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system daily. The research team believes that this business could economically serve overflow needs since it uses a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system and has small vehicles.

5.3.3 Bridgeway, Inc.

Bridgeway, Inc. provides a number of services, including educational training and transportation for those in need. Its contracted services include training classes for data entry, transcription services, vocational and work adjustment training, and developmental services for adults with severe and multiple developmental disabilities. These adults include people with physical disabilities and those with significant communication and sensory impairments. Programs are individualized and designed to emphasize development of an individual's personal independence. Its services include basic adult educational services, training on daily and independent living skills, community-based leisure activities, pre-vocational training, physical therapy, social skills training, and specialized services for the elderly.

Bridgeway's Residential Program provides residential and transit support to individuals with developmental disabilities and/or mental illnesses in Illinois and Iowa. Living situations in Macomb include five group homes and two apartment buildings.

Bridgeway's fleet consists of two sedans, three vans, six minivans, one minibus, and three buses, all of which are wheelchair accessible. It uses these vehicles to transport its clients from all parts of McDonough County to its programs. Collaborative arrangements with other providers make it possible for people from outlying counties to reach services in Macomb. Bridgeway provides public transportation training to its clients in order to help them increase their levels of independence. Its annual ridership is comparable to that of the Red Cross. Bridgeway's transportation has little overlap with the Red Cross since it focuses on the severely handicapped, while the Red Cross focuses on the elderly. Bridgeway does not currently maintain a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system, but would not require much to incorporate one into its infrastructure since it has the office space, personnel, and hardware to maintain such a system. However, it would require extensive education and training because it has very little knowledge of how a brokered system operates.

5.3.4 Go West

Go West uses 24 heavy duty buses, which are all lift equipped, to transport one-and-one-half million riders a year. The general public and Western Illinois University students primarily use this service, although some people with disabilities use it as well. There is a coordinated effort on campus to educate students about how the system works. Go West has a good working relationship with the aforementioned agencies in the Macomb area, but has little overlapping service with them.

Although Go West operates a fixed route system, it does not receive 5311 funds from the State of Illinois nor does it operate paratransit service. Instead, the City of Macomb receives 5311 funding and distributes it to Barry's Taxi, Bridgeway, and Red Cross. Disabled patrons that ride Go West pay for their own fares.

Go West is excited about participating in a brokerage and is willing to become the broker for Macomb. It is capable and large enough to operate and maintain a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system. Since it is located on a college campus, it already has enough hardware and technological sophistication to support a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system. It would, however, need funding to purchase a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system and train its personnel.

5.3.5 Issues

When asked about possibly implementing a brokerage system in Macomb, Go West and the other agencies in the area had the following concerns:

Table 5.4 Fears of Macomb Agencies

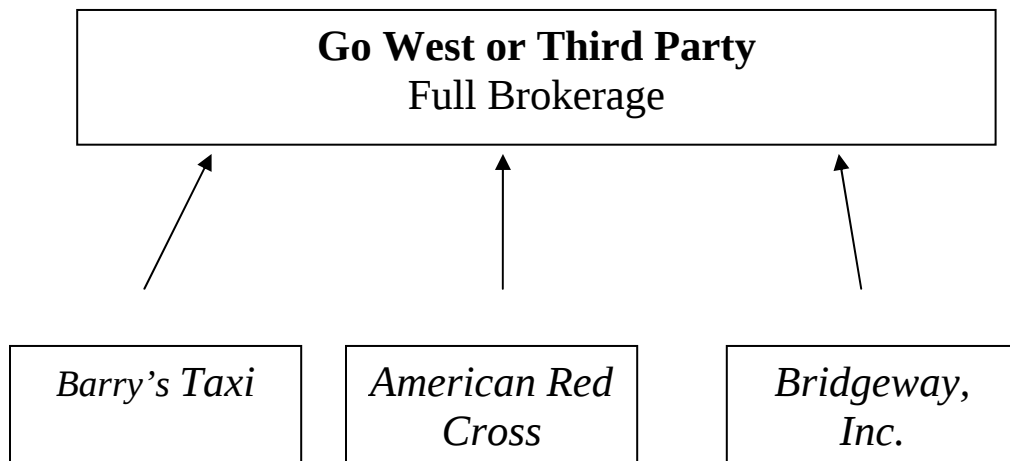
1. Uncomfortable with one call center	5. Uncomfortable with one scheduler and dispatcher for all riders
2. Confusion to riders	6. Several different types of riders
3. Additional Funding Needed	7. Insurance Issues
4. Paying vs. Non-paying riders	8. Profit vs. Non-profit Organizations

The ability to coordinate such diverse agencies is their main concern. How could such a large program be coordinated? Who would be able to organize such diverse clientele while maintaining its own organization's efficiency? Many of the clients that would be served are severely handicapped, and there is a fear that riders may be unable to communicate with the call center and/or drivers. They are also not comfortable with a broker acting as a call center or scheduler and dispatcher for their riders because there are too many different types of riders to coordinate. Moreover, increasing wages and decreasing funds greatly concern these agencies. Who is going to pay for implementing and operating the brokerage? How would the broker handle fare payment for paying riders and non-paying riders that are paid for by governmental programs? How would the broker pay the for-profit and non-profit organizations?

5.3.6 Proposed Brokerage Model for Macomb

Barry's Taxi, American Red Cross, Go West and Bridgeway, Inc. have stated that they would likely participate in a brokerage. Since there is a lack of coordination in the area, the research team proposes that the State of Illinois help them implement a modified full brokerage. In this brokerage, Go West or a third party would maintain the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system, receive calls, perform scheduling and dispatching, and house the equipment. Since the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system is expensive, a bidding process should determine who is best able to operate it.

Figure 5.2 Proposed Brokerage Model for Macomb



The brokerage's participants would log into the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system using a cable modem or DSL connection. This would allow for quick data transfer and enable the broker to post excess capacity on vehicles to accommodate riders that the usual transportation provider was unable to pick up.

The consultant team also proposes that the third party, or brokerage, maintain the following responsibilities:

Table 5.5 Responsibilities of Broker

-
1. Management and training,
 2. Data reporting,
 3. Database maintenance,
 4. Trip approval and verification,
 5. Call in-take,
 6. Scheduling/dispatching, and
 7. Billing.
-

The following responsibilities belong to the participating agencies:

Table 5.6 Responsibilities of Participating Agencies

1. Eligibility determination, and
2. Transportation.

The initial and most important question then becomes, what do the brokers and their participating agencies need in order to run this service? This answer varies according to each provider's current technology and will be addressed in the following chapter.

All of the four agencies share the same view on implementing a brokerage in the Macomb area. They want whatever works best, however, some financial incentives are needed to gain the participating agencies' trust and support.

5.4 South Central Transit

South Central Transit was chosen for further study for several reasons. First, it serves six counties in Southern Illinois and has implemented the *StrateGen* computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system. Second, it has maintained positive relationships with neighboring transit providers and has established service agreements with several of these providers. Third, it provides driver training for many smaller agencies and may be an ideal location to establish a formal brokerage. And finally, demand for paratransit service is growing in the region.

5.4.1 Description of Agency

South Central Mass Transit was initiated in 1989 and became a formal transit district in 1992. It uses 60 fully accessible vehicles, including five minivans and six heavy duty buses, to provide 18,000 one-way trips per month. It recently expanded service to include Perry County so that its overall service district now includes Clinton, Franklin, Jefferson, Marion, Perry, and Washington Counties. It also recently established a connection to the MetroLink transit system, which serves the St. Louis area.

Many taxi, ambulance, and paratransit service providers operate in or near South Central Transit's operating area. South Central Transit works well with these providers and has agreements with some of them. Larger transit agencies, such as Washington County Senior Center and the St. Clair County Transit District, also operate in the area and have a good relationship with it. South Central Transit is looking to expand services to other nearby counties and is willing to participate in a brokerage.

South Central Transit prohibits the use of vouchers to pay fares, except for a special case in Mt. Vernon. It also markets and advertises services and acts as a regional training center.

5.4.2 RIDES Mass Transit District

The research team visited and interviewed personnel from RIDES Mass Transit District for several reasons. First, it serves an area that is over 3,000 square miles and has coordinated some of its services with agencies in Indiana and Kentucky. Second, it has implemented a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system and coordinates with many agencies, including local DHS offices. And finally, it provides nearly all of the region's paratransit trips. However, it is willing to become a broker or a participating agency in the brokerage if it can get a carefully crafted contract, which would not adversely affect its current transit services and agreements.

5.4.2.1 Agency Description

RIDES was established initially in 1977 as part of a national RIDES program and took its current form in 1990. It provides 22,000 rides per month and uses 56 vehicles, 46 of which are lift equipped, to provide service to Edwards, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Pope, Saline, Wabash, and Wayne Counties. It also provides service to four cities along the banks of the Ohio River using a water taxi. Service is offered Monday through Friday from 6am to 6pm and has extended evening hours in high population areas. Although service is open to the general public, many of its riders are public aid recipients or people with disabilities. Service is either demand response with 24 hours advance notice or deviated response, which is fixed route service with deviations on certain segments within cities.

Although the general public pays \$1.50 per ride, discount ticket books are available. Intercounty service is also available for a higher fare.

RIDES would like to implement a brokerage, but is concerned about how it would deal with funding agency requirements and the eligibility of other agencies that would like to participate in the brokerage. RIDES' funding comes from a variety of sources, including working for municipalities, counties, and public and private agencies.

5.4.3 Washington County Senior Services

Washington County Senior Services (WCSS) is part of this study because it currently has a contract with South Central Transit and the Area Agency on Aging to provide transit service to Washington County's seniors (people who are 60 years old or older).

5.4.3.1 Agency Description

Washington County Senior Services uses four lift-equipped vehicles to provide approximately 6,500 demand response trips each year within Washington County. It takes seniors to and from medical offices, hospitals, stores, and the senior center, which hosts such things as educational programs, tax services, health screenings, and driver's license renewals. It also uses its vehicles to deliver meals to qualified residents in the county.

To arrange their rides under the South Central Transit program, riders call South Central Transit 24 hours in advance. South Central Transit will schedule these rides and fax its schedule to Washington County Senior Services, which will provide these rides on the following day. Although riders pay their fares to Washington County Senior Services, it will give these fares to South Central Transit at the end of the month. Approximately 30 trips are provided through this service. Riders who book their rides through South Central Transit are not mixed with riders who book their rides through the Area Agency on Aging.

5.4.4 St. Clair County Transit District

St. Clair County, which lies on Illinois' western border, is part of the greater St. Louis metropolitan area. Its transit agency, the St. Clair County Transit District receives revenue from a $\frac{3}{4}$ cent sales tax and other downstate funding assistance.

5.4.4.1 Agency Descriptions

The St. Clair County Transit District performs administrative tasks, such as interpreting contracts, determining service quality, and securing funding. It also helps train bus drivers and provides sensitivity and accessibility training. It does not operate any of its transit services, however, but contracts with other agencies, such as the Alternate Transit Service, Bi-State Development Corporation, and Our World, for these services.

The South Central Community College operates the Alternate Transit Service, which provides curb-to-curb transit service under its contract with the St. Clair County Transit District. The Alternate Transit Service uses accessible vehicles, which are not purchased with state funds, to provide approximately 375 senior trips and 6300 ADA trips per month. It also uses the *StrateGen* scheduling/dispatching software.

The St. Clair County Transit District has signed an agreement with South Central Transit to provide transit service to the New Baden MetroLink Station, located just east of the St. Louis metropolitan area. MetroLink connects to downtown St. Louis and many important destinations, such as Barnes Jewish Hospital, the Children's Hospital, job centers, and Lambert Airport.

5.4.5 Williamson County Council on Aging

The Williamson County Council on Aging receives Section 5311 funds, Section 5310 vehicles, public aid funds, and Area Agency on Aging funds. Ninety percent of its rides are to and from homes, shopping centers, or medical facilities. It also occasionally provides special trips to Carbondale. It has seven lift-equipped vehicles.

The Williamson County Council on Aging is open to the general public and seniors. No Medicaid service is provided. South Central Transit currently provides its driver training and drug testing.

5.4.6 Issues and Fears

The following table lists some potential issues or concerns to implementing a brokerage in Southern Illinois.

Table 5.7 Positives and Negatives to Implementing a Brokerage System in Southern Illinois.

Problems/Fears	Benefits
• Mixing with unionized labor • Coordination with MPO/IDOT • Coordination with other agencies • Lack of consistent requirements • Using outdated rules for rural service • Lack of technology	• Cost-effectiveness • Improved service • Connection to job, medical, shopping centers • Consistent requirements • Improved service • Improved technology

5.4.6.1 Turf

Although transit providers in this area have good relationships with each other, taxi and ambulance companies in the western part of the region are concerned that they could lose some of their current riders and ultimately their businesses to larger agencies. The larger agencies, on the other hand, believe that they can work with the taxi and ambulance companies on this issue.

Near the St. Louis metropolitan area, rural providers worry that they will be forced to compete with their urban counterparts, who have more resources and different concerns than they have. They are concerned that they will face higher wages and benefits and less concern for their rural issues, if they have to compete with their urban counterparts.

5.4.6.2 Labor Issues

Labor is the largest barrier to implementing a brokerage in the southwestern portion of the state. The broker will have to find a way for unionized, non-unionized, and volunteer labor to work together under its direction. It may resolve this issue by inserting a provision in the contract agreement that the brokerages' participating agencies must provide their own staff, regardless of whether they consist of unionized, non-unionized, or volunteer labor. These agencies will have to determine their own staffs' wages and benefits and resolve any problems with their local unions, if their staffs are unionized. However, staff members must meet all of the training standards.

Labor is rarely unionized in the southeastern part of the state and would not likely interfere with brokerage implementation. However, the broker will need to enter into

cross state agreements with other agencies in order to coordinate systems across state boundaries.

The coordination of transit services in either part of this region will naturally worry current employees who want to know that their jobs are secure and that they will have opportunities to grow with the brokerage. To overcome these fears, the broker should offer current employees positions in the new system and assure them that opportunities will likely become available as the brokerage grows. The broker may need to retrain these employees, however.

5.4.6.3 Funding

Funding can hinder the development of a brokerage in Southern Illinois. Since human service and transportation funding agencies attach rules and requirements to their funding, the more programs that an agency has or the more agencies that a brokerage has will likely increase the chances for conflicting rules and regulations. Under this scenario, the brokerage's participating agencies will either need to restrict some clients to their original transportation provider or follow the strictest rules and requirements of each agency so that no one will jeopardize another agency's funding. The proponents for a brokerage, therefore, will need to work with the funding agencies to try to streamline the rules and requirements so that a brokerage can become viable and efficient.

5.4.6.4 Technology

Transit providers in Southern Illinois use several different scheduling and dispatching programs. South Central Transit and Alternate Transit Service use StrateGen software, while RIDES uses a different product, which is Internet-based. Although poor Internet service in Southeastern Illinois hinders RIDES' scheduling/dispatching software, improved Internet service, such as T1 cable connections, could vastly improve the performance of its scheduling and dispatching software. Establishing similar computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems is needed to create a brokerage since many of this region's agencies have no or inadequate systems. If technology in this region is not fully implemented and/or updated, agencies in this area may decide that brokerage implementation is not a viable option.

Determining which computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system to use, however, is uncertain. Like RIDES, South Central Transit has problems with its software, stating that StrateGen's program is too expensive and does not meet all of its unique needs. StrateGen's representative for South Central Transit replied that his firm is currently deciding whether it should create another program to meet South Central Transit's needs at a lower cost. StateGen might even market its new program, if it decides to build one for South Central Transit, to other transit providers with similar needs.

5.5 Model Brokerages

The research team explained the brokerage options that were available and discussed whether a brokerage was plausible in Southern Illinois with potential brokerage participants. The recommended brokerage models for transit agencies in southern Illinois vary by agency because of differences in service, funding, perceptions, current infrastructure, and information obtained from interviews and site visits. However, the models suggested below are simply a starting point, which can be expanded to reflect changes in political, economic, and funding realities.

5.5.1 South Central Transit – Rides Brokerage

South Central Transit and RIDES are large paratransit providers in Southern Illinois that have grown substantially larger than their counterparts. For this reason, the research team recommends that these transit agencies have the following responsibilities.

South Central Transit: 4, 6

Rides: 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9

1 = Receiving calls

2 = Scheduling and dispatching

3 = Determining eligibility

4 = Managing and training

5 = Reporting

6 = Maintaining the database

7 = Approving and verifying trips

8 = Transporting riders

9 = Billing

This brokerage agreement could be called the *South Central Transit/RIDES Coordination Model* since South Central Transit would handle some of RIDES' administrative duties, while RIDES would continue providing its transit service, trip approval, scheduling/dispatching, and call intake. RIDES would use the Internet to input its daily rides into the regional computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system at South Central Transit. South Central Transit, on the other hand, would accommodate any rides that would go outside of RIDES' boundaries, generate reports, and maintain the client database. South Central Transit could also use computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching information to generate reports and maintain its database. This brokerage type would likely improve service in counties that border each of these providers' service areas.

5.5.2 South Central Transit – St. Clair County Transit District Brokerage

A formal agreement between these transit agencies currently exists. The proposed brokerage model for South Central Transit and the St. Clair County Transit District would build on this partnership and is very similar to that of RIDES. The St. Clair County Transit District currently handles administrative activities while contracting out transportation services and should be eased into the brokerage. South Central Transit would act as the broker and would be primarily responsible for administrative duties, such as management, training, reporting, and billing. The St. Clair County Transit

District would perform call intake, scheduling/dispatching, trip approval, and transportation, until it could negotiate labor agreements that would allow South Central Transit to take responsibility over its transit service or that would bring other agencies, such as the Alternate Transit Service, into the brokerage system.)

South Central Transit: 4, 5, 6

St. Clair Co. Transit District: 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9

1 = Receiving calls

6 = Maintaining the database

2 = Scheduling and dispatching

7 = Approving and verifying trips

3 = Determining eligibility

8 = Transporting riders

4 = Managing and training

9 = Billing

5 = Reporting

5.5.3 South Central Transit – Washington County Senior Services

A formal agreement currently exists between South Central Transit and Washington County Senior Services. However, IDOT and these parties will need to adjust this agreement in order to implement a brokerage. Essentially, Washington County Senior Services would provide only transit service, while South Central Transit would be responsible for all other activities. If the brokerage participants and their funding agencies worked together on funding requirements, the brokerage should allow Washington County Senior Services to mix riders from different agencies. As residents in Washington County continue to age, the need for transit service to such places as shopping areas and medical services will grow. A brokerage system could effectively offer improved transit services for these residents.

South Central Transit:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9

Washington Co. Sr. Services:

8

1 = Receiving calls

6 = Maintaining the database

2 = Scheduling and dispatching

7 = Approving and verifying trips

3 = Determining eligibility

8 = Transporting riders

4 = Managing and training

9 = Billing

5 = Reporting

5.5.4 South Central Transit – Williamson Co. Council on Aging

The Williamson County Council on Aging and South Central Transit have created a partnership to provide transit services for Williamson County's senior residents using seven lift equipped vehicles that the Williamson County Council on Aging owns. A *Partial Brokerage* would likely work best here. This brokerage type would allow the Williamson County Council on Aging to continue transporting riders and possibly continue scheduling and dispatching. South Central Transit would be responsible for call intake, billing, reporting, and other administrative activities. Currently, the Williamson County Council on Aging does not transport Medicaid clients, but offers rides to medical and shopping centers, including some outside of the county lines. South Central Transit

already provides training for Williamson County Council on Aging and should provide training for the other participating agencies.

South Central Transit: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9

Williamson Co Council on Aging: 8

1 = Receiving calls

2 = Scheduling and dispatching

3 = Determining eligibility

4 = Managing and training

5 = Reporting

6 = Maintaining the database

7 = Approving and verifying trips

8 = Transporting riders

9 = Billing

**** Scheduling and dispatching (2) may work at either South Central Transit or the Williamson County Council on Aging, but it is preferable that South Central Transit be responsible for this activity.***

5.5.5 South Central Transit – Other Taxi and Ambulance Companies

A number of small taxicab and ambulance companies operate in southern Illinois. When they were contacted, the majority of these companies were unwilling to participate in a brokerage. However, a brokerage could expand to include these companies, if it was successfully initiated. Some funding and turf barriers may hinder attempts to partner with these companies, but over time, these issues may be resolved. A brokerage type that would allow these companies to continue to provide transportation services and relieve them of demanding administrative duties such as call intake, scheduling/dispatching, reporting, and training would work best.

South Central Transit: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9

Taxi & Ambulance Companies: 8

1 = Receiving calls

2 = Scheduling and dispatching

3 = Determining eligibility

4 = Managing and training

5 = Reporting

6 = Maintaining the database

7 = Approving and verifying trips

8 = Transporting riders

9 = Billing

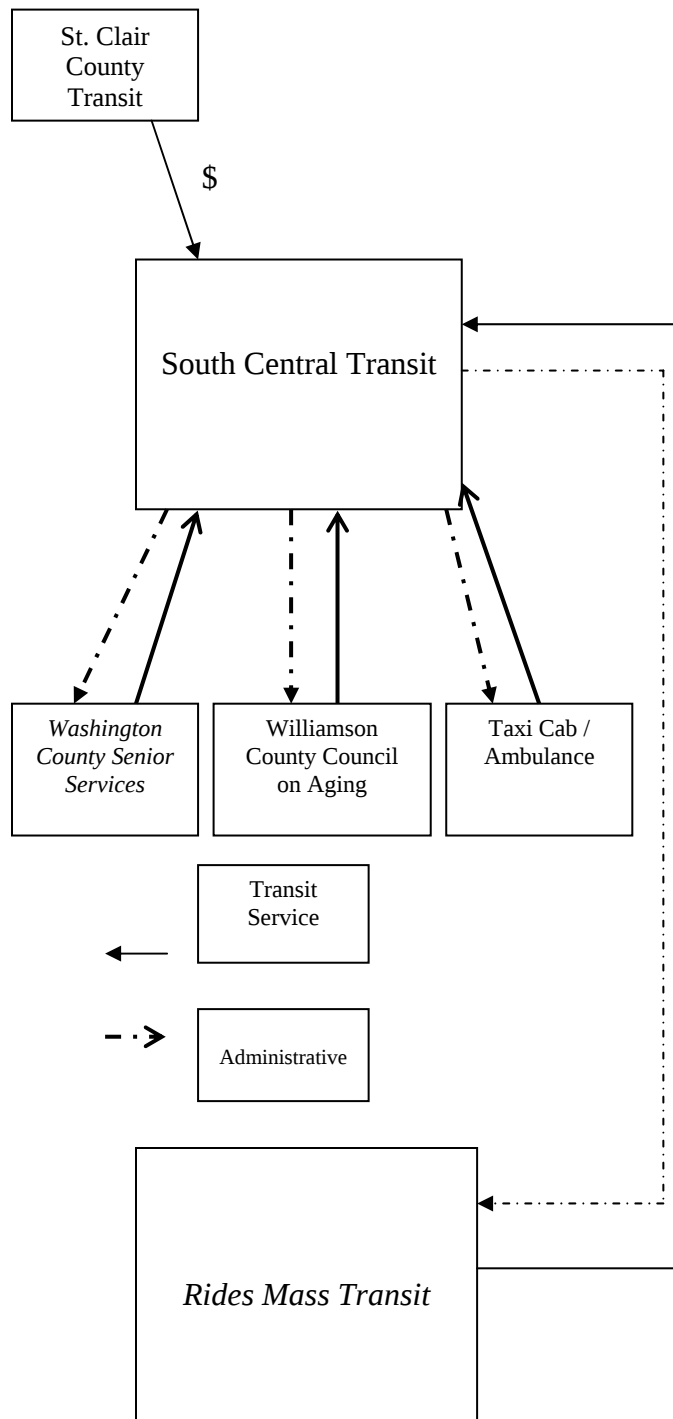
5.6 Performance Measures

To ensure that the brokerages are meeting all of their legal requirements and service standards, IDOT will designate an advisory board that will monitor compliance and discipline infractions.

5.7 Payment

The participating agencies will need to submit all fares, fare passes, and fare box reports to the broker at the end of each month. The broker will use this information to report its activities and pay its participating agencies.

Figure 5.3 Relationship between Broker and Participants



Chapter 6 Operational Needs for a Rural Brokerage Demonstration

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the research team, while working with IDOT, selected three sites that could potentially benefit from brokerage implementation. In this chapter, the research team identifies the operational needs of agencies at these sites so that they might successfully participate in a brokerage. Several generalizations apply to most of these agencies, which are the following:

6.2 Computer skills and support are geared toward tasks at hand.

Most of the brokerage's potential participants at the three sites are able to routinely perform word processing and spreadsheet tasks with little daily use of more complicated systems. For most operators, implementing and/or using a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system within a brokerage's organizational structure would require developing new computer skills in general and extensively training existing personnel about computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems.

6.3 Transportation is a small part of many agencies' everyday operations.

Many of the potential brokerage participants are typically not-for-profit human service agencies that provide transportation services as part of their overall community service mission. While this ensures that much of the state has some level of public transportation available, it suggests that transportation may not be the human service agencies' greatest concern. As a result, the transition toward a brokerage partnership might challenge existing organizational cultures.

6.4 Reporting is a paratransit agency's bane.

Though most agencies understand the need for reporting and accept it as a requirement for use of public funds, few enjoy the process, and most tend to see reporting requirements as complicated, arbitrary, and inconsistent among grantors. Standardizing grantor (e.g., IDOT, IDHS, etc.) reporting requirements would go a long way toward easing operator frustration. Moreover, developing ways to accept electronic data submission could help facilitate acceptance of computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems.

6.5 Computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching applications must integrate with accounting applications.

Most agencies have in-house accounting systems that are based on legacy software that would be difficult to migrate. Implementation of computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems should, therefore, be carried out with this in mind in order to find ways for computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems to share data with legacy accounting systems.

6.6 Computer upgrades must precede computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system installations.

The technological assessments showed that some agencies have computers that are unsuitable for computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems. Therefore, prior to proceeding with system installation, IDOT should more closely evaluate computer configurations and upgrade those that do not meet the vendors' specified requirements.

6.7 Each participating agency should outline its own billing practices.

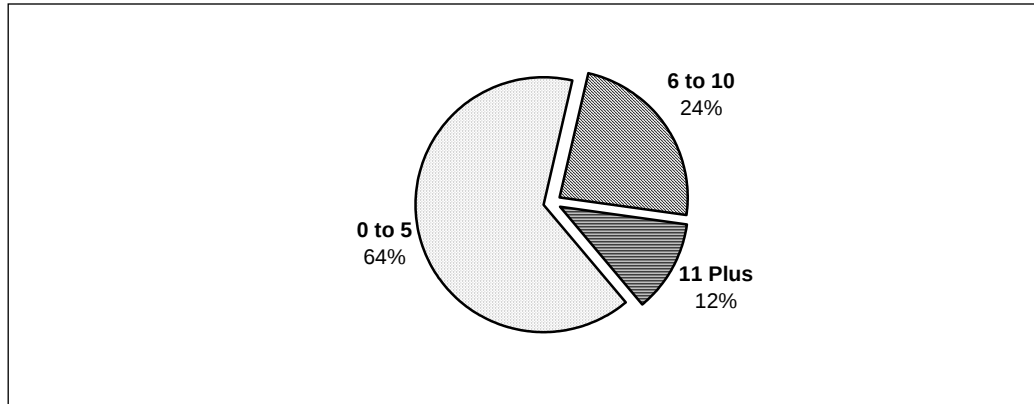
Each participating agency should outline its own billing practices and its third party's billing practices. The written agreement between the agencies that formed a coordinated relationship should include these practices.

6.8 Technology Assessment

This section borrows heavily from an earlier survey that the research team found to be relevant to this study (Pagano et al., 2002). Although assessment scores are based on a previous survey, it is assumed that potential brokerage participants from this study largely represent the earlier sample.

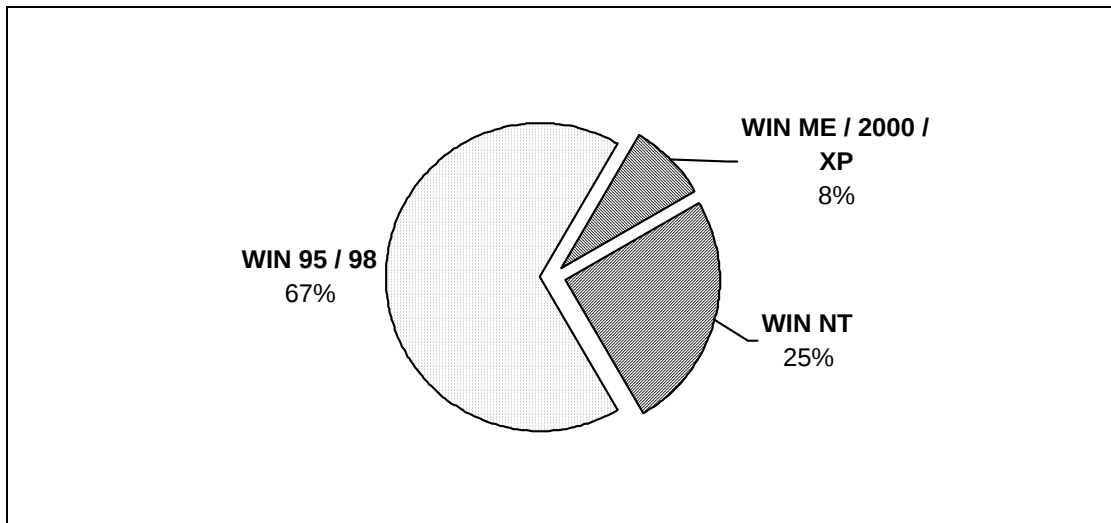
The level of technical sophistication was very satisfactory at some locations, but not so at others. For example, higher functioning agencies had an abundance of updated computer hardware and software. Computers were used not only for constructing driver manifests and customer information, but also for services that the agency provided, such as counseling services and maintenance. For a few agencies, most of the records were manually kept and infrequently updated.

The research team focused its technological assessment on gathering data from those operators that could best describe their existing technical sophistication. It collected and analyzed information on such factors as the number of PCs in use, operating system types, and network capabilities. Figures 6.1 and 6.2 show the current number of PCs and the operating systems they use.



Source: Pagano et al. (2002)

Figure 6.1 Current Number of PCs In Use



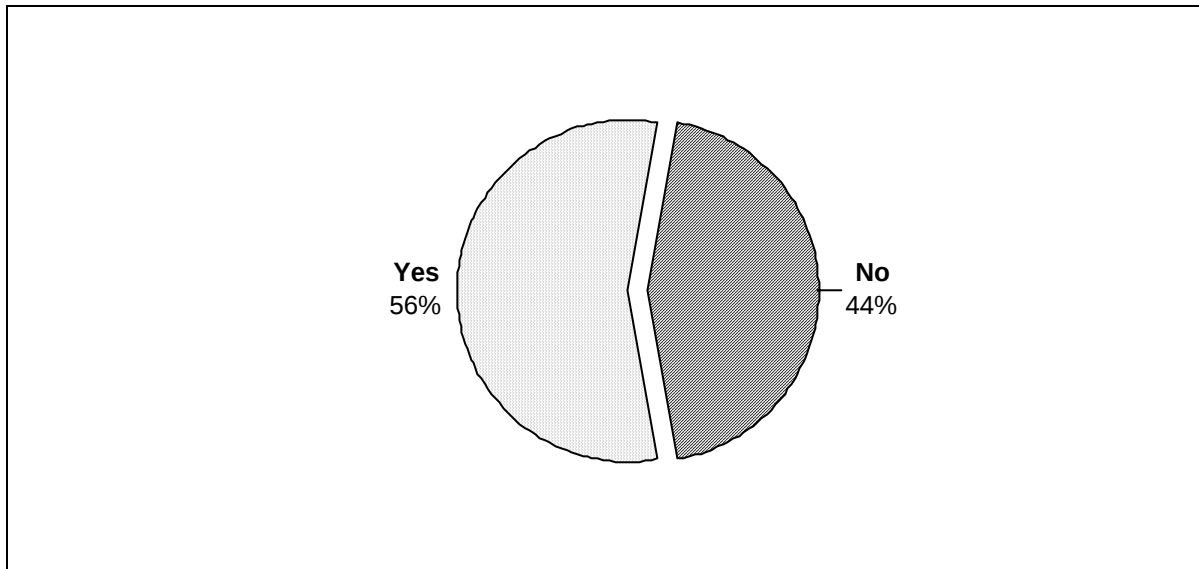
Source: Pagano et al. (2002)

Figure 6.2 Current Operating System

The operating systems are still, by and large, WIN 95 and WIN 98. Newly purchased computers are equipped with WIN ME, WIN 2000, or WIN XP. However, only 8% fall into this category.

Having network capabilities is important because many computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems use networks to allow multiple schedulers, dispatchers, and others to simultaneously use the system. Not all agencies that have networks used Win NT.

Fig 6.3 shows the percentages of operators that have or do not have networks in place.



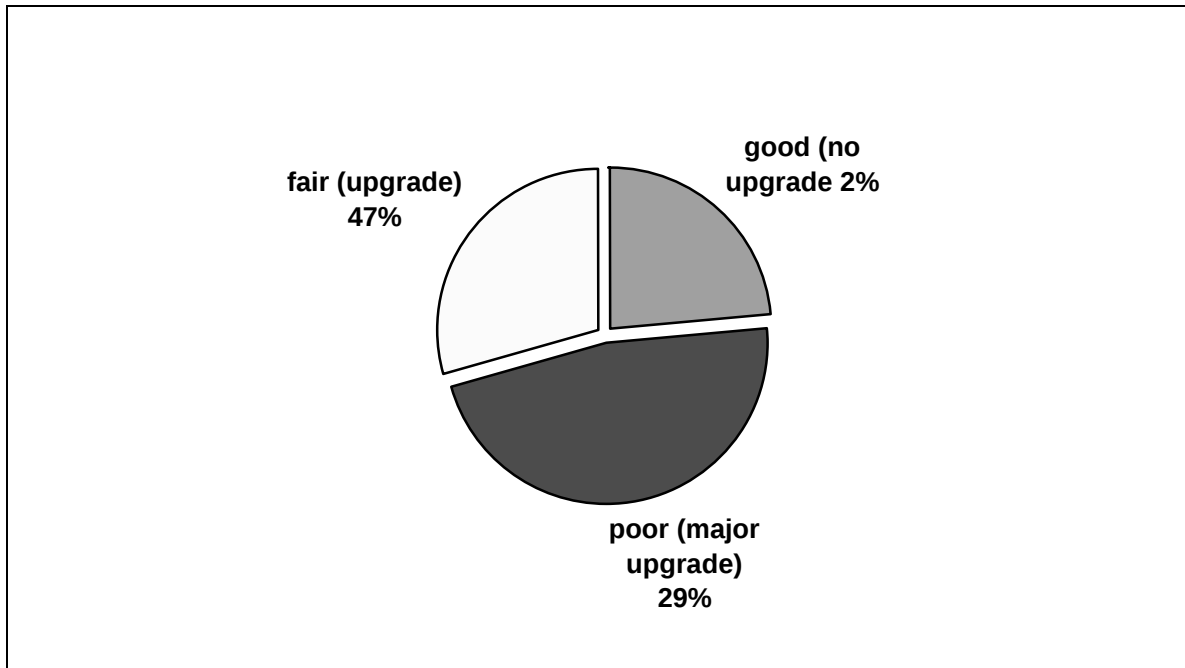
Source: Pagano et al. (2002)

Figure 6.3 Network Capabilities

Finally, the research team computed a technological readiness score, which determines whether an agency's hardware must be upgraded if a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system is installed. The scores were based on an interval scale of poor, fair, and good, and were determined using a combination of factors related to the respondent's technological capabilities.

These factors were the following:

- Number of computers used in the agency,
- Computer configuration (RAM, HDD, drives, monitor, etc.),
- Operating system,
- Networking capabilities (existing network),
- Internet capabilities (modem, high speed),
- Available peripherals (printers, scanners, etc.), and
- Overall technological preparedness.



Source: Pagano et al. (2002)

Figure 6.4 Distribution of Scores Grouped into Three Intervals

The first category – poor – contains agencies that need major hardware upgrades. This means that they need new computers because their existing ones are either outdated or needed for other purposes.

The second category – fair – comprises agencies that need upgrades, but not major ones. Here, components such as: operating systems, network cards, and new monitors would be needed.

The third category – good – includes agencies that are technologically up-to-date. In these agencies, only minor changes (e.g. properly configuring networks and setting up servers) would have to be made prior to deploying computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software.

6.9 Peoria's Hardware and Software Needs

Agencies that use computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems often lease it because they do not have sufficient funds to buy it outright. Peoria is an exception, and therefore needs its existing software and hardware upgraded. Agencies near Peoria would require some minimal hardware, such as sufficient terminals, and the ability to use the same software as CityLink. Because of the large number of small providers, this area should use Internet-based software.

6.10 Macomb's Hardware and Software Needs

Unlike Peoria, Macomb does not currently have enough people who can operate and maintain a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system, and therefore, might benefit from having a third-party broker run its system. This third-party broker would need to have the skills necessary to operate and maintain a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system, a large enough office to accommodate the hardware needed to operate the software, a manager, and several dispatchers. The specifics or parameters of these and other requirements would need to be further outlined in a business plan. The third-party would not necessarily have to be situated in Macomb.

An alternative to a third-party broker is to have Go West as the broker. Go West has all of the experience necessary to be a broker, except operating and maintaining a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system. Either of these potential brokers would need to train personnel from the participating agencies on how to use an Internet-based computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system.

6.11 South Central Transit's Hardware and Software Needs

South Central Transit would need a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system upgrade. Agencies in the South Central area would also require hardware and software upgrades to link them to the regional computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system. It is suggested that this area use Internet-based software, given the large number of small providers.

Considering the potential availability of funds, the research team asked potential brokerage participants from all three brokerage sites how they would spend these funds. Not surprisingly, the agencies, which have computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems, want to use these funds to upgrade their existing software or build upon their existing systems.

Of the other agencies, only one agency was interested in buying a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system and working with the agency that would provide it. The other agencies were not sure how they would spend the funds or whether they would purchase a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system.

The agencies only identified two preferred vendors (or systems), CTS Software and StrataGen Systems, Inc., because only two agencies have computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems. The other agencies have little or no knowledge of computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems or potential vendors. Table 6.1 identifies the needs of the three possible brokerage sites.

Table 6.1 Operational Needs of Each Brokerage Site

	Peoria	Macomb	South Central
Hardware Upgrades	√	√*	√
Software Upgrades	√	√	√
CASD System		√	
Terminals at Smaller Agencies	√	√	
Addt'l Office Space		√*	
Training		√*	√
Internet Connection		√*	
Manager		√	
Dispatchers		√	√
Business Plan	√	√	√

*Indicates the need for these criteria to be met if Go West would not be used as the brokerage site

6.12 Coordination

Coordination is an important consideration for paratransit providers. In a survey that the research team used for this study, agencies tended to informally coordinate their services with neighboring agencies. The research team therefore created a survey to determine the following: 1) whether agencies perceive a need for coordination through brokerages, 2) whether agencies were willing to participate in a brokerage, and 3) the necessary degree of complexity for the brokerage.

Most agencies stated that they already communicate with other operators in the same area. At the very least, they knew several other operators in the area. Most agencies have tried to coordinate in one way or another. The most frequent procedure is to refer the client to another operator (taxi, etc.). This is usually done, if the operator cannot accept the trip or if it is outside regular operating hours (i.e. late evenings or weekends). Another common practice is to transfer clients at pre-defined locations. Most operators were familiar with the concept of service coordination and had experienced it in some way. In most cases, this coordination is done informally and inconsistently.

Smaller agencies seemed to like the idea of coordination, despite limited opportunities for coordination and their lack of experience with it. This lack of opportunities, however, also makes them anxious and nervous about coordination. Larger agencies, on the other hand, tend to be more open to joining a brokerage, possibly because of prolonged exposure to coordination, an ability to acquire new service areas, and an ability to generate larger ridership numbers.

Chapter 7 Development of a Brokerage Strategy

7.1 Introduction

The brokerage strategy developed in this chapter is based on an extensive literature review, a survey of states, a survey of Illinois agencies and operators, and interviews with potential brokerage participants. If implemented, this brokerage strategy can help overcome potential barriers to brokerages in each of the selected areas in Illinois.

7.2 The Need for the State of Illinois' Commitment and Consistency

1. The Governor's Office, IDOT, and other state agencies must be committed to creating a sustainable and manageable paratransit brokerage.

The Governor's Office, IDOT, and other state agencies must make providing access and mobility to all citizens a priority and mandate this policy from the top-down in order to ensure consistent requirements. Inconsistent requirements and policies can confuse transit providers and diminish trust between these agencies and the transit providers.

A legislation coordination body was recently established at the state level to break down agency requirements that hinder coordinated transit. (A national coordinating committee has been created to do the same on a national scale.) This body will meet regularly to address the current needs and concerns of state agencies that may cause conflicting requirements and hinder access to funding programs.

State agencies that work together and share responsibility will work more efficiently and effectively and build more trust among riders and their paratransit providers. These agencies should be able to cross boundaries and remove barriers that will lead to more effective delivery of transportation services.

7.3 Crossing Organizational Boundaries

The key to more efficiently providing transit services lies in coordination among agencies and providers. However, current organizational boundaries challenge the premise of a brokerage. A brokerage agreement is based on the concept of crossing organizational boundaries and uniting service provision and riders. However, crossing these organizational boundaries is extremely challenging and many agencies have deep-seated fears and perceptions. For brokerages to be successful:

2. IDOT and its regional MPOs must help agencies and transit providers cross organizational boundaries. And

- 3. IDOT should work with the Department of Health and Human Services and other interested agencies and paratransit providers to break down barriers to brokerage implementation.**

IDOT is already involved in a coordination effort with the Illinois Department of Human Services. These efforts will greatly help brokerage implementation.

- 4. IDOT should designate an advisory board that will include representatives from various public agencies and transportation providers. It will guide the brokerage's implementation through its initial stages and help these agencies and providers with their problems and concerns.**

The advisory board should include all paratransit agencies that may participate in a brokerage, the Metropolitan Planning Organization or the Regional Planning Commission, county government, sponsoring agencies, and representatives of paratransit customers.

7.4 Make Working Together Work

Possibly, the most difficult barrier to overcome is coordination itself. Many transit providers and public agencies have little experience with paratransit coordination. Consequently, fears, misperceptions, and lack of experience may hinder brokerage attempts.

The creation of an advisory board and identification of a local leader will help foster cooperation among agencies and paratransit providers. The local leader will work closely with IDOT and lead the creation of an advisory board.

- 5. The advisory board should guide all participants through the brokerage implementation process, determine the needs of participating agencies and their riders, and assess the brokerage's progress.**

Another key responsibility of the advisory board is to break down fears and perceptions and educate agencies and transportation providers about the benefits and responsibilities of participating in a brokerage.

- 6. IDOT should identify strong local leaders to lead the brokerages, create their advisory boards, and assume other responsibilities in the brokerage's preliminary stages.**

This leader should work with the state legislation coordination committee to meet the transit providers' needs and concerns and identify governmental and organizational barriers to a successful brokerage. In cases where a local transportation leader is difficult to identify, IDOT should choose a local leader and work with him or her to establish a brokerage.

7. IDOT should assure transit providers that participation in a brokerage would not jeopardize opportunities for receiving new vehicles.

Although a brokerage system promotes vehicle efficiency, IDOT should assure transit providers that they will continue to receive the same amount of vehicles.

8. The advisory board should develop agreements for the brokerage's participating agencies and an agreement between IDOT and the broker.

A clearly defined agreement should outline the responsibilities of the broker and its participating agencies. (A model agreement is shown in Appendix I at the end of this report.) The advisory board should also draft a similar agreement between IDOT and the brokerage.

9. IDOT should assure the brokerage's participating agencies that the brokerage's funding is secure.

7.5 Establish Consistent Requirements

10. The advisory board and IDOT will need to establish a set of requirements and standards for participating in the brokerage and providing service.

Transit providers and other participating agencies, such as the Illinois Department of Human Services, will need to provide their input on this set of standards and requirements. These standards and requirements should address such issues as the duplication of services, underused resources, and service gaps.

7.6 Vehicle Responsibility

11. IDOT and all transit providers that are participating in the brokerage should be involved in negotiating vehicle maintenance and responsibility.

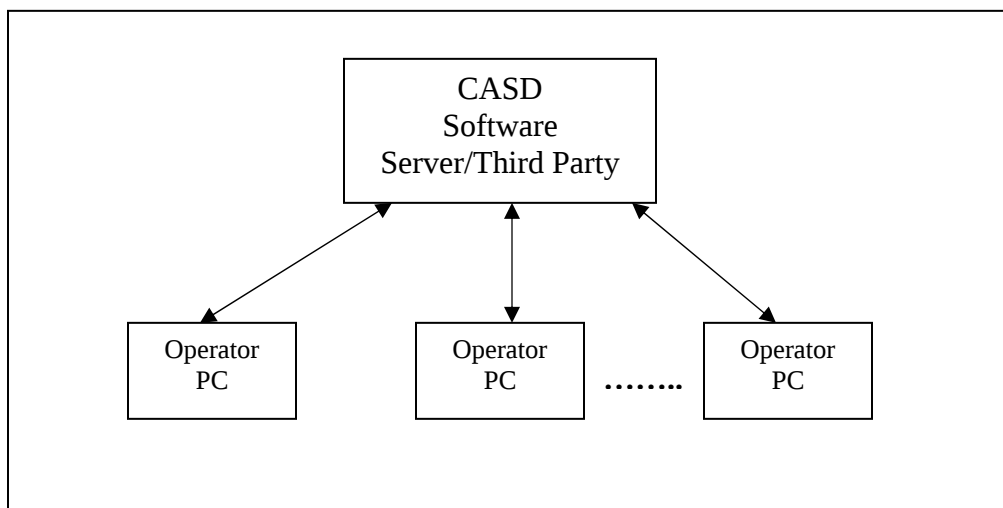
Maintenance and other responsibilities associated with transit vehicles must be negotiated in each region in order to create an unambiguous agreement, which outlines each agency's responsibilities.

7.7 Technology – A Regional Approach

A regional approach to statewide brokerage begins with identification of each brokerage's service areas and implementation of high-level technology components as shown in Fig. 7.1. The following discussion will clarify the role of each of these components.

Figure 7.1 Regional Brokerage Approach

Source: Strategic Plan: Computer Assisted Scheduling and Dispatching System, IDOT, UIC May 2003



Operator PCs: Operator PCs are personal computers for dispatchers. For larger paratransit agencies with multiple dispatchers, these computers can be tied together with a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software server. These computers need adequate connection capability with their software server, especially if they are situated in another location.

Computer-Assisted Scheduling and Dispatching Software Server: The computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software server has two basic components installed: (a) the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software and communication capabilities on operator PCs; and (b) software and communication capabilities to connect to the Internet. Larger operators, especially those that have experience with computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching implementation, could have a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software server on their premises. Smaller operators could have adequate connections for accessing computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software servers located at larger operators in their region.

Two major steps are necessary to successfully implement this approach:

First, IDOT must certify and select a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems vendor for statewide implementation. This will ensure that computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching standards are consistent. This critical step will probably require technical assistance (even at the contract negotiations stage) to ensure that the vendor can successfully implement technological components needed for statewide deployment of computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching systems. Operators that have existing computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software could choose to use their existing software. However, the vendor should ensure seamless communications

between its existing computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software and the IDOT server.

Second, IDOT would monitor the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching vendor's performance under the contract. During its initial contract period with the vendor, IDOT would monitor the vendor's performance based on criteria that was established in the contract.

The principal advantages of this approach include the following: (a) paratransit operators would not have to maintain and update the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software and related hardware, (b) **IDOT could objectively monitor the vendor's contract performance and ensure that its grantees' needs are met,** (c) a structure would be in place to implement a higher level of brokerage service at a later date, and (d) the server would allow maintenance, training, and service of client software.

Paratransit brokerages, however, will never get off the ground without adequate hardware, software, and training on how to use the system. To optimize the brokerage's success, IDOT should:

1. Provide computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system hardware and software,
2. Provide funds for training computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system users,
3. Fund conversion to the new system, and
4. Fund system maintenance and upgrades.

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APPENDIX I
MODEL AGREEMENT

PARATRANSIT BROKERAGE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

This Memorandum of Agreement is made and entered into between (broker agency) and (participating agency) on this day, (date) .

This Agreement serves each party's mutual benefit; each of the parties agrees that the consideration in this contract is good and valuable.

The Parties agree to the following terms and conditions:

I. Phases of Implementation

A. Advisory Board

The parties shall work with IDOT to establish an advisory board for the sole purpose of brokerage oversight and implementation. The members shall consist of the following:

- One representative of each participating agency,
- One representative from the regional MPO or Planning Commission,
- One representative from each funding agency, and
- Two citizen representatives.

B. Computer-Assisted Scheduling and Dispatching System Installation

IDOT shall provide a computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system for all scheduling and dispatching activities. Each of the parties shall receive necessary equipment and technology upgrades for this software. All parties shall use the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system for activities related to scheduling and dispatching and may even generate reports using this software.

Initial Training

All employees from (broker) and (participating agency) shall be trained on how to use the computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching system hardware and software. Some employees may also receive additional training to bolster their basic computer skills.

C. Vehicle Inspection

(Broker) shall inspect all current vehicles prior to operation under this agreement to ensure that all federal and state vehicle safety standards and

requirements are met. (Broker) shall make all necessary repairs to (participating agency's) vehicles before they begin service under the brokerage. (Broker) has the right to refuse any of (participating agency's) vehicles that the (broker) deems unsafe or too expensive to repair or operate.

D. Employee Changeover

All employees of (broker) and (participating agency) shall be retained and offered a similar position as part of this agreement. Some retraining or new training might be required and employees should be well informed of this possibility. New wage earnings should be comparable to previous wages and opportunities for advancement should not vary under this agreement. (Broker) shall pay compensation for any expenses related to this change.

Drug and Alcohol Testing Compliance

All employees who have safety-sensitive positions (e.g. drivers, dispatchers, and maintenance workers) shall comply with federal drug and alcohol testing requirements. (Participating agency) shall pay to test its employees for drugs and alcohol and share the results with (broker).

II. Scope of Services

A. Service Type

During the term of this contract, (participating agency) shall provide general public (service type, e.g. demand response, fixed route) transportation service for the area outlined as (service area, e.g. within the limits of Washington County).

Time and Dates of Operation

During the term of this agreement, (participating agency) shall operate services from Monday to Friday between the hours of (weekday times, e.g. 9am to 6pm) and on Saturday and Sunday between the hours of (weekend times, e.g. 12pm to 6pm).

The following days are considered holidays and (participating agency) will provide no service or limited service (the service level that is provided on weekends):

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Presidents' Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day

Columbus Day
Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving Day
Friday after Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

Vehicle Standards and Maintenance

Vehicles must comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations that apply to the provision of transportation services, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and its implementing legislation.

(Participating agency) shall daily perform pre- and post-trip inspections on its vehicles and keep and maintain operational records and procedures. **It should negotiate the records' format and procedures with (broker) and attach them to this agreement as an Appendix. These procedures should minimally include the following: vehicle cleanliness, fueling, and the inspection process.**

(Broker) should have its maintenance personnel inspect (participating agency's) vehicles (period of time), so that (broker) can detect and repair damage or wear conditions before major repairs are necessary. Inspection items should include suspension elements, leaks, belts, electrical connections, tire wear, and any noticeable problems and noted on the agreed-upon forms. **(The broker and participating agency will need to mutually agree upon the inspection forms' format and procedures and attach them to this Agreement as an Appendix.)** If (participating agency) fails to allow (broker) to conduct these inspections in the aforementioned time and a failure results, the (participating agency) will be financially responsible for the repairs.

When a vehicle failure is encountered that makes the vehicle unsafe or unable to operate under the brokerage's service, the (participating agency) should remove the vehicle from service and notify (broker). The (broker) is obligated to fix the vehicle within (period of time), unless unusual circumstances exist that can be substantiated. (Broker) shall repair and/or maintain the vehicle or vehicles on its premises or at the premises of (participating agency), if necessary. **(Please select one of the following)** (Broker) or (participating agency) shall provide a comparable back-up vehicle for each vehicle that is being repaired or waiting to be repaired. A comparable back-up vehicle should be the same size or slightly larger than the one being replaced and have the same level of accessibility for people with disabilities.

Administrative Duties

Funding and Compliance – (Broker) shall be responsible for completing all operating and capital grant applications for itself and (participating agency). (Broker) is also responsible for ensuring that it and (participating agency) comply with federal and state contract and programmatic requirements.

Reporting – (Broker) shall be responsible for all reporting duties necessary for funding and for meeting federal, state, county, and other public service agency requirements. (Participating agency) shall comply with all requests for information for the generation of these reports. (Participating agency) shall receive a hardcopy of each report within 30 days of completion.

Management and Training - (Broker) shall be responsible for all management and training issues and duties related to transit service under this agreement. (Participating agency) shall comply with all requirements and programs. (Participating agency) shall receive a hardcopy of training and management updates within 30 days of documentation.

Database Maintenance - (Broker) shall be responsible for all activities involved in the creation and maintenance of a database, which chronicles all transit activities, including training, income sources, and employee activities. (Participating agency) shall comply with all requests for information used for this database's maintenance.

III. Service Requirements

H. Computer-Assisted Scheduling / Dispatching Software

The Illinois Department of Transportation shall provide all transit providers and the broker agency with updated computer-assisted scheduling and dispatching software to be used for all scheduling and dispatching activities.

Please select one of the following arrangements:

- _____ (Broker) shall be responsible for primary scheduling and dispatching activities. (Broker) shall provide (participating agency) with all relevant information for daily scheduled rides at the start of each business day. (Participating agency) shall submit a daily report containing rides completed; time of rides, and type of rides, including pickup and delivery locations.
- _____ (Participating agency) shall be responsible for primary scheduling and dispatching activities. All scheduling and dispatching activities must be reported to (broker) the following business day for reporting purposes.

A. Call Intake

Please select one of the following arrangements:

- ____ (Broker) shall be responsible for all call intake activities. (Broker) shall provide (participating agency) with all relevant information for daily scheduled rides at the start of each business day. (Broker) will promptly notify (participating agency) of any changes in the schedule (e.g. client's cancellation of trip request or broker's request for additional trips).
- ____ (Participating agency) shall be responsible for primary scheduling and dispatching activities. All scheduling and dispatching activities must be reported to (broker) the following business day for reporting purposes. (Participating agency) will promptly notify (broker) of any changes in the schedule (e.g. client's cancellation of trip request or broker's request for additional trips.).

B. Eligibility Determination

Please select one of the following arrangements:

- ____ (Broker) shall be responsible for all eligibility determination activities. (Broker) shall provide (participating agency) with all relevant information for riders scheduled at the start of each business day.
- ____ (Participating agency) shall be responsible for eligibility determination activities. All eligibility determination information must be provided to (broker) the following business day for reporting purposes.

C. Trip Approval / Verification

Please select one of the following arrangements:

- ____ (Broker) shall be responsible for all trip approval and verification activities. (Broker) shall provide (participating agency) with all relevant information for riders scheduled at the start of each business day.
- ____ (Participating agency) shall be responsible for trip approval and verification. All eligibility determination information must be provided to (broker) the following business day for reporting purposes.

Mixing of Passengers

Please select one of the following arrangements:

- _____ The mixing of passengers is at (broker)'s sole discretion. The mixing of passengers must comply with the funding agencies' requirements. An agreement must be established with all funding agencies to ensure that passenger mixing will not jeopardize funding eligibility.
- _____ The mixing of passengers is at the sole discretion of (participating agency). The mixing of passengers must comply with the funding agencies' requirements. An agreement must be established with all funding agencies to ensure that passenger mixing will not jeopardize funding eligibility.

D. Fare System

A common fare collection system shall be established between (broker) and (participating agency), which may include use of tickets and/or vouchers. **(Please attach a copy of this mutually-agreed upon fare system in the Appendix.)** The broker and participating agency agree that this system is efficient and that their riders can understand the fare collection system.

E. Marketing

Please select one of the following arrangements:

- _____ (Broker) shall work with all of the agencies that are participating within its brokerage to create a marketing campaign that attracts new riders and retains existing riders. **This marketing campaign should receive the acceptance of each of its participating agencies and should be attached to this Agreement as an Appendix.**
- _____ (Participating agency) shall create its own marketing campaign to attract new riders and retain existing riders. **This marketing campaign should be attached to this Agreement as an Appendix.**

IV. Financial Terms & Special Provision

A. Fares

All fares, whether cash or ticket, shall be delivered to (broker) once a month. A fare box revenue report shall be delivered to (broker) at this time.

B. Accident Reporting

(Participating agency) shall immediately report to (broker) any vehicle or passenger accidents involving it and should thoroughly investigate and document any damage or injuries for itself and the broker.

C. Insurance Coverage Requirements

Until further notice, (participating agency) is solely responsible for insurance coverage. The following insurance coverage is mandated:

Workmen's Compensation and Employers' Liability: Statutory Limits

General Liability: At least \$1,000,000.00 *Combined Single Limit* (bodily injury and property damage) per occurrence, \$2,000,000.00 aggregate, \$10,000,000.00 umbrella, including contractual liability specifically referencing this agreement.

Automobile Liability: At least \$1,000,000.00 *Combined Single Limit* (bodily injury and property damage) per occurrence, \$10,000,000.00 umbrella, including hired and non-owned auto coverage and medical payment coverage of \$5,000.00 per occurrence.

D. Employee Selection, Evaluation, and Discipline

(Participating agency) shall be responsible for hiring, paying, evaluating, disciplining, and/or firing its employees. (Broker) reserves the right to refuse to use one or more of the (participating agency's) employees, for reasonable and substantiated cause. (Broker) must present this cause in writing to the participating agency before refusing to use an employee or employees.

E. Broker Boundaries

(Broker) shall only provide transportation and administrative services within the boundaries outlined in this agreement. The advisory board shall approve plans for new brokerage service areas.

The number of passengers that (broker) may service shall be limited to ***** per day or ***** per month. If the number of riders exceeds this number, the advisory board shall intervene accordingly. The aforementioned restrictions should not apply to brokers that are mass transit districts when they are providing transportation and administrative services within their own district boundaries. These restrictions would, however, apply when they are performing brokerage duties outside of their district boundaries.

Through the terms of this agreement, (participating agency) and (broker) shall remain autonomous and retain ownership of their own transit vehicles. The advisory board, however, shall approve of any future mergers or business changes that could affect the brokerage.

F. Performance Measures

The advisory board shall ensure that (broker) and (participating agency) will meet the mutually-agreed upon performance measures and standards **that are attached to this agreement in the Appendix**. The advisory board will investigate any infractions that may jeopardize completion of this Agreement.

APPENDIX II
Greater Peoria Mass Transit District

	Jul-02	Aug-02	Sep-02	Oct-02	Nov-02	Dec-02	Jan-03	Feb-03	Mar-03	Apr-03	May-03	Jun-03	Total	Avg.
<i>Total Ridership</i>	10268	10790	9934	11249	9709	8666	18226	10103	10226	10705	10580	10289	122743	10229
Vehicle Miles	51323	54012	48485	57689	49298	49981	53065	50376	53065	57088	53938	51375	584355	48696.25
Total Vehicle Miles	3717.92	3633.29	3032.25	4124.06	3637.73	3717.09	4004.77	3752.29	4004.77	4332.34	4175.70	3884.87	456027.08	3818.9
Total Billing Hours	3277.58	3203.67	3002.20	3612.34	3136.34	3178.93	3376.51	3207.15	3376.51	3606.48	3687.20	3431.68	40096.53	3341.18
Productivity (avg. pass. /hr.)	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.03	3.0	2.9	3.0	40.03	3.34
On-time (System)	95.2	97.4	97.4	94.6	95.5	92.9	98.2	98	98.96	96.8	98	95	1157.26	96.44
Late Only	33.33	5.88	54.5	11.91	11.16	7.86	4.88	6.26	.91	.32	6.16	4.83	147.61	12.30
Late Only (missed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Early only	11.11	15.8	10.43	26.70	15.38	13.78	6.51	10.64	7.31	3.95	4.38	5.19	131.18	10.93
Early only (missed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Operating Days</i>	26	27	24	27	25	25	24	24	26	26	25	26	305	25.42
Weekday	22	22	20	23	20	21	22	20	22	22	21	21	256	21.33
Saturday	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	51	4.25
<i>Complaints</i>	2	3	3	8	4	3	3	5	1	6	9	6	53	4.42
<i>Compliments</i>	0	1	3	1	1	2	0	2	0	1	6	5	22	1.83

APPENDIX III
Financial Information for We Care, Inc.

County: <u>WOODFORD</u> Mo./Yr.: <u>June 2003</u>				County: <u>Tazewell</u> Mo./Yr.: <u>June 2003</u>			
Monthly:				Monthly:			
Miles: <u>16,362</u> Hours: <u>473.13</u> Trips: <u>576</u> Passengers: <u>594</u>				Miles: <u>44,968</u> Hours: <u>1,965.71</u> Trips: <u>8,917</u> Passengers: <u>8,855</u>			
Vehicles: <u>4</u> Days: <u>21</u> Gal. of Gas: <u>1,025.40</u> Gal. of Dsl: <u>407.70</u>				Vehicles: <u>17</u> Days: <u>21</u> Gal. of Gas: <u>934.90</u> Gal. of Dsl: <u>2,817.30</u>			
Vehicle Breakdowns: <u>1</u> Vehicle Hours out of Service: <u>4</u>				Vehicle Breakdowns: <u>4</u> Vehicle Hours out of Service: <u>20</u>			
Total Expense: <u>\$14,209.37</u>				Total Expense: <u>\$47,323.03</u>			
Monthly Cost Per:				Monthly Cost Per:			
Mile:	\$.87	Miles per gallon:	11.42	Mile:	\$ 1.05	Miles per gallon:	11.98
Hour:	\$30.03	Miles per hour:	34.58	Hour:	\$24.07	Miles per hour:	22.88
Trip:	\$24.67	Miles per trip:	28.41	Trip:	\$5.31	Miles per trip:	5.04
Pass:	\$23.92	Mles per pass.:	27.55	Pass:	\$5.34	Mles per pass.:	5.08
Veh.:	\$3553.34	Trips per hour:	1.22	Veh.:	\$2,783.71	Trips per hour:	4.54
Day:	\$676.64	Pass. per hour:	1.26	Day:	\$2,253.48	Pass. per hour:	4.50
		Pass./veh./day:	7.07			Pass./veh./day:	24.80
		Trips/veh./day:	6.86			Trips/veh./day:	24.98