

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

San Mateo County Transit District

**San Mateo County
Division of Aging and Adult Services**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The San Mateo County Strategic Plan for Accessible Transportation Services (SPATS), sponsored by the California Department of Aging, serves to:

- Identify transportation needs by involving the community through a variety of outreach activities;
- Develop strategic direction to enhance the mobility of underserved populations; and
- Present potential strategies to address identified needs with a focus on preventing the premature institutionalization of seniors and people with disabilities.

The target population of this study is seniors and people with disabilities. However, the scope also includes other groups with transportation needs, such as those who are geographically isolated or have language or cultural barriers that make using existing transportation services difficult.

The SPATS project represents a unique partnership between two public agencies, based on a social service model designed around the needs of common clients. The two partners – the San Mateo County Health Service's Aging and Adult Services Division (AAS) and the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) – formed the core of the project Working Group. While SamTrans is the county's key public transportation provider, the Plan is not intended to be a SamTrans plan, but rather goes beyond the commonly used transportation resources to include other essential partners such as local municipalities and social service agencies.

The project Steering Committee consisted of the Working Group, consumers, advisory groups and representatives of social service agencies serving seniors and people with disabilities. Since the committees were aware at the outset that a wealth of information is already available about senior and disabled transportation needs, they agreed to employ innovative outreach methods to attempt to reach populations that are not normally included in outreach activities. This outreach relied on many different media that are described later in this Executive Summary.

Based on this extensive outreach and information from demographic data of the county, the Working Group identified a range of potential transportation gaps. These were then assessed to determine the veracity and preponderance of the stated need, since many of the needs were based on input from a single individual. Where the needs appeared to reflect systemic problems that affected a large number of county residents, potential strategies were developed to address these needs.

Key Demographic Trends

Demographic trends are key indicators of potential transportation dependency, particularly characteristics such as population, age, ethnicity, public assistance, mobility impairment and auto ownership. Some of the study's key findings related to the County's population include:

- While the county's population is fairly dispersed throughout the bayside, there are four main population centers in Daly City, South San Francisco, the city of San Mateo, and Redwood City. Less than 6% of the County's population lives on the Coastsides geographically separated by the Coastal Range.
- The percentage of residents over 65 is slightly higher than the statewide average (12.5% versus 10.6%), but is growing at a slower pace. Those under 18 years old are the County's fastest growing age cohorts.
- While half the County's population is Caucasian, there are large Latino (22%) and Asian (20%) populations.
- About 24% of individuals over 65 consider themselves to be mobility impaired.
- Approximately five percent of County households own no cars, compared to over nine percent for the Bay Area region.

Existing Transportation Resources

Six transportation agencies serve San Mateo County: the San Mateo County Transit District, Caltrain, BART, San Francisco MUNI, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) and AC Transit. The San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) provides fixed route bus service throughout the County and connects to trains and the San Francisco MUNI and VTA fixed route bus services. ADA eligible persons who cannot ride fixed route transit are served by Redi-Wheels, SamTrans' ADA paratransit service. Caltrain operates trains along a north-south corridor from downtown San Francisco to Gilroy in Santa Clara County. The BART regional rapid transit system currently extends as far south as the City of Colma, with extensions to South San Francisco, Millbrae, and San Francisco Airport expected in 2003. Additionally, rail shuttle bus services provide connections between Caltrain and BART stations and major employers on the Peninsula and in Santa Clara County. AC Transit operates the Dumbarton Express, which provides commuter service between San Mateo County and the East Bay using a contracted provider.

In addition to these resources, social service agencies, city shuttles, and taxis provide transportation throughout the county. However, very few of the taxis are wheelchair accessible.

Community Outreach

Developing innovative approaches to identify the transportation needs of traditionally overlooked and underserved communities was a key component of this study. Over the

course of almost a full year, the study's working group implemented a variety of approaches to "getting the word out" to these communities. These included:

- Focus groups
- Intercept surveys
- Open house
- Forums held at committee meetings
- Stakeholder interviews
- Videos distributed to Social Service agencies
- TV programs
- Transportation hotline
- Individual input

Of all these approaches, the focus groups and the Open House proved to be the most effective. The project consultant trained staff from over a dozen agencies in techniques to facilitate focus groups with their client population in order to assess their particular transportation needs. As a result, more than two hundred and sixty people participated in 24 focus groups that were conducted in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Spanish; with people with a variety of physical, cognitive, and visual disabilities, with caregivers, and with a group of Filipino seniors.

An Open House, attended by over 60 people, was held at SamTrans in October 2001. The Working Group chose the Open House format rather than a traditional public meeting to encourage more widespread participation than usually occurs when there are speakers and comments from the floor. Most of the Open House program was devoted to small groups that gathered around "stations" with specific themes, such as "Seniors giving up their car keys," and "Redi-Wheels riders." A group of about ten individuals also received simultaneous translation in Mandarin and Cantonese.

The intercept surveys and video programming appeared to have been less effective outreach methods. Intercept surveyors were able to recruit very few subjects on the street who were willing to participate in the survey. This could be due to a number of reasons. It was not always possible or practical to identify who was a senior or had a disability; individuals who are in the middle of an activity can be reluctant to give of their time for a survey; the surveyors were all volunteers.

It is more difficult to assess the effectiveness of the video that was developed as part of the study, partly due to the fact that the video was only broadcast for a period of less than three weeks. While significant time and resources were devoted to creating an outstanding product (in terms of disability and cultural sensitivity, and providing and soliciting information), less than fifty calls to the project hotline were received as a result of the video being broadcast on local cable TV. We do not have an idea about how many people saw the program and took some other action that would improve their mobility as a result of the program content.

Community Input Regarding Transportation Gaps and Barriers

The study identified transportation barriers that individuals or groups indicated present a problem to their mobility throughout the county. Some of the gaps reflect the views of one or a small group of individuals, and may or may not be indicative of a problem faced by a whole cohort of county residents. Where possible, the team attempted to identify if the gap appeared to be systemic, or whether further research was needed to make this determination.

Following are some of the key themes that emerged from this community input:

1. Seniors who stop driving need more mobility options

Until recently there has not been adequate attention paid to the education of seniors who are either continuing to drive when it is no longer safe to do so, or who have recently stopped driving without developing alternative plans for their continued mobility in the community. The decline in mobility options that usually follows the decision to stop driving can be a significant impediment to seniors continuing to age in place.

2. Security is a concern for seniors and people with disabilities

While many seniors in the county are able to use public transportation, some are concerned about riding on a bus or train, or waiting at a bus stop during evening hours or when there are large numbers of youth onboard.

3. Public transportation is not convenient or available to many seniors and others who live in the hills and other less densely populated areas

Seniors and others who live in the low-density "hills" areas are unable to conveniently access the fixed-route bus system. They may face challenges using taxi service, such as cost; service quality; the need for more assistance than the driver is willing to provide; lack of accessible taxis; and the overall limit of available taxis.

4. Non-English speaking seniors and others find it difficult to use public transit

Approximately one-third of the county's residents do not speak English as a first language. Some seniors and others who are not fluent in English report having difficulty using existing public transit. Fear of using available transportation resources or unfamiliarity with existing resources present barriers to non-English speakers or those unable to read English.

5. Many seniors and others are not aware of existing transportation resources

Many residents do not understand what public transportation resources are available and how to use them. This inability or unwillingness to use public transportation may be due to a lack of familiarity and stigmas associated with the use of public transportation. For some, financial considerations may also present a barrier to regular usage.

6. Residents of skilled nursing facilities may require a higher level of service than is provided by public transportation

Accessible public transportation services are generally geared towards those with a higher level of mobility than that of residents in the county's 26 Skilled Nursing Facilities. A gap exists between the level of service provided through ADA paratransit and the higher level of service provided by ambulance and non-emergency transportation services. Limited attention has been paid to this population and their inability to access services in the community without relying on facility staff, friends or family members.

7. Children with disabilities are subject to long rides on special education buses

A fifth of the approximately 1,500 children with disabilities who attend special education programs have to spend an hour or more on the bus each way to reach their programs. While this is consistent with ride times on comparable programs for people with cognitive disabilities, it does represent a hardship for some children.

8. Residents of Coastsides areas have a lower level of public transportation service

Many Pacifica focus group participants reported that their public transit trips require multiple transfers to other locations on the coast. Further south along the coast, development densities are so low that it is difficult to provide a transportation service that meets the needs of farm laborers and others in the Pescadero area who do not own a car.

9. Redi-Wheels riders do not have all their transportation needs met by ADA-level paratransit service

There are service parameters of the Redi-Wheels program that are ADA compliant (or go beyond ADA compliance) but do not meet the transportation needs of all those who rely on the service. These include the inability to make same day trip requests (e.g. for unanticipated medical appointments), the unavailability of service between midnight and 5:30 am outside of the route 391 corridor, and the lack of direct service between Pacifica and the communities around Half Moon Bay. In addition, the on-time performance requirements, which allow for a time window during which a rider can be picked up, make it difficult to rely on the service to keep tightly scheduled medical appointments or

employment schedules. The outreach process pointed to other aspects of the service that may impact the usability of the system, including the difficulty of making inter-county trips, incidents of unreliability, vehicle comfort, and issues with program staff courtesy and competence.

10. Some people with mental health issues and cognitive disabilities have difficulty using public transportation

For many people with mental health issues, existing transportation services present formidable challenges for a variety of reasons. For those who experience paranoia or delusional behavior, traveling on SamTrans buses under certain circumstances is too intimidating, and yet some may not be considered eligible for ADA paratransit because their disability does not prevent them from using fixed-route buses. For those who are on medication, concentration problems may make it difficult to follow schedules or to get off at the correct bus stop.

Chapter 4 includes a list of specific issues that stakeholders indicated present a mobility barrier.

Study Recommendations

The SPATS study makes recommendations in several areas for addressing transportation barriers that can lead to the premature institutionalization of seniors and people with disabilities. The goal of these strategies is to improve mobility, by creating options so that seniors and people with disabilities remain engaged in the community, live independently, age in place, and prepare for changes in their mobility.

Immediate Recommendations (“Tier 1”) (FY 2003-04)

Education

1. Provide transit education and trip planning to seniors and staff at senior centers and social service agencies, with an emphasis on those serving non-English-speaking clients
2. Create a video on fixed-route bus usage that is targeted towards seniors
3. Continue to promote the SamTrans and Caltrain toll-free information number, public transit discounts for seniors and people with disabilities, large print bus schedules, non-cash fare media (e.g. monthly pass), and the RIDES program
4. Continue to conduct outreach and consult with the community on transit route and schedule changes, find better ways to communicate these changes, and re-travel train affected customers
5. Make sure those with visual impairments are aware of the availability of orientation and mobility training through the Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (PCBVI)
6. Continue the current Redi-Wheels practice of educating customers about incorporating the allowable windows into their schedules

7. Continue to train Redi-Wheels reservationists and schedulers to help customers set appropriate travel schedules, to adjust schedules and to inform customers when insufficient time has been allowed
8. Explore expanding AARP 55 Alive Program to include non-auto options
9. Invite mental health representatives to participate in driver training

Service Improvements

1. Explore transportation options to Cordilleras Center
2. Explore carpools and vanpools for commuters with disabilities through the Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance
3. SamTrans should maintain the lifeline fares at the \$1 level
4. SamTrans, its contractor and the Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC)'s Consumer Corps should continue monitoring driver performance
5. SamTrans and its contractor should review the Multiple Stop Directory on an on-going basis, using the PCC as a review and advisory body
6. SamTrans and Redi-Wheels staff should ensure that the list of common destinations is regularly updated to include those locations for which it is difficult to specify an address
7. Maintenance staff and PCC should continue to review "state-of-the-art" equipment before the next vehicle purchase

Assistance

1. Continue paratransit escort program for Redi-Wheels users
2. SamTrans should continue to meet with customers who have problems using the bus because of the size of their wheelchair or scooter. If appropriate, the mobility device should be measured and the person assisted with practicing boarding and disembarking from a vehicle while it is out of service

Additional Research

1. Develop a list of the community groups that provide transportation
2. Provide Redi-Wheels reservationists with a list of accessible recreation areas in San Mateo County
3. Evaluate audibility of Caltrain and BART announcements
4. SamTrans should review its capacity at different times of the day to determine if there is space available to offer same day rides without adversely affecting service
5. Research availability of free and loaner children's car seats
6. Evaluate access issues for Bayshore residents

Follow up with Advisory Committees

1. SamTrans should review complaints to determine if there are frequent complaints about drivers starting to move before seniors are fully seated and / or not asking people to move from preferential seating or if there is a pattern of confusion when in-bound and out-bound routes operate on different streets
2. SamTrans should continue to monitor complaints about inter-county paratransit trips to identify if there is a systemic problem and report to the appropriate advisory group

Other

1. Build legislative support for senior transportation funding
2. Continue senior representation on Measure A reauthorization committees
3. Local senior advocates should work through the state legislature to introduce legislative measures to mitigate senior mobility limitations
4. Cities should be encouraged to review complaints received from taxi riders to determine if there is a pattern regarding a taxi company or specific taxi drivers
5. Refer people with complaints about lack of curb cuts to the Department of Public Works in the appropriate city, the Aging & Adult Services brochure "Removing Barriers through Self-Advocacy", and the Commission on Disabilities' web site (www.smco-cod.org)

Short Term Recommendations (Tier 2 –FY 2004-2006)

Education

1. SamTrans should create a brochure specifically for parents of children with disabilities, explaining and promoting the travel training process
2. Investigate the need for transit information in alternative languages and implement where feasible
3. Work with the DMV to send transit information to people whose licenses are being suspended or revoked
4. Develop peer-to-peer mentor program (which would train seniors to use fixed-route transit before they lose their drivers' license)
5. Educate consumers, wheelchair manufacturers, dealers, and funding agencies about limitations on bus usage by large wheelchairs and scooters
6. Work with the local chapter of the American Medical Association to educate doctors on the dangers of people driving when it is no longer safe for them to do so and to counsel patients on their ability to drive safely
7. Review National Highway and Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) and American Society on Aging (ASA) community education program kit

Service Improvements

1. Expand travel training
2. Explore feasibility of renewing HealthRide service or other medical rides options
3. Explore options for carrying large items on Redi-Wheels vehicles

Assistance

1. Recruit more volunteer drivers for volunteer driver programs
2. Advocate for casual carpools and formalized housing facility Share-A-Ride Program including consideration of incentives for drivers

Research

1. Work with cities to reduce hazards, improve lighting, and improve the path of travel to bus stops frequented by seniors

2. Research the process used in other suburban counties to strengthen taxi ordinances to require the use of accessible vehicles
3. Encourage city ordinances to require accessible taxis
4. Encourage city ordinances to require accessible shuttles
5. Work with Ombudsman to determine special needs of residents of skilled nursing facilities and residential care facilities.

Long Term Recommendations (Tier 3 – FY 2006 - 2014)

Education

1. Develop a public education campaign to educate employers about the need to accommodate workers with disabilities regarding transportation issues
2. SamTrans and partners should develop a continuum of education programs, including travel education
3. Provide sensitivity training to professionals besides SamTrans staff

Service Improvements

1. Explore options to serve geographically isolated area (such as the Coastside or "the hills") such as shuttles, deviated fixed-route, limited demand-response service, community bus, hybrid service, farm laborer vanpool, more accessible taxis, feeder service to El Camino Real, or assisting seniors to move closer to bus routes
2. Explore hybrid transit services in low-density areas
3. Evaluate increased feeder service to El Camino Real
4. Evaluate feasibility of Simme bus stop seats
5. Evaluate free transfers on SamTrans buses
6. Evaluate all day fare discounts on fixed-route buses
7. Evaluate paratransit options for emergency or same-day trips
8. Get additional Redi-Wheels vehicles and staff
9. Expand number of accessible taxis in county
10. Explore alternatives for funding and maintenance of bus shelters

Assistance

Travel training at senior centers

Other

1. Acquire on-going funding sources
2. Evaluate use of detectable directional tiles at Caltrain stations
3. Explore locations in San Mateo County where "talking signs" can be installed
4. Install curb cuts

Funding and Implementation Steps

Depending on which of the potential strategies are selected for implementation, additional funding may be required for many activities. Acquiring an ongoing funding source is critical to the successful implementation of a mobility support system in San Mateo County. This is a particular source of concern as the main transportation provider in the

county, SamTrans, is currently facing major budgetary constraints in supporting existing services and several other existing transportation providers have ceased to exist.

Within this context of shrinking available revenues and impending financial shortfalls, few components of the Strategic Plan are likely to be implemented unless aggressive efforts are made to tap every available public and private funding source. Creative funding arrangements will need to be made using a combination of federal, state, regional, and local monies and developing potential partners such as cities and social service agencies who are part of the home and community-based system.

Implementation Steps

Since the inception of this study, there have been two encouraging developments that will hopefully facilitate the implementation of some of the strategies recommended in this Plan. They are 1) the initiation of the SamTrans Strategic Plan study which includes an extensive household survey with over-sampling of seniors, low-income persons, and a survey of people with disabilities, and 2) the application for a Caltrans transportation planning grant that can be used to build on the planning efforts of the Strategic Plan for Accessible Transportation Services (SPATS).

Following are the implementation steps that will need to take place in order to ensure that the SPATS recommendations do not remain simply discussion items in a lengthy document, but rather are used to achieve improved mobility for the County's underserved population:

- Continue the functioning of the SPATS Steering Committee
- Determine which of the Tier 1 strategies are the most likely to be implemented
- Develop a timeline for implementation of the initial strategies once the most promising strategies have been selected
- Ensure that items requiring further research will be brought back to the Steering Committee to determine who will be responsible for follow-up activities
- Ensure that those items that have an educational or publicity component will be included in the educational strategies that are developed
- Ensure that SPATS recommendations are integrated into appropriate groups' long-term planning efforts
- If SamTrans receives the Caltrans transportation planning grant, ensure that there is minimal duplication and maximum follow-up from the present study
- Coordinate with the cities, other agencies, and stakeholder groups to ensure that recommended changes are congruent with the needs expressed in the SPATS study
- Ensure that appropriate staff at SamTrans, Aging & Adult Services and other agencies are designated to coordinate evaluation and implementation of the plan's recommendations.

Chapter 1. Introduction

The San Mateo Strategic Plan for Accessible Transportation Services (SPATS) is the culmination of a study by San Mateo County's Aging and Adult Services Division and the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans). The purpose of the study was: to identify the transportation needs of the most underserved populations in San Mateo County using a variety of innovative outreach activities and develop transportation strategies to address the gaps identified with a focus on those strategies to prevent the premature institutionalization of seniors and people with disabilities.

The target population for this study was broadly defined as the most underserved communities, with a particular emphasis on seniors and people with disabilities. However the scope also includes other groups with transportation needs such as those who are geographically isolated or have language or cultural barriers. The evaluation included the range of transportation modes available to county residents and different types of trips, such as employment and recreational.

The project Steering Committee consisted of the Working Group, consumers, advisory groups and representatives of social service agencies serving seniors and people with disabilities. Since the committees were aware at the outset that a wealth of information is already available about senior and disabled transportation needs, they agreed to employ innovative outreach methods to attempt to reach populations that are not normally included in outreach activities. This outreach relied on many different media, including the development of a videotape that was broadcast on non-English language cable television, an Open House Forum that included a Chinese translator, intercept surveys, and the training of social service agency staff who conducted focus groups at their own agencies and in their own language medium.

Based on this extensive outreach and information from demographic data of the County, the Working Group identified and prioritized a range of transportation gaps that need to be addressed. These were then assessed to determine the veracity and preponderance of the stated need, since many of the needs were based on input from a single individual. Where the needs appeared to reflect systemic problems that affected a large number of county residents, potential strategies were developed to address these needs. During the course of this study, SamTrans has embarked on a long-range strategic plan and also applied for funding to expand on the SPATS results. It is hoped that these efforts will lead to the implementation of the study's most feasible recommendations, thus contributing to the improved mobility of the underserved communities in San Mateo County.

Chapter 2. Key Demographic Trends

Key demographic trends assist in projecting the future transportation needs of the underserved populations. This chapter presents San Mateo County demographic characteristics in terms of population, age, ethnicity and public assistance, as well as the transportation-specific characteristics of mobility impairment and auto ownership. This chapter was prepared in 2001 and the information's source is noted.

General Characteristics

Population

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) has created population projections for each city in San Mateo County which include not only the incorporated part of each city, but territory included in the City's Sphere of Influence. These numbers accurately reflect the number of people in and around each city. These population data have been categorized in eight groups: San Mateo, Daly City, Redwood City, East Palo Alto, South San Francisco, Pacifica, Coastsides and Other Unincorporated. As figure 2-1 shows on the following page, San Mateo has the largest proportion of the County's population at 34.1%. Redwood City, Daly City and South San Francisco round out the top four at 16.8%, 15.7% and 14.9% of the County's population respectively.

Figure 2-1 Year 2000 Population of Cities and Their Spheres of Influence in San Mateo County (ABAG)

		% of County Total			% of County Total
San Mateo	237,380	34.1%	East Palo Alto	63,605	9.1%
Millbrae	20,386		Menlo Park	34,288	
Burlingame	28,811		East Palo Alto	29,317	
San Mateo	95,206		South San Francisco	103,776	14.9%
Foster City	28,716		South San Francisco	60,275	
Belmont	24,660		San Bruno	39,944	
San Carlos	28,778		Brisbane	3,557	
Hillsborough	10,823		Pacifica	38,264	5.5%
Daly City	109,059	15.7%	Coastsides	21,481	3.1%
Daly City	107,917		Half Moon Bay	10,994	
Colma	1,142		Other Coastsides	10,487	
Redwood City	117,108	16.8%	Other	6,038	0.9%
Redwood City	96,970				
Woodside	6,446				
Atherton	6,876				
Portola Valley	6,816				
			Total	696,711	100.0%

Age

Figure 2-2 shows the age breakdown of San Mateo County residents. The percentage of county residents over 65 is 12.5%, compared to a statewide average of 10.6%. However, the increase in this cohort is slower in the county than in the rest of the state, 10.1% versus 14.7%.

The number of residents under 18 and over 65 years of age is growing faster than the countywide average. As figure 2-3 illustrates, the number of persons under 18 grew by 13% between 1990 and 2000, compared to only 7.3% for the 18 to 64 group.

Figure 2-2 Countywide Population by Age (2000 Census)

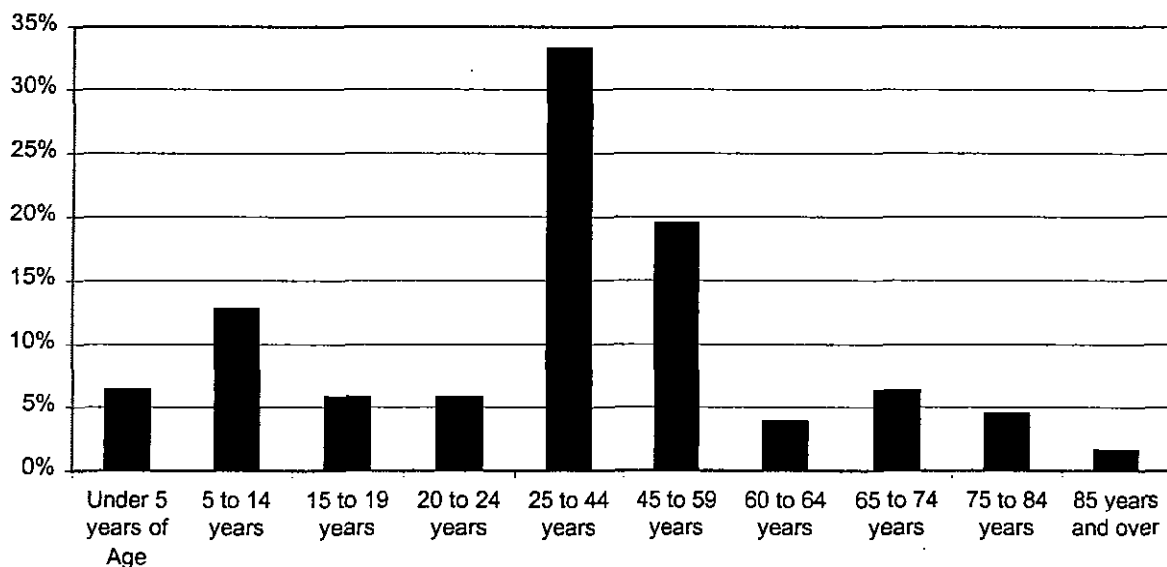


Figure 2-3 Change in Population by Age, 1990 to 2000 (Census)

	2000	1990	Change
Under 18	160,965	142,486	+ 13.0%
18-64 years	458,111	427,139	+ 7.3%
65 and over	88,085	79,998	+ 10.1%
All Ages			+ 8.9%

Ethnicity

The 2000 Census captured countywide data on race and ethnicity. According to the Census, roughly 50% of San Mateo County residents are white. Meanwhile, both Hispanics and Asians make up a large portion of the County's population, at 22% and 20% respectively compared to the statewide proportion of 32% and 11% respectively.

Figure 2-4 Countywide Ethnicity (2000 Census)

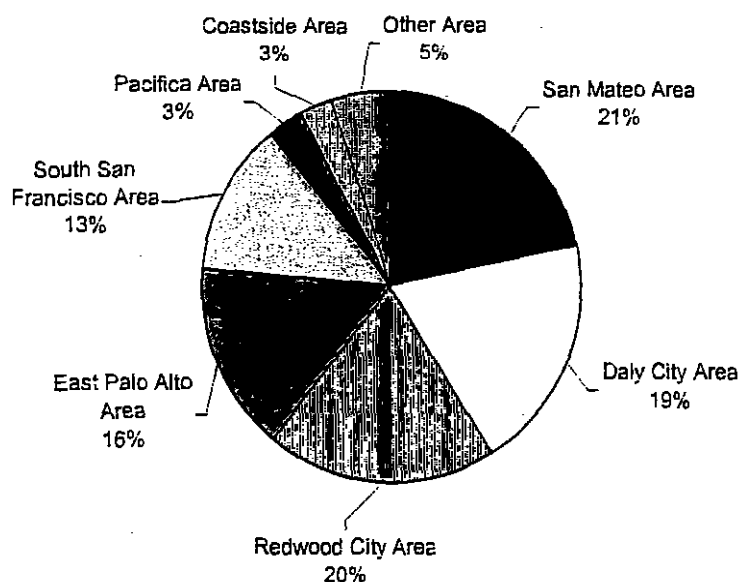
White	50%
Hispanic	22%
Asian	20%
Black or African American	3%
American Indian*	0%
Pacific Islander	1%
Other*	0%
Multiple	3%
Total	100.0%

*Rounded values

Public Assistance

The San Mateo County Welfare to Work Transportation Plan groups together, by place of residence, persons enrolled in public assistance programs with the San Mateo County Human Services Agency. Figure 2-5 displays the results.

Figure 2-5 Locations of People Receiving Assistance in San Mateo County (2000)



The eight geographic categories correspond to those used for overall population discussed earlier, allowing for comparison between the two. The San Mateo region has 34% of the County's population but only 21% of the County's public assistance recipients and East Palo Alto has only 9% of the County's population but accounts for 16% of the County's aid recipients. The Daly City and Redwood City regions both have higher recipient percentages than their proportion of the population.

Figure 2-6 Population and Public Aid Recipients by Region

	% of Population	% of Aid Recipients
San Mateo	34%	21%
Daly City	16%	19%
Redwood City	17%	20%
East Palo Alto	9%	16%
South San Francisco	15%	13%
Pacifica	6%	3%
Coastside	3%	3%
Other	1%	5%

Transportation Specific Characteristics

Mobility Impairment

The Census asked a sample of people whether or not they have a "mobility impairment." Since these data from the 2000 Census have yet to be tabulated, the data from the 1990 Census were used. Figure 2-7 displays the percentage of mobility impaired persons for the three most populated regions as well countywide. On average countywide, 6% of persons 16 to 64 years of age and 24% of persons aged 65 and above consider themselves mobility impaired. It is interesting to note how little variation there is between regions.

Figure 2-7 Mobility Limitations by Age (1990 Census)

	16-64 Years	65 Years and Over
Daly City/San Bruno	6%	26%
San Mateo/Burlingame	4%	23%
Redwood City/Menlo Park	6%	24%
San Mateo County*	6%	24%

San Mateo County *: includes only incorporated cities.

Auto Ownership

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has created vehicle per household estimates for each of the nine Bay Area counties. This data is important in determining the transportation options available to people who live in San Mateo County. As a whole, auto ownership is somewhat higher in San Mateo County than the Bay Area average. According to the data, only 5.4% of households in San Mateo County do not own a car, compared to 9.1% region wide. Meanwhile 66.2% live in a household with two or more cars in San Mateo County, while 61.9% of households have two or more cars region wide.

Figure 2-8 Auto Ownership in San Mateo County (MTC)

	% of Households with 0 Cars	% of Households with 1 Car	% of Households with 2 or More Cars
San Mateo County	5.4%	28.4%	66.2%
Regional Average	9.3%	28.8%	61.9%

Demographic Summary and Conclusions

- **Age:** Seniors aged 65 and over make up almost 13% of the County's population. This group grew by 10% from 1990 to 2000, which is slightly higher than the countywide average of population growth, but slower than the statewide increase in senior population, which is almost 15%.
- **Ethnicity:** Asians make up more than 20% of San Mateo County's population, almost double the statewide average. Whites and Hispanics account for 50% and 22% respectively of the County's population.
- **Mobility Impairments:** Six percent of working age residents (16 to 64) have a disability that inhibits their travel. This figure quadruples to 24% for persons aged 65 and older. The percentages are consistent across the County.
- **Automobile Ownership:** Five and a half percent of county households do not have access to an automobile. Although this figure is somewhat lower than the regional average of 9%, it is significant because of the limited transit options in a low-density area such as San Mateo County.

Chapter 3. Community Outreach

The SPATS project employed both traditional and non-traditional forms of community outreach to identify the transportation needs of the most underserved populations in San Mateo County. This chapter describes the variety of outreach activities that took place over the course of a year, starting in June 2001. Each activity lists the target population and an assessment of how effectively this activity accomplished the project goals.

While some of the outcomes are readily measurable, such as the number of participants in various meetings, most do not lend themselves to quantifiable measurement. For example, a goal of the project is to raise the awareness of county residents, particularly seniors and people with disabilities, about the issue of transportation needs and resources. While a relatively small number of individuals responded to the telephone hotline in the television programs describing the project, they were viewed by an unknown, and presumably significantly larger, number of residents. The actual input received from participants is presented in the next chapter of this report.

The study found that the most effective means of reaching individuals who are often overlooked in transportation needs assessments was through the focus group facilitation training provided to agency staff member who were proficient in a number of languages. They were then able to return to their own constituencies and gather a wide range of viewpoints on transportation needs. In terms of obtaining information from individuals without having to interview a large number individually, the Open House format proved to be particularly valuable. Stakeholder interviews also provided valuable in-depth information, but tended to be fairly time-consuming.

In contrast, the value of devoting significant resources to creating a high quality, culturally sensitive video for distribution to cable television and social service agencies remains difficult to determine. While many county residents viewed the video, few used it as an opportunity to provide input to the project. In addition, the use of intercepting individuals on the street to conduct surveys has proven to be an inefficient means of reaching those in underserved communities.

Community Outreach Activities

The Project Team adopted a variety of approaches, both traditional and innovative, to solicit input on transportation barriers from a broad cross-section of the underserved population. The primary targets of the outreach efforts were seniors, people with disabilities, people with cultural and linguistic barriers and those who are not well served because of their geographic isolation. The goal of the outreach effort was to reach as broad a spectrum of these population groups as possible, with cost-effectiveness being less of a consideration than hearing from those who do not traditionally provide input to policy-makers. Listed below are the various outreach efforts conducted in this study, followed by an assessment of the effectiveness of each activity. The list roughly follows the chronological order in which the activities occurred.

Intercept Surveys

In an attempt to reach seniors or people with disabilities who are not affiliated with an organization or are reluctant or unable to attend meetings, the team developed a survey instrument to be used by volunteers in locations where the target population groups gather in the course of their daily activities. This approach, known as an "intercept survey", has been used with mixed results in other settings, such as recreational areas or college campuses. Its purpose is simply to solicit qualitative information from underrepresented groups, rather than provide quantifiable data that has any statistical validity. The experience in the SPATS study with this approach indicated that even with this limited objective, unless the geographic setting draws a cohesive population representing a "captive audience", it is very difficult to recruit potential subjects.

During the month of July 2001, four volunteers surveyed 14 individuals at various public locations in the county. One individual tried for one and one-half hours to interview members of the public at Woodside Plaza shopping center with no success. Even after the survey tool, which was also translated into Spanish, was considerably shortened in an effort to address time concerns of potential subjects, individuals still refused to participate. Some of the volunteers interviewed acquaintances who were part of the target population groups out of frustration with the intercept survey process. In addition to the surveys conducted in these public locations, a project team member conducted surveys with individuals attending the San Mateo County Senior Fair. A total of sixteen individuals were surveyed. This more targeted location appeared to yield better results than those selected by the volunteers, but the information generated did not contain information on the unmet needs of the target population.

The limited number of subjects recruited in the intercept survey could be due to the fact that surveyors were not paid for their efforts; that it is difficult to approach individuals on the assumption that they may have a disability or be over a certain age; and that people generally are not interested in answering surveys when they are "going about their business". Based on the project experience, intercept surveys are considered to be a highly ineffective means of soliciting input from the target population.

Four Public Forums

In October 2001, the project team participated in or initiated four public forums, including one Open House. The goal of these activities was to hear from staff and representatives of the target groups, and to reach out to others who are able to attend meetings. The goal of holding the Open House was to encourage those who do not normally speak up at large group meetings, but may be willing to speak in small, facilitated groups or one-on-one with project staff at various "stations". The project team also believed that the Open House forum would create an opportunity for people who do not normally work or travel together to share their views in one location.

Following is a brief description of these four forums:

- Approximately 25 people attended a forum held by the Commission on Aging, which is a 21 member group of professionals, seniors, family members and others that advises the Board of Supervisors and advocates on behalf of seniors.
- A similar number participated in the forum sponsored by the Commission on Disabilities, a 21 member group of professionals, people with disabilities, family members and others that advises the Board of Supervisors and advocates on behalf of children and adults with disabilities.
- Immediately preceding the regular monthly meeting of the San Mateo County Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC), twenty people participated in a forum specifically addressing the SPATS study. The PCC provides input to SamTrans, the Board of Supervisors and other public bodies to ensure that the interests of the mobility impaired are fairly represented. The PCC primarily advocates on behalf of individuals who ride Redi-Wheels, the county's ADA paratransit program.
- An Open House was held at SamTrans headquarters, with over 60 people in attendance. Participants – most of whom were seniors - were extremely diverse in terms of ethnicity and functional mobility. In one section of the room, a group of Chinese-speaking seniors were provided with simultaneous translation of the proceedings. Following general comments about the project, the forum broke up into four sub-groups, each with a particular theme, and participants were invited to participate in the group that held the most interest for them. A facilitator and recorder led each group. The groups were divided as follows: "Fixed-Route Issues" (SamTrans and Caltrain), "Redi-Wheels", "When it is time to give up your car keys", and "Other Issues".

The project team determined that the Open House was the most effective in meeting the project goals. While a proportion of the participants were individuals who routinely attend other meetings where accessible transportation issues are addressed, there were many more that do not. Moreover, the Open House format allowed facilitators to encourage the less assertive participants to state their views in the small groups or to approach one of the professionals at each station and engage in a more individualized, in-depth conversation about a particular transportation need. One shortcoming of this process is that some of the input that was recorded on the flip charts was not sufficiently detailed to provide meaningful input to the Needs Assessment. Given that the attendees participated on an anonymous basis, it was not possible to contact them after the event to obtain further information. It is possible to ask people if they are willing to be contacted later, which allows more detailed information, but is time-consuming.

Focus Group Training

Twenty-four focus groups were conducted during the summer and fall of 2001. The consultant provided two training sessions to staff members at each of the agencies where the focus groups were held. This approach achieved the following objectives:

San Mateo County Strategic Plan for Accessible Transportation Services

- Conserved project budget;
- Allowed the project team to reach a very broad audience for input;
- Enhanced the facilitation skills of the staff members;
- Relied on professionals who were familiar with their constituents, thus assuring their trust in the process; and
- Allowed for focus groups to be held in a multitude of languages.

This activity effectively reached a broad cross-section of the target population. The "Composition" column in the table below conveys a sense of the diversity of individuals who were reached by this method, both in terms of ethnic and disability diversity. Over 260 individuals participated in the focus groups. They were roughly divided as follows:

San Mateo County Strategic Plan for Accessible Transportation Services

Agency/ Group	Number of Participants	Composition
Parca Support Group, South San Francisco	Not Available	Developmental Disabilities
Parca, Half Moon Bay	4	Developmental Disabilities
Paratransit Coordinating Council	8	Primarily Redi-Wheels users
Self-Help for the Elderly (San Mateo)	8	Senior Cantonese/English-speakers
Self-Help for the Elderly (San Mateo)	11	Senior Mandarin-speakers
Rosener House	9	Primarily seniors with Alzheimer's
Redwood City Veteran's Memorial Senior Center	17+	Seniors
Commission on Aging	25	Seniors
Health Plan of San Mateo	8	Employees serving low-income (Medi-Cal) clients
Senior Coastsiders	12	Mix of paratransit and bus users on Coastsides
San Bruno Senior Center	18	Seniors, 5 Latino, average age 78, mostly ambulatory, use bus and car
Center for Independence of the Disabled	8	Mix of Redi-Wheels, bus and auto users with disabilities
Council for the Blind	14	9 visually impaired
Fair Oaks Senior Center	7	Seniors, 6 of whom Spanish-speaking, primarily Redi-Wheels riders
Pacifica Oaks Senior Apartments	10	Primarily senior bus riders
Foster City Senior Center	8	All senior auto users
San Carlos Senior Center	6	Mix of senior drivers and non-drivers
Poplar ReCare	Not Available	Parents/ Caregivers of people with developmental disabilities
Poplar ReCare	Not Available	Staff
Mental Health Association	8	Staff
Mental Health Association	4	Peer Counselors/ Consumers
Asian Senior Club	60	Seniors
Cordilleras	12	Clients and staff at Mental Health Rehabilitation center
La Esperanza Vive	Not Available	Spanish-speaking peer counselors, seniors with mental health concerns
St. Andrews Church, Daly City	8	Filipino seniors (English and Tagalog)

Development and Dissemination of Video

The project team worked with a video production consultant to design an outreach video that is culturally sensitive, provides captions for persons with hearing impairments, and can be used to reach a mass audience more effectively than the other outreach efforts, which were not mass media-based. The video, which is approximately 18 minutes long, has a number of objectives, including:

- Educating the public at large about the mobility barriers faced by people in their communities.
- Providing role models of individuals who are able to lead full lives despite these barriers, using the available transportation resources.
- Generating sufficient interest among people in one of the target groups that they would be motivated to call a free telephone hotline to discuss the specific mobility barrier they face.

While it is not possible to measure the video's success in meeting the first two objectives, short of conducting a follow-up survey, it is likely that a relatively large numbers of county residents saw the program on television or at a social service agency. It should be noted that production of the video took far longer than expected, resulting in a very short time frame of approximately three weeks for broadcast and responding to the video. With regard to the last of the three objectives, the video generated a rather limited amount of follow-up.

The video consisted of vignettes of six individuals who represented a cross-section of the project's target groups. To give a picture of the diversity of this group, the following briefly describes the individuals who were included in the final version of the video.

- East Palo Alto male, Latino, quadriplegic, uses power chair, works part-time, uses a lift-equipped van and sometimes rides SamTrans
- Redwood City, white female, uses walker and scooter, rides Redi-Wheels, SamTrans, and BART
- South San Francisco, white male, has spina bifida, uses crutches with difficulty, scooter and manual wheelchair, drives but car has broken down, security guard at night, due to limited transportation options, depends on friends and relatives to get to work, uses bus wheelchair lift with scooter when work schedule and location permit
- Daly City senior African-American male, has diabetes, blind for past five years, is a double amputee, uses a manual wheelchair, uses paratransit in San Mateo and San Francisco counties
- Redwood City older white female, recently stopped driving due to visual problems, uses a cane, recently started riding Redi-Wheels, but largely relies on family and friends for transportation

- San Mateo older female, Asian-American, drives but has no car, uses SamTrans and taxis, travels regularly into San Francisco

To identify these six interviewees for the video, project staff screened twenty potential candidates, which was an extremely time-consuming process. For each individual, this required numerous telephone calls; sending background information on the project; an in-person interview to determine their suitability for the program; three to four hours for the film shoot; and then a considerable number of hours in the editing room.

The video consultant produced approximately fifteen copies of the video. These were translated into Spanish and Cantonese and captioned, and distributed to the main cable television station, Peninsula Community Television and other local stations where Peninsula does not reach. SamTrans established a hotline number to receive input in a variety of languages. This effort, which occurred during March and April 2002, was accompanied by press releases that were very widely distributed to radio, television and print media outlets.

The video was broadcast repeatedly on a number of television stations, including the Spanish and Chinese language stations. In addition, project staff were interviewed on at least two programs. Two Aging and Adult Services social workers participated in public affairs TV shows that were conducted in Spanish and Cantonese to discuss the project and solicit input. A public service announcement on the project was also presented on Peninsula TV's Calendar Page. To the best of our knowledge, the radio stations did not broadcast information about the project. Project staff did not follow up with the radio stations due to limited resources and the fact that radio was considered to be a less innovative medium than television.

Flyers

Hundreds of flyers were printed in English, Spanish, and Chinese, soliciting input from individuals at senior centers, social service agencies, and public housing complexes throughout the county. Social workers from Aging and Adult Services discussed the project at the centers. Similar to the video program, the flyers listed the toll-free hotline number for residents to call and give input to the study. The flyer also offered to loan the video to interested agencies.

Telephone calls

As described above, the project established numerous opportunities to solicit information from the public via telephone. The number of individuals who used the telephone hotline as a means of providing input was relatively limited given the resources assigned to this task. However, this medium did allow project staff to hold extensive discussions with some of the callers. Forty-five individuals called the English-speaking hotline during the months of March and April 2002. The consultant returned calls and received input from 29 of the callers. Most of those who called did so in response to the television advertisements or flyers that had been widely distributed. The calls were distributed among almost all the cities in the county.

Four individuals used a separate Spanish and Cantonese hotline.

Letters from the Public

Only two letters were received from the public, one from an Asian-American senior, and the other from a Redi-Wheels customer.

Stakeholder Interviews

While the Needs Assessment focused on soliciting input from members of the public, the transportation needs of certain population groups (such as people with cognitive disabilities and children) are more clearly articulated by agency staff through stakeholder interviews. In addition, the interviews were used to follow up on concerns expressed by members of the public to verify facts or determine the extent of the problem. For example, when a stakeholder indicated that children traveling to Special Education programs experience very long rides, the consultant contacted the Office of Special Education, which had recently completed an analysis of the children's ride times. Based on the SPATS project experience, stakeholder interviews are an essential element in any needs assessment

What did we learn?

Significant project resources were allocated to the community outreach effort. A range of options were utilized, including some that had not been tried before by the project team and some that were considered to be risky in terms of potential effectiveness, but worth exploring with this target population. In order of effectiveness, the outreach efforts may be ranked as follows:

- Training social service agency staff to facilitate focus groups in their own agencies.
- Conducting an Open House in which participants could participate in small groups and interact one-on-one with project staff.
- Conducting stakeholder telephone interviews provided valuable in-depth information.
- Holding telephone conversations with callers to the hotline provided detailed information and reached individuals who may not attend meetings, but was very time-consuming.

The following outreach efforts were determined to be less effective, both in terms of the input received and the resources required to perform the required activities:

- Creating videos for distribution to mass media (although these may be more effective as an educational tool than a survey outreach tool).
- Conducting intercept surveys.

The outreach activities discussed above can “go deeper” than traditional approaches. However, it should also be recognized that in order to develop transportation strategies that are based on quantifiable data, the information supplied through the qualitative Needs Assessment and outreach process should be accompanied by additional efforts such as statistically reliable telephone surveys and extensive demographic analysis. These can help define the scope of the mobility problems experienced by individuals in the underserved sectors of the community.

Chapter 4. Community Input Regarding Transportation Gaps and Barriers

This chapter presents a discussion of the results of the community outreach process described in Chapter 3 of this report. The major themes focus on targeted populations, including seniors, people with disabilities, and those who are geographically or linguistically isolated. The ability of members of these populations to function independently is hindered by a lack of appropriate or convenient transportation options or by a lack of understanding or knowledge of existing options. The information is first presented according to general themes based on the input of different communities regarding their transportation needs, and then greater detail is provided on specific comments provided by individuals as part of the outreach process.

The general themes reflect the input received as part of the extensive outreach process and information from demographic data for the county. A detailed description of the methodology used to identify these gaps is described in Chapter 3. It should be noted that in a number of instances, the gaps have been identified by an individual or a small number of individuals, and may not necessarily indicate a systemic problem faced by a whole class of residents. These gaps have nevertheless been included in this chapter in order to reflect the input received in the outreach process.

Chapter 5 includes an analysis of reported transportation gaps and indicates which items are actual systemic issues and which items are based on stakeholders' perceptions but are factually incorrect or may not be as pervasive as suggested in the initial outreach process. Some potential gaps and barriers may also require further research in order to identify how many residents they impact.

Themes

Following are the themes that emerged in the outreach process:

Seniors who stop driving need more mobility options

Consistent with national demographic trends, it is reasonable to assume that a growing number of active seniors in San Mateo County continue to drive even though their functional ability to do so safely has been impaired. Many seniors also voluntarily give up their driver's licenses, thereby limiting their mobility options.

According to 2000 projections conducted by the State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), the percentage of San Mateo County residents over 85 who have driver's licenses is approximately 30%. In the 75 – 84 age category, this percentage is closer to 70%. Until recently there has not been adequate attention paid to the education of seniors who are either continuing to drive, are in the process of giving up their car keys, or have recently stopped driving without developing alternative plans for their continued mobility in the community. The decline in mobility options that usually follows the

decision to stop driving can be a significant impediment to seniors continuing to age in place.

Security is a concern for seniors and people with disabilities

While many seniors in the county are able to use public transportation, some are concerned about riding on a bus or train, or waiting at a bus stop during evening hours or when there are large numbers of youths onboard. Given the relatively low crime rates in most parts of the county, this sense of danger may be based on perception rather than reality. It nevertheless poses a serious challenge to mobility for those who choose to *avoid using public transportation after hours*. People with visual impairments or who use wheelchairs may also feel vulnerable in facilities that are not well utilized or are poorly designed.

Public transportation is not convenient or available to some seniors and others who live in the “hills” and other less densely populated areas

In 1999 a number of underutilized SamTrans bus routes serving the low-density “hills” sections of the county were cut as service was shifted to the higher usage core areas in the El Camino Real corridor. As a result, some seniors and other hills residents are no longer able to access the fixed route bus system, and others cannot do so conveniently. There is a perception that most residents have high incomes and a variety of options, including taxis. However, taxis may not be a viable option for a number of reasons: the high costs of relying on taxis for frequent trips; variable service quality can be an effective deterrent; seniors may require more assistance than the driver is willing to provide; lack of accessible taxis; or the overall availability of taxi service. These challenges are particularly difficult for seniors who are not ADA paratransit-eligible.

Non-English speaking seniors and others may find it difficult to use public transit

Approximately one-third of the county’s residents do not speak English as a first language. Seniors and others who are not fluent in English may have particular difficulty in using existing public transit. Due to the predominance of English-speakers in the county, communications and media educating the public about how to use public transportation services are generally in English. In some cases, Spanish translations are provided, but this leaves out seniors and others who are not comfortable reading and speaking English or Spanish. Fear of using available transportation resources, or even the under-utilization of existing resources, present significant barriers to non-English speakers or those unable to read English.

Many seniors and others are not aware of existing transportation resources

Since the vast majority of San Mateo seniors have relied primarily on autos for their mobility, there are many that may not understand what public transportation resources are available and how to use them. An inability or unwillingness to use public transportation may be due to a lack of familiarity and stigmas associated with the use of public transportation. For some, financial considerations may also present a barrier to regular usage of public transportation.

Residents of skilled nursing and residential care facilities require a higher level of service than is provided by public transportation

There are 26 Skilled Nursing Facilities in San Mateo County with 2,340 beds. There are 252 residential care facilities with 4,610 beds. The existing transportation services that are intended to address the needs of people with disabilities are geared towards those with a higher level of mobility than many nursing facility residents have. A gap exists between the level of service provided by ADA paratransit service and the higher level of ambulance and non-emergency transportation services that may be needed by these residents. Redi-Wheels does not provide assistance beyond the front door of the facility because of the need to maintain supervision of the passengers and vehicle. In the absence of facility staff, residents usually require a higher level of assistance in order to be able to make use of the Redi-Wheels program. Limited attention has been paid to this population and their inability to access services in the community without relying on facility staff, friends or family members.

Children with disabilities are subject to long rides on special education buses

One stakeholder raised the issue of children with disabilities having to spend a long time on a special education bus to reach their program. The Office of Special Education explained that there are insufficient buses and drivers to provide this transportation. Some children with disabilities are placed in two schools, which can involve traveling across county lines. This can also present a problem in terms of trip lengths. Finally, there may be a long lag time to set up transportation, which delays the child's entry into the educational program.

Another problem that was raised is that Redi-Wheels does not accept applications for children under 7 years of age with disabilities. While this is consistent with the assumption that young children also generally do not ride the fixed-route service alone (and therefore this is not an ADA-compliance issue), it does present a problem for those parents with multiple children who need to transport their disabled children to various activities.

Taxis do not have car seats available for transporting children, which can present a problem for parents with disabilities who are not able to carry these to the taxi.

Residents of Coastside areas have a lower level of public transportation service

Many Pacifica focus group participants reported that their public transit trips require multiple transfers to other locations on the coast. Redi-Wheels trips between the Bayside and the Coastside may require a transfer. More detailed customer input relating to specific bus stops and underserved routes is provided in the listing later in this chapter. Further south along the coast, SamTrans provides fixed-route transportation between Pescadero and Half Moon Bay. Service is provided in the morning and afternoon commute hours. However, the service is not available early or late enough during weekdays to serve the needs of many farm laborers, and is not available on weekends, even though many laborers work six-day weeks.

The transportation needs of Redi-Wheels riders are not all met by ADA paratransit service

Approximately 7,000 out of about 700,000 County residents are currently ADA paratransit-eligible. The majority of these registrants are over 65 years of age. This number of paratransit eligible individuals is projected by MTC to double in the next 20 years, which is faster than the projected increase in the senior population. While those eligible for paratransit remain a small proportion of the 88,000 seniors in the county over 65, they include those with the most significant mobility impairments. This cohort of the senior population is therefore a key focus of this report.

There are service parameters of the Redi-Wheels program that are ADA compliant (or even exceed ADA requirements) but do not meet a portion of the transportation needs of those who rely on the service. These include the inability to make same day trip requests and the unavailability of service between midnight and 5:30 AM outside of the Route 391 corridor. In addition, the variability of the pick up time can make it difficult to tightly schedule trips to medical appointments.

The outreach process pointed to other aspects of the service that impact the usability of the system for some consumers, such as the difficulty of making inter-county trips, incidents of reliability, vehicle comfort, and complaints about program staff.

People with mental health issues and cognitive disabilities may have difficulty using public transportation

For many people with mental health issues and cognitive disabilities, existing transportation services present formidable challenges for a variety of reasons. For those who experience paranoia or delusional behavior, traveling on SamTrans buses may be too intimidating, and yet some may not be considered eligible for ADA paratransit because their disability does not prevent them from using fixed-route buses. For those who are on medication, concentration problems may make it difficult to follow schedules or to get off at the correct bus stop. For others, particularly those at the Cordilleras center who are slowly reintegrating into society, the bus schedules and location of the

bus stop may prevent regular usage of the bus as a suitable alternative for work and other trips.

Specific Reports of Transportation Needs from the Outreach Process

In the first part of this chapter, the transportation needs of key constituencies were presented in general terms. Following is a detailed listing of the needs identified by individual stakeholders as part of the outreach component of this project.

Seniors who are considering giving up driving / No longer drive

- "Some seniors are able to drive and are not eligible for paratransit, but their mobility is impaired because of an unwillingness to travel in unfamiliar places"
- "The strong commitment to driving among seniors presents a mobility barrier for those who are no longer able to do so safely – in response to "what would get you out of your car", participants indicated illness, old age, disability, poverty, or broken down car!"
- "Walking to a bus stop is often a safety issue for seniors due to physical and visual problems."
- "The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) does not provide information about SamTrans and Redi-Wheels to auto drivers who lose their licenses due to a disability."
- "Many seniors are unaware that the ADA allows for a conditional eligibility category for those who are able to use the SamTrans bus for some trips but not others."
- "There remains a stigma associated with bus usage among some seniors who can no longer drive."

Language / Cultural Issues

- "There is a perception that Redi-Wheels service is not user-friendly to Spanish-speaking customers. "
- "Chinese speakers have difficulties reading the bus schedules."
- "Bus schedules can be hard to read in small print."
- "Some people need to use magnifying glasses to read bus schedules at stops that have them."
- "Some bus drivers don't speak adequate English."
- "There is inadequate non-English education of consumers about how to use the bus, make transfers, travel across the county."

Geographic Isolation / Coastside Issues

- "There is very limited transit service in non-commute hours and on weekends."
- "Travel to the College of San Mateo requires inconvenient stopover at Hillsdale."
- "Many trips from Half Moon Bay require transfers at Pacifica. This is particularly difficult for people with developmental disabilities. Coastside weather also makes transfers more difficult."
- "Bayshore residents, including large monolingual populations of Chinese and Mexican immigrants, are poorly served by SamTrans, requiring multiple transfers for trips into the heart of the county and into San Francisco."

Redi-Wheels

- "Lack of an emergency / immediate needs trip option."
- "Problems with on-time performance have an impact on meeting doctors' appointments."
- "The ride can be too bumpy for some people. Long rides cause bladder problems and can be painful."
- "Staff turnover creates problems with drivers not being familiar with tie-downs and geographic locations."
- "Inter-County service can be difficult, particularly when crossing the border to Stanford. Drivers are not clear on the policies, particularly the wait time policy."
- "The location of pick-up points at large locations (e.g. Shopping malls) remains confusing."
- "Some Redi-Wheels customers are poorly informed about the service parameters, *resulting in certain riders believing that they have to call seven days in advance to reserve a trip.*"
- "Fare levels present a hardship for low-income riders"
- "Pick-up locations are poorly defined, and, at the most frequently used locations, there are no dedicated phones pre-programmed in different languages that would be helpful to riders. Designated spots at inter-county transfer points are particularly needed."
- "There are no car seats available for disabled children."
- "Some residents find the ADA application form too difficult to read and understand."
- "The lack of flexibility allowed drivers and schedulers when riders do not know the exact address (e.g. Flood Park, Hillsdale Mall) makes the system user-unfriendly."
- "There is no information booth on transportation at the East Palo Senior Center which could assist potential riders."

SamTrans Fixed-Route Service

- "The drivers' failure to call out stops presents a transportation barrier for visually impaired riders, particularly on lines with limited stops."
- "Security concerns present a psychological barrier to riders, particularly seniors."
- "Some riders report that drivers are insensitive to their disability, particularly those with invisible disabilities."
- "Uncovered bus stops are a deterrent to usage by seniors (e.g. on Route #'s 250 and 251)."
- "Some drivers start moving before seniors are fully seated and do not enforce the rule when teenagers are sitting in disabled seating or are being unruly."
- "Seniors get confused when the inbound and outbound routes operate on different streets."
- "Some buses cannot be used by passengers with wide wheelchairs. "
- "Some riders find the wheelchair positions on buses are not easily accessible."
- "Graffiti can be a deterrent to bus usage."
- "There is insufficient travel training for seniors and people with disabilities who want to use the SamTrans buses."
- "Fare levels present a barrier for those on fixed incomes."
- "Bus signs do not provide adequate information about destinations on route. "
- "Some bus drivers do not wait for slower moving seniors."
- "The increase in school student passengers since school bus service was terminated has made it more difficult for seniors to ride the bus."
- "Changes in bus stop locations or bus schedules present particular problems for those who have been travel trained"

Area/Route-Specific Concerns

The following comments are drawn primarily from the Transportation Needs Forum held at SamTrans in October 2001. SamTrans routinely receives comments from riders and non-riders seeking changes and improvements in fixed-route services and facilities. SamTrans responses vary from taking immediate action to tabling the request until additional comments or information demonstrates a compelling need. Contact with the commenter is essential to get more information about the perceived problem and gauge its severity and the type of action that would be appropriate. Since input at the Forum was anonymous, SamTrans is unable to act upon them until more detailed information is received.

- "There is insufficient service to the Foster City Marina Plaza."
- "There is no bus stop at 10th and Delaware, and the current bus stop spacing in that area is too far apart. Strawflower Shopping Center also needs more stops."

- "There is no bus on Walnut Street in Redwood City, which presents a barrier for seniors from the senior housing complex who currently have to walk 3 ½ blocks to the nearest stop."
- "There are insufficient feeder routes into Route #390."
- "There is insufficient service from the Pacifica Oaks Senior Apartments to Linda Mar and Route 1, and there is no Sunday service in the area."
- "There is no bench in front of the Pacifica Oaks Senior Apartments."
- "The cross-walk at the Linda Mar bus stop in Pacifica is perceived as dangerous for seniors."
- "Route #14 is not well coordinated with #110 and #112 in Pacifica."
- "The service from Middlefield Road to Woodside Plaza is too indirect."
- "There are no buses that run between Junipero Serra and Serramonte in Daly City, which creates dangerous walking conditions."
- "There is no bus pull-in on Main and Kelly in Half Moon Bay."

Other Transportation Modes

Caltrain

- "Both taxis and Caltrain are perceived as being too expensive."
- "The public announcement systems on Caltrain and BART are very difficult to understand."
- "The guardrail on the Caltrain wheelchair platform obstructs motorized wheelchairs during boarding and alighting."
- "Schedules between SamTrans buses and the trains are not well-coordinated."

Taxis

- "Taxis are hard to find, and few are ramp-equipped for use by people with mobility impairments."
- "Taxi drivers are often rude and drive too fast."

Shuttles

- "Menlo Park Shuttle hours are too short."
- "There is insufficient local shuttle service in downtown San Mateo."
- "Foster City Shuttle service is mainly geared towards shopping trips, rather than medical appointments."

People with Cognitive Disabilities/ Mental Health Issues

- "People with mental health issues experience anxiety due to overcrowding on the bus and confusion when reading bus schedules."

- "Mental Health Association clients have had problems using the SamTrans 1-800 number."
- "The lack of bus schedules at the stops is a disincentive for clients to use the bus."
- "Changes in bus stop locations or bus schedules present particular problems for those who have been travel trained."
- "People with cognitive disabilities have difficulties handling cash fares. This can pose a problem if individuals wish to use the SamTrans bus or Redi-Wheels and they are not associated with a facility that has a pre-payment arrangement."
- "The SamTrans helpline menu system can be too complicated for people with mental health issues."
- "Additional service to Cordilleras"

Recreational Trips

- "Transportation for social outings of children who use wheelchairs is very limited. School buses do not meet this need as requests have to be made two weeks in advance."
- "Access to recreational areas is virtually non-existent on public transportation."
- "Recreational trips are limited on Redi-Wheels (e.g. the vehicles won't transport camping equipment)."

Employment Trips

- "Job seekers with disabilities have had to turn down jobs because they were not easily accessible to the El Camino transit corridor."
- "Employers do not understand the need to be flexible with disabled employees who rely on public transportation with its variable schedule."

Other Issues

- "In case of emergencies during the late evening or early morning hours, there are very few options for wheelchair users."
- "Parents have fears about their children with disabilities using public transportation."
- "On some wide streets in the city of San Mateo, the pedestrian lights do not allow sufficient time for seniors to cross."
- "Wheelchair users sometimes face inoperable bus lifts and poorly cut curbs."
- "Difficulties in orientation at transit facilities"

Chapter 5. Gap Assessment and Strategy Development

For each of the issues identified, the following discussion includes an assessment of whether there is sufficient data to determine the extent of the problem, describes the efforts that are currently underway to address the issue, and proposes strategies to strengthen or improve upon these efforts. Where appropriate, we also indicate whether further research and analysis is required under each strategy. It should also be pointed out that many of the strategies cited below are beyond the responsibility of SamTrans and will require the development of other resources through partnerships with local municipalities and social service agencies in the home- and community-based system.

Seniors Who Are Considering Giving Up Driving Or No Longer Drive

One of the key issues raised by many who participated in the outreach process was developing options for older adults who are still driving or whose ability to drive has been compromised by functional decline and who need to begin transitioning to other forms of transportation. On a national level, there is a significant initiative currently being undertaken by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the American Society on Aging (ASA) to develop "social marketing" efforts that will identify the particular needs of this group and strategies for addressing those needs. As part of this effort, a community education program kit will be created that will enable local professionals who work with older adults to educate them about their various transportation options. Stakeholders working with older San Mateo County residents should closely follow the developments in this study that is scheduled for completion at the end of 2003. In addition, a strategy should be developed to establish contact with American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to determine if programs can be developed locally for those who have recently lost their drivers' licenses due to deteriorating eyesight, poor hand-eye coordination or other impairments. The strategy should include working with the DMV to send transit information to people who lose their licenses.

SamTrans is planning to create a video to educate seniors about the opportunities public transit affords them and to highlight the ease with which they can use it. In addition to education, local senior activists should work through the State legislature. The former Chair of the San Mateo County Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC) is a delegate to the California Senior Legislature. In this capacity, she plans to focus on legislative measures to mitigate senior mobility limitations.

SamTrans applied for a Caltrans Transportation Planning grant to work with Aging and Adult Services to plan transit strategies for senior mobility.

Potential strategies:

SamTrans video to educate seniors on use of public transit.

Obtain and review community education kit from NTHSA.

Work with the DMV to send transit information to people who are losing their licenses.

Local senior activists should work through the State legislature to implement legislative measures to mitigate senior mobility limitations.

“Some seniors are able to drive and are not eligible for paratransit, but their mobility is impaired because of an unwillingness to travel to unfamiliar places”

It is unclear how many people are affected, and to what degree, by this issue. For those who are, SamTrans can provide information via a toll-free information number and can refer people to connecting transit services. Customer service representatives are trained to help callers obtain the information they need to gain confidence in using transit services to unfamiliar places. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has a new 511-hotline number that provides regional transit information. MTC should continue to educate the public about this option.

In addition, the SamTrans Customer Service Center representatives should be interviewed about the frequency of calls of this nature to determine if there is a need to respond in a different way or with different information.

Potential strategy:

Continued education about SamTrans toll-free information number and MTC's 511 number.

“The strong commitment to driving among seniors presents a mobility barrier for those who are no longer able to do so safely – in response to “what would get you out of your car”, participants indicated illness, old age, disability, poverty, or a broken down car!”

In a 1998 publication entitled “Mobility and Independence: Changes and Challenges for Older Drivers”, the authors found that “most elders believe that they will know when they should stop driving, yet most elders know peers whose driving they consider to be so unsafe that they will not accept rides from those peers”, and, predicts as older drivers are driving more, “the number of elderly traffic fatalities will more than triple by the year 2030...(and) will be 35 percent greater than the total number of alcohol-related traffic fatalities in 1995”.

Currently, insurance organizations offer at least three “55 Alive” driving safety programs for seniors in the County. However, it is unclear whether these programs include information on alternatives to driving. This also appears to be true for the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), which is responsible for issuing driver's licenses.

A potential strategy for addressing this issue is to encourage the DMV to distribute transit information to people whose licenses are being suspended or revoked. This strategy would include working with DMV to determine which indicators of driving ability

and proficiency would trigger issuance of transit information, short of termination of the driving privilege.

In addition, the local chapter of the American Medical Association should be encouraged to educate doctors on the dangers of people driving when it is no longer safe for them to do so. Medical professionals should counsel patients on their ability to drive safely.

Potential strategies:

Work with the DMV to distribute transit information to people whose licenses are being revoked or suspended. Encourage medical professionals to counsel patients on their ability to drive safely.

“Walking to a bus stop is often a safety issue for seniors due to physical and visual problems”

Some seniors have safety concerns about walking to a bus stop. It is unclear how many seniors are affected and to what degree.

If an individual’s disability prevents him/her from walking to a bus stop, she or he may be eligible for ADA paratransit service. Cities maintain sidewalks in safe condition to the extent possible and are usually responsive to citizen concerns about unsafe conditions.

Potential strategies:

Expanded travel training for people with physical and visual problems.

Working with cities to reduce hazards, improve lighting and the path of travel.

“The Department of Motor Vehicles does not provide information about SamTrans and Redi-Wheels to auto drivers who lose their licenses due to a disability”

The study recommends that a strategy be developed to approach the DMV to discuss this possibility.

Potential strategies: Work with the DMV to distribute transit information to people whose licenses are being revoked or suspended.

“Many seniors and people with disabilities are unaware that the ADA allows for a conditional eligibility category for those who are able to use the Samtrans bus for some trips but not others”

It is unclear how many people have a disability that would qualify them for conditional Redi-Wheels eligibility. However, the various educational strategies recommended elsewhere in this report should also publicize the fact that individuals may qualify for ADA paratransit for some of their travel even though they are able to ride a regular bus for some trips.

“There remains a stigma associated with bus usage among seniors who can no longer drive”

The study hopes to address this issue through the SamTrans video promoting fixed-route service to seniors, through the NHTSA community education packet, and through continued marketing of SamTrans services.

Potential strategies:

SamTrans video

NHTSA community education packet

Language and Cultural Issues

“There is a perception that Redi-Wheels service is not user-friendly to Spanish-speaking customers”

Redi-Wheels has a Spanish-speaking staff member who can translate for customers upon request. More information on the nature of the problem is needed.

“Chinese speakers have difficulties reading the bus schedules”

Staff of the SamTrans Customer Service Center can use the AT&T Language Line to answer questions and provide transit information. SamTrans recently conducted an outreach effort in Chinese to the Asian Seniors group.

Potential strategies:

SamTrans will investigate the need for public information in alternative languages and implement as feasible.

Field visits to non-English language senior centers to educate participants about transit use.

Train volunteer travel planners (especially non-English speakers) who can assist their peers in their own language.

SamTrans can also work with staff at social service agencies serving non-English speaking staff.

“Bus schedules can be hard to read in small print”

“Some people need to use magnifying glasses to read bus schedules at stops that have them”

Bus schedules are designed to convey as much information as possible in a pocket-size brochure. Type size may limit the ability of visually impaired persons to obtain schedule information this way. Large-type schedules are available on request. This information should be included in the overall education strategy through agencies that work with people with visual impairments. Clients should also be encouraged to call toll-free transit information to obtain schedule information.

Potential strategies: Continue to promote the toll-free information number.

Promote availability of large-type bus schedules.

“Some bus drivers don’t speak adequate English”

Many bus operators do not speak English as their native language. Drivers are interviewed and evaluated before being hired. The ability to speak and understand spoken and written English is a job requirement. Notwithstanding these efforts to ensure English adequacy, customers can file complaints with SamTrans, which deals with the problems on a case-by-case basis.

“There is inadequate non-English education of consumers about how to use the bus, make transfers, travel across the county”

Staff of the SamTrans Customer Service Center can use the AT&T Language Line to answer questions and provide transit information. SamTrans recently conducted an outreach effort in Chinese to the Asian Seniors group.

Potential strategies:

SamTrans will investigate the need for public information in alternative languages and implement as feasible.

Field visits to non-English language senior centers to educate participants about transit use.

Train volunteer travel planners (especially non-English speakers) who can assist their peers in their own language.

SamTrans can also work with staff at social service agencies serving non-English speaking staff.

Geographic Isolation / Coastside Issues

This section addresses both those who live in geographically isolated areas such as the hills and Bayshore, and those who live on the rural Coastside of the county. There are a number of potential strategies that are used to serve low population density areas and could be applicable to the hills and coastal section of San Mateo County.

These potential strategies include:

- Shuttles
- Deviated fixed route
- Limited demand-response service
- Community Bus
- Expand the number of Accessible taxis
- Feeder Service to El Camino Real
- Assisting seniors to move closer to bus routes

These are all low productivity, high cost per unit options, and are therefore considered to be long-term strategies. Following is a detailed discussion of some of the issues that were raised in the outreach process and how they are being addressed currently.

“Limited Coastside transit service in non-commute hours and on weekends”

The population density on the Coastside makes it uneconomical to operate high frequency mass transportation. While this study was in progress, the consultant worked with SamTrans and the Coastside community on a separate project to develop options for improving the mobility of Coastside residents. A number of options were explored. SamTrans embarked on a marketing campaign to encourage residents to use the existing Route 15 service from Pescadero to Half Moon Bay. However, despite the distribution of free passes to every household in the area, there was no noticeable increase in ridership. The future of the route is unclear at the time of this report. However, the long-term strategy remains using the Pescadero service as a launching pad for ultimate Highway 1 service to Half Moon Bay.

In October 2002, SamTrans started “SamCoast” service. SamTrans provides two vehicles to a contractor, who runs service to serve those without autos and to support community-based programs, such as taking students to Canada College, Sunday service to Half Moon Bay, serving transportation needs of farm laborers, and group trips to English as a Second Language classes.

Potential strategies:

Community bus

Deviated fixed-route

Accessible taxis

South coast hybrid service

Farm laborer vanpool

“Travel from the Coast to the College Of San Mateo (CSM) requires inconvenient stopovers at Hillsdale”

SamTrans held a large community meeting on the Coastside in 1998 to discuss the possible cancellation of Route 90H, which linked the Coastside with CSM. The Coastside community indicated that the 90H should not travel to CSM, because Coastside residents in general did not go there. Ridership data confirmed this. SamTrans decided to reconfigure the 90H route to serve Caltrain (at Hillsdale) and to bypass CSM based on this public input. This route was named the 294. Ridership remains marginal on this route, but is somewhat improved over 90H ridership.

In addition to the community meeting described above, SamTrans routinely reviews customer comments and evaluates route performance to determine if changes should be made. Four measures are used to assess the efficiency of transit routes: passengers carried per bus revenue mile of operation; passengers carried per bus revenue hour of operation; farebox recovery ratio (the ratio of passengers fares to the cost of operating the route) and the net cost per passenger after deducting fare revenue. A weighted point system is used to prepare a composite score of the four measures. The lower the score, the more efficient the service. The score is compared with established standards that set community-based service at 300 points, intercity service at 250 points and premium (e.g., express) service at 200 points. In other words,

community-based services such as those to the coast are held to the lowest productivity standard. Any route that scores greater than the standard is singled out for evaluation.

The most recent review of route performance indicates that ridership on Route 294 is still marginal. However, more people are riding Route 294 than rode Route 90H. If the agency budgetary situation should improve, service to CSM should be reconsidered.

“Many trips from Half Moon Bay require transfers at Pacifica. This is particularly difficult for people with developmental disabilities. Coastside weather also makes transfers more difficult”

All but two of 11 trips to and from Half Moon Bay connect to local routes to Daly City BART or Colma BART. The operator continues to the new destination with a change of the headsign, and no transfer is required. A transfer is required, however, to and from most express buses to the two BART stations.

With regard to the bad weather, the transfer is made at the Linda Mar Park 'N Ride, which is an accessible stop with a large, accessible bus shelter. However, this does not address the particular needs of those with cognitive disabilities.

SamTrans made a commitment to the Coastside in 1999 to through-route as many schedules as possible from Half Moon Bay to Daly City BART or Colma BART so that customers would not have to transfer or wait for the connecting bus – or run the risk of missing a connection. Normal practice is to avoid long routes due to labor factors and the difficulty of maintaining a schedule.

SamTrans should continue the review of the market for through-routed trips and potential for interlining remaining schedules.

“Bayshore residents are poorly served by SamTrans, requiring multiple transfers for trips into the heart of the county and into San Francisco”

More information is needed to evaluate this issue.

Potential strategy: Explore access issues for Bayshore residents.

Redi-Wheels Service

Redi-Wheels exceeds the minimal requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in a number of areas. However, this act was not intended to meet the mobility needs of all people with disabilities, and therefore a number of gaps remain. For example, the ADA specifies service criteria for area (within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of a fixed route bus route), service hours (same hours and days of service as for fixed-route transit), fares, and other factors. Even when the criteria are met, individuals may still not be able to use the service to meet their mobility needs.

The Redi-Wheels service area far exceeds the required $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. (For example, residents in the hills may receive Redi-Wheels service, despite being more than $\frac{3}{4}$ mile

from a fixed route bus route.) For much of the service area, the service hours exceed those of the fixed route bus service. The Redi-Wheels fares are lower than the maximum allowed under ADA. The Redi-Wheels ridership has grown dramatically over the last year, while financial resources have not. As a result, SamTrans does not currently plan to increase service levels, apart from meeting ridership demand.

“Lack of an emergency / immediate need trip option”

Due to current capacity constraints, for most of the service day Redi-Wheels does not have capacity to offer a same-day ride without adversely impacting the service of other customers. In 2002 SamTrans developed plans for same-day taxi service but put them on hold due to budget limitations.

Community groups offer volunteer driver programs on a small scale that could possibly meet this need. For some individuals, better education about how accessible buses and Caltrain can be used could meet this need for same-day service.

Potential strategies:

List the community groups that provide transportation.

Expand knowledge of available resources.

Recruit more volunteer drivers.

Encourage city ordinances to require accessible taxis.

Review the Redi-Wheels capacity to determine if it is possible to offer same day paratransit rides on a “space available” basis.

Implement same-day subsidized taxi service for Redi-Wheels customers.

Future research on this subject could include a review by SamTrans of the Redi-Wheels capacity at different times of the day to determine if there is space available to offer same day rides without adversely affecting service. More information is required on the need for emergency trips. Examples include: how frequently customers have emergencies; how many customers simply want the security of knowing they have an option and how many would use it several times per week; the degree of flexibility on pick-up times versus immediate pick up; and the degree to which emergencies are medical emergencies. Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority’s (VTA’s) experience offering same-day rides at a premium fare is valuable, although VTA’s current same-day ride fare would be prohibitive for many people.

“Problems with on-time performance impact meeting doctors’ appointments”

Customers are asked to allow up to an hour of travel time for trips under 20 miles and an hour-and-a-half for trips over 20 miles. The purpose of this standard is to allow for traffic congestion, multiple pickups and drop-offs and other trip delays. Redi-Wheels has on-time performance of approximately 90%. While this is consistent with industry standards, it does mean that customers are sometimes late for appointments. Given the experience of other systems, it may be difficult to improve Redi-Wheels’ on-time performance.

Due to the time-sensitive nature of medical trips, and the fact that the ADA prohibits giving priority to medical trips to ensure they arrive on time, Redi-Wheels should continue the current practice of educating customers about incorporating the allowable windows into their schedule. Customers are reminded about the pick up window, ride time policy and other service policies with telephone hold messages on the Redi-Wheels reservation line.

Additional education and one-on-one work with individuals who have had difficulty getting to doctor's appointments on time may be helpful to clarify the customer's responsibility to allow sufficient time for travel and Redi-Wheels responsibility for arriving within the pick-up window. In order to enhance the effectiveness of this educational process, the cooperation of doctors' offices and family members must be solicited. Redi-Wheels should continue to train reservationists and schedulers to help customers set appropriate travel schedules, to adjust schedules and to inform customers when insufficient time has been allowed. In addition, other strategies outside of Redi-Wheels service should be considered, such as a revival of the recently discontinued HealthRide service.

Potential strategies:

Continue to remind customers to allow adequate travel time.

Continue to work with and educate doctor's offices.

Continue to train reservationists to inform customers if they are not allowing enough travel time.

Consider reinstating HealthRide service or other medical ride service.

"The ride can be too bumpy and long. Long rides cause bladder problems and can be painful."

Redi-Wheels does not offer vehicle preference to customers because of its adverse impact on operating flexibility and passenger productivity.

With regard to long trips, Redi-Wheels asks customers to allow up to an hour of travel time for trips under 20 miles and up to 90 minutes for trips over 20 miles. While these travel times are generally less than fixed-route travel times for comparable trips, they may cause discomfort for those with bladder problems.

Redi-Wheels recently purchased new vehicles to replace the oldest, roughest riding vehicles in the fleet. The new vehicles have an improved suspension system. SamTrans has plans to upgrade the suspension systems of older vehicles to provide a comparable ride when funding becomes available. The agency hopes that the concerns mentioned by riders will be addressed by these vehicle improvements. The availability of accessible taxis would also significantly help address these needs.

Potential strategy:

In future vehicle procurements, SamTrans Maintenance staff will continue to review the "state of the art" of paratransit vehicles with the PCC.

“Staff turnover creates problems with drivers not being familiar with securement and geographic locations”

Staff turnover, coupled with inadequate or hasty training has, in the past, contributed to a lack of driver proficiency. However, for the last two years under the current operating contract, staff turnover has declined and training has improved. Field supervision has also increased.

In response to reports of drivers improperly securing customers, SamTrans and its contractor mounted an intensive campaign to train drivers in wheelchair securement. Drivers receive initial training before starting service and regular refresher training. Field monitoring by SamTrans inspectors and contractor road supervisors is performed daily. Drivers also receive training on how to read a map and on how to find specific, frequent locations. Drivers are issued a Multiple Stop Directory, which includes maps and directions for frequent locations. Complaints about specific drivers are reviewed and addressed. As a result of these efforts, there were no complaints of improper securement and only one complaint about poor map reading skills from May 1, 2002 to September 12, 2002.

The existing training and retraining procedures appear to be effective. SamTrans and its contractor should continue monitoring drivers to determine when performance may indicate the need for additional training and should review the Multiple Stop Directory on an on-going basis, using the PCC as a review and advisory body.

Potential strategies:

SamTrans and its contractor should continue monitoring drivers.

SamTrans should revise the Multiple Stop Directory on an on-going basis, using the PCC as a review and advisory body.

“Inter-county service can be difficult. Drivers are not clear on the wait time policy”

Redi-Wheels has a transfer arrangement with other paratransit providers, similar to the transfer arrangement between SamTrans and other fixed-route bus services.

The Rider's Guide describes how to make an inter-county transfer. SamTrans has a Standard Operating Procedure for Redi-Wheels to follow on inter-county transfers with Santa Clara County. Drivers and dispatchers are trained in inter-county transfer policies. SamTrans met with Outreach, Santa Clara County's paratransit provider, to clarify transfer procedures. When SamTrans' new radio system is in place, Redi-Wheels dispatchers will have better information to provide to customers who call for an arrival time at the transfer location. VTA is also planning to upgrade its system to provide better information to Santa Clara County paratransit dispatchers. SamTrans staff currently works with Outreach, Muni, San Francisco Paratransit, and East Bay Paratransit staff to resolve specific inter-county complaints, as necessary.

However, despite all these efforts, stakeholders did indicate that transfers remain a problem, especially for frail seniors who do not have the physical or cognitive ability to manage transfers. It is hoped that the improved radio systems will result in better information about vehicle whereabouts that should enhance operator coordination of transfer trips. Funds have already been budgeted for the improved radio systems.

SamTrans should continue to monitor complaints to identify if there is a systemic problem and report to the appropriate advisory group.

“The location of pick-up points at large locations (e.g. Shopping malls) can be confusing”

SamTrans occasionally receives complaints from customers who find the limited drop-off and pickup locations at shopping malls confusing or inconvenient.

Redi-Wheels and its contractor are revising the “Multiple Stop Directory” which lists specific pick up points at large locations, such as hospitals and shopping malls. Drivers are instructed to pick up and drop off customers only at the specific point. If customers are uncertain of where they will be dropped off when they make reservations, the reservationists are given a copy of the Multiple Stop Directory and can explain the specific location to the customer. SamTrans staff can also work with consumers to clarify pick up locations. Comments can be added to the driver’s manifest to clarify the pick up and drop off location. SamTrans reviews and revises the Multiple Stop Directory at regular intervals.

This problem does not appear to be systemic at this time.

Potential strategy: SamTrans should review the Multiple Stop Directory annually and revise as necessary, using the PCC as a review and advisory body.

“Some Redi-Wheels customers are poorly informed about the service parameters, resulting in certain riders believing that they have to call seven days in advance to reserve a trip”

Some Redi-Wheels riders have difficulty understanding how Redi-Wheels operates, because it is unlike any transportation service they have ever used.

Newly certified riders are given a *Paratransit Riders’ Guide* to acquaint them with the Redi-Wheels operation, service parameters and policies. This *Guide* was prepared with input from the PCC, focus groups and other consumers. Telephone hold messages on the reservation lines give riders policy information. Newsletters prepared by the PCC and by SamTrans provide frequent policy reminders and updates. SamTrans plans to begin a program of calling newly certified riders to see how the service is working for them and to answer any questions they may have. The PCC is particularly interested in this issue.

This issue has been resolved to the extent possible given the lack of familiarity of new riders. The telephone surveys may suggest additional areas of research or additional ways to communicate with customers.

“Redi-Wheels and SamTrans fare levels present a hardship for low-income riders”

SamTrans regular fixed-route fares are \$1.25 per one-way ride and \$0.60 for seniors and those with disabilities that have appropriate ID.

The standard Redi-Wheels fare is \$2 per one-way ride. Low-income riders in the “lifeline” fare assistance program pay \$1. On average, SamTrans pays \$28 per Redi-Wheels ride.

SamTrans offers a “lifeline” fare assistance program to those with extremely low incomes who receive public assistance. In addition, some private organizations purchase Redi-Wheels tickets and provide them free to their clients. SamTrans has maintained the lifeline fare at \$1 despite raising the regular Redi-Wheels fare to \$2.

As an additional strategy for addressing this issue, SamTrans staff could attempt to collect information on the private organizations that provide free tickets to their clients. Maintaining the \$1 lifeline fare will ensure that the poorest customers do not pay more.

Potential Strategies:

All Day fare discounts on SamTrans, at least for those with ADA paratransit eligibility.

Explore use of federal Section 5310 funds to purchase bus tickets

Provide free transfers on SamTrans buses

Maintain “lifeline” fare assistance fares for low-income Redi-Wheels riders

Explore having social service agencies buy TransLink® tickets for their clients

“Pick up locations are poorly defined, and at the most frequently used locations, there are no dedicated phones pre-programmed in different languages that would be helpful to riders. Designated spots at inter-county transfer points are particularly needed.”

Pick up locations for frequent destinations are defined and listed in the Multiple Stop directory. Drivers are instructed to pick up and drop off customers only at the specific point. If customers are uncertain of where they will be dropped off when they make reservations, the reservationists are given a copy of the Multiple Stop Directory and can explain the specific location to the customer. SamTrans staff can also work with consumers to clarify pick up locations. Comments can be added to the driver’s manifest to clarify the pick up and drop off location. SamTrans reviews and revises the Multiple Stop Directory at regular intervals.

The inter-county paratransit pickup points were defined several years ago in cooperation with the PCC. Important factors in the location of transfer points included the availability of a telephone, accessible restroom, a bench and a shelter.

Printed material on the inter-county transfer process defines the transfer points. Customers making inter-county transfers are also given verbal explanations of the transfer points.

It appears that this issue has been addressed.

“There are no car seats available for disabled children”

SamTrans staff reports that this is the first request for a child's car seat that they have received. Currently, car seats are available through the Community Association for Rehabilitation (CAR) in Palo Alto. In the future, when SamTrans receives a request for a car seat, the person will be referred to CAR.

Potential strategy: SamTrans will continue to refer people to CAR.

“Some residents find the ADA application form too difficult to read and understand”

SamTrans uses the Bay Area regional application process, which was developed in concert with MTC, transit operators in the nine-county bay area, and the public. It is difficult to strike a balance between the applicant's desire for a short simple form and the transit agency's need for enough information to make an eligibility decision.

Upon request, Accessible Services staff members do assist people in filling out the application. Senior centers, Center for the Independence of the Disabled (CID), and other organizations also provide this assistance. MTC and regional transit operators are reviewing the ADA certification process and plan to consider a shorter application form for re-certification of applicants' whose disability permanently prevents them from using fixed-route service.

“The lack of flexibility allowed drivers and schedulers when riders do not know the exact address of their destination makes the system user-unfriendly”

Redi-Wheels riders are asked to provide their destination address when they reserve their trips. Since a different driver often picks up and drops off a customer, the specific address information needs to be recorded. Because Redi-Wheels is a shared ride service and uses a computerized scheduling system, each pickup needs an address. For some common destinations, such as hospitals, Caltrain stations, and shopping malls “abbreviations” exist and the customer can simply describe the location. Reservationists are trained in common destinations.

The Working Group believes that it is reasonable to expect customers to use the telephone book or call SamTrans Accessible Services for help in locating an address. In addition, Redi-Wheels staff should ensure that the list of common destinations is regularly updated to include those locations for which it is difficult to specify an address.

“There is no information booth on transportation at the East Palo Alto senior center which could assist potential riders”

This is the first time SamTrans received this request. Widespread information dissemination has generally made such a facility unnecessary. Agency staff currently distributes bus schedules, Redi-Wheels information and other information to the East Palo Alto Senior Center. SamTrans and Redi-Wheels staff have made a number of presentations to participants at the senior center.

Since this was suggested as a need during the outreach process, SamTrans staff can make a presentation to staff at East Palo Alto Senior Center. Staff can work with their clients to inform them about transportation options and to advocate for them. East Palo Alto will continue to be included as a targeted area for future outreach strategies.

Potential strategy: SamTrans can work with staff at social service agencies serving non-English speaking clients.

SamTrans Fixed-Route Service

“The drivers’ failure to call out stops presents a transportation barrier for visually impaired riders, particularly on lines with limited stops”

The ADA requires stops to be announced for the orientation of visually impaired riders. SamTrans requires operators to announce stops for all customers. Operators are trained and required to announce time points and any stop requested by a customer. SamTrans has a campaign of monitoring operators, counseling and re-training those who do not make announcements, and rewarding those that do.

SamTrans is currently installing a new radio system. When this system is completely installed, announcements will be made automatically. Continual monitoring of operators will be performed until the automated announcements are operational.

Potential strategy: SamTrans should continue to promote the toll-free information number and large type schedules.

“Security concerns present a psychological barrier to riders, particularly seniors”

While the overall crime rate is low in San Mateo County, the fear of crime presents a barrier for seniors who feel particularly vulnerable. While incidents may occur at bus stops and on board buses, SamTrans has had few reported incidents of crime.

The agency has security staff who rides the trains and buses. In the event of a problem on board the vehicle, the operator can use the radio to call for a service supervisor to assist. Many bus shelters are lit at night or are located near a streetlight. All 55 new buses SamTrans receives this year will be equipped with surveillance cameras. The Strategic Plan survey of transit perceptions and preferences among people with disabilities and seniors may inform this issue by quantifying the number of people who believe it is an obstacle to using transit.

Given the low crime rates on buses and at transit related facilities, education of potential riders is a key strategy to address this concern. In addition, efforts should be made to work with cities to install better lighting at specific bus stop locations frequented by seniors.

Potential strategies:

Work with cities to install better lighting at specific bus stops frequented by seniors.

“Some riders report that drivers are insensitive to their disability, particularly those with invisible disabilities”

SamTrans does receive complaints about drivers who are insensitive to people with hidden disabilities. This continues to be an issue despite the fact that all operators receive sensitivity training that includes an experiential component. The training specifically states that some people have hidden disabilities. Specific complaints about an operator are investigated, and operators are counseled and re-trained. Complaints are tracked and reviewed for patterns.

More information is needed to determine the nature and extent of the problem and whether it is more appropriate to deal with individual “problem” operators or to make changes to the sensitivity training program that operators receive by including mental health representatives.

Potential strategy: Mental health representatives participate in driver training.

“Uncovered bus stops are a deterrent to usage by seniors”

There are approximately 400 bus shelters in San Mateo County. SamTrans has specific usage standards for installing the shelters. SamTrans is currently exploring the possibility of joint bus shelters, where the sponsor would pay a portion of the installation and maintenance costs. Cities have been approached about allowing bus shelters with advertising, installed and maintained by national advertising firms. No program has yet been developed. Through development agreements, developers could be required to install and maintain bus shelters at locations that are likely to draw transit usage. In order to implement these changes in a targeted fashion, rider counts should be conducted at requested bus shelters, and potential sponsors secured for bus shelters.

At some bus stops there are also no benches to sit on, which is a particular concern for seniors and people with disabilities. One strategy that should be considered are the low-cost bus stop seats, known as Simme Seats, that are currently being used in a number of locations, including Portland and Eugene, Oregon, and in San Jose. Research on this topic has yielded the following information:

The Simme Seat was patented by a Lane County Transit (LCT) employee in Eugene, and has been in use in the county for about five years. The Simme Seat consists of two durable seats mounted on the sidewalk at a bus stop, with a stop pole mounted in

between. According to the manufacturers, the seat, which sells for approximately \$400, has the following advantages:

- Allows for wheelchair access at the stop (as it does not block sidewalk)
- Less space is needed for the size of the stop, and smaller sidewalk space required
- More comfortable than traditional "park" bench
- Easier to see if a passenger is waiting, less chance for a bus pass-by
- Attractive, leading to a more positive perception of the system

There are currently 350 Seats in use in Eugene, accounting for approximately 20% of all seats provided at bus stops. LCT believes strongly in the Seat's cost effectiveness and durability, while its space effectiveness makes ADA right of way compliance much easier to uphold. In Portland, the City prefers installing the Seat on curb extensions with 4 to 6-foot platforms where interference with other street furniture and pedestrian movements are minimized.

Potential strategies:

Explore alternatives for funding installation and maintenance of bus shelters.
Explore feasibility of using Simme Seats.

"Some drivers start moving before seniors are fully seated and do not enforce the rule when teenagers are sitting in disabled seating or are being unruly"

SamTrans operators are supposed to wait for passengers to be seated before moving the vehicle. Operators are supposed to ask non-disabled persons / non-seniors to move from the preferential seating, but are not able to force people to move. (Teenagers may also have hidden disabilities that require preferential seating. See the mental health section above.) It is difficult to determine the frequency with which this problem occurs.

Complaints should be reviewed to determine the frequency of this issue. If appropriate, the SamTrans training department should develop training procedures to ensure that operators have the knowledge and skill to apply the rules appropriately.

"Seniors get confused when the inbound and outbound routes operate on different streets"

Few SamTrans routes operate on different streets. When route changes are made, the agency's Public Information department takes steps to inform the public. Customers who are confused can call the toll-free information number to clarify specific bus routes.

Based on complaints, SamTrans should determine whether this is an on-going problem, a problem mostly for new riders, or a problem only when route changes first occur.

“Some buses cannot be used by passengers with wide wheelchairs”

“Some riders find the wheelchair positions on the buses are not easily accessible”

The ADA requires all vehicles purchased after January 25, 1992 to be accessible to people using a “common wheelchair” with specific dimensions. All SamTrans vehicles meet this standard. In addition, some people with mobility devices that exceed this standard (e.g. the wheelchair is wider than the ADA common wheelchair) are able to use some vehicles. It is unclear how many people are affected by this concern.

Input from the community was solicited when SamTrans last prepared specifications for new buses, including users of wheelchairs and scooters. Information is available on the length and width of wheelchair lifts on each type of District vehicle. In special cases, an individual can meet with a SamTrans travel trainer to practice boarding and disembarking from a vehicle while it is out of service.

SamTrans should continue to meet with customers who have problems using the bus because of the size of their wheelchair or scooter. If appropriate, the mobility device should be measured and the person assisted with practicing boarding and disembarking from a vehicle while it is out of service. In addition, wheelchair manufacturers and salespeople should be educated to inform their customers that if the mobility device exceeds the ADA common wheelchair dimensions they may have difficulty using public transit.

Potential strategy: Educate consumers, wheelchair manufacturers, dealers, and funding agencies about limitations on bus usage by large mobility devices.

“Graffiti can be a deterrent to bus usage”

Complaints about graffiti usually involve bus shelters, but rarely buses. SamTrans has an aggressive graffiti removal program for buses. Shelter maintenance is contracted, and agency staff conduct regular inspections to ensure that maintenance is being performed. This issue appears to have been addressed.

“There is insufficient travel training for seniors and people with disabilities who want to use SamTrans buses”

SamTrans has not received any complaints about the need for more travel training for fixed-route bus service.

Accessible Services provides a travel training program using internal staff and through contracts with the Peninsula Center for the Blind, RCH and Community Gatepath. Staff has focused training on Redi-Wheels applicants rather than seniors or persons with disabilities at large.

A continuum of education programs, including travel education and a peer-to-peer mentor program is one of the study’s major recommendations.

Potential strategies:

Field visits to senior centers to educate participants about transit use.

Train volunteer travel planners who can assist their peers.

SamTrans can also work with staff at social service agencies serving non-English speaking staff.

“Redi-Wheels and SamTrans fare levels present a hardship for low-income riders”

SamTrans regular fixed-route fares are \$1.25 per one-way ride and \$0.60 for seniors and those with disabilities who have appropriate ID. Redi-Wheels riders who are able to use fixed-routes for some trips may ride for \$0.25 by showing their Redi-Wheels ID card.

The standard Redi-Wheels fare is \$2 per one-way ride. Low-income riders in the “lifeline” fare assistance program pay \$1. On average, SamTrans pays \$28 per Redi-Wheels ride.

SamTrans offers a “lifeline” fare assistance program to those with extremely low incomes who receive public assistance. In addition, some private organizations purchase Redi-Wheels tickets and provide them free to their clients. SamTrans has maintained the lifeline fare at \$1 despite raising the regular Redi-Wheels fare to \$2.

As an additional strategy for addressing this issue, SamTrans staff could attempt to collect information on the private organizations that provide free tickets to their clients. Maintaining the \$1 lifeline fare will ensure that the poorest customers do not pay more.

Potential Strategies:

All Day fare discounts on SamTrans, at least for those with ADA paratransit eligibility.

Explore use of federal Section 5310 funds to purchase bus tickets

Provide free transfers on SamTrans buses

Maintain “lifeline” fare assistance fares for low-income Redi-Wheels riders

Explore having social service agencies buy TransLink® tickets for their clients

“The lack of bus schedules at bus stops is a deterrent to bus use”

Since many bus stops do not have schedules, prospective riders often do not find the information they need at bus stops to use the bus. While the toll-free information number is available at every bus stop to call for specific information, this is obviously a less convenient option than posted schedules. Since there are budget constraints preventing this option, there will need to be continued marketing with an emphasis on calling for customer information.

Potential strategy: Continue to promote toll-free information number

“Some bus drivers do not wait for slower moving seniors”

SamTrans’ current policy is to grant discretion to the operator whether to wait for an arriving passenger. Besides operating safely, staying on schedule is the operator’s key concern. Typically operators will dwell at a bus stop if there is time in the schedule to

board the passenger. When a driver has pulled away from the bus stop, it may not be safe to stop and allow someone to board.

No follow-up appears necessary on this issue.

"The increase in school student passengers since school bus service was terminated has made it more difficult for seniors to ride the bus"

SamTrans provides service to the general public, which includes both seniors and school-age children. Significant numbers of youth may be daunting to seniors, but SamTrans rarely receives complaints about youth acting improperly toward seniors.

Signs on the vehicles indicate that customers are to reserve the seating in the front of the vehicle for seniors and people with disabilities. Operators are trained to ask passengers who are not seniors or disabled to vacate a seat for a senior or disabled passenger.

This issue does not appear to require further follow-up.

"Bus signs do not provide adequate information about destinations on route"

Bus stop signs that list only one route give the termination point of the route. Bus head signs also give the termination point. Additional information is available from the toll-free information number and from the bus schedules and route maps.

SamTrans public information is aimed at providing customers with an array of information tools to use services. The information on bus stop signs and head signs is designed to simply identify the correct route for the customer. Published schedules and route maps and the toll-free telephone information number are designed to fill in the details.

No follow-up appears necessary on this item.

"Changes in bus stop locations or bus schedules present particular problems for those who have been travel trained"

When SamTrans made sweeping changes to its routes, Accessible Services contacted the contractors who provide travel training to determine whether clients needed to be re-trained. The contractors responded that most clients were travel trained on "mainline" routes serving El Camino Real, where the changes were small. The agency should continue to conduct outreach and consult with the affected community on route and schedule changes, and find better ways to communicate the changes, so that affected customers can be re-travel trained.

Potential strategy: SamTrans should continue to conduct outreaches and consult with affected communities on route and schedule changes.

Other Transportation Modes

Caltrain and BART

“Both taxis And Caltrain are considered costly”

Typical taxi charges are \$2.50 flag drop and \$2.50 per mile. A four-mile trip costs \$12.50.

One-way Caltrain fares range from \$1.50 for travel within one zone (5-7 miles) to \$7.25 for travel within nine zones. Seniors and people with disabilities pay approximately half fare with appropriate I.D. Discounts are available for frequent riders who use 10-ride passes or monthly passes.

Cities in San Mateo County set taxi fares through taxi ordinances, weighing the cost of operating a taxi against the ability of residents who depend on taxis to pay for travel. The Caltrain Joint Powers Board sets Caltrain fares after consideration of these and other factors.

In order to address this issue, outreach to seniors should include comparative costs of various transportation modes, including owning and operating an automobile.

Potential strategy: Continue to promote discounted fares for seniors and people with disabilities.

“The public announcement systems on Caltrain and BART are very difficult to understand”

It is unclear how often and to what extent this occurs. SamTrans states there have not been very many complaints about this issue. Facility complaints should be reviewed and valid complaints answered.

Potential strategy: Evaluate audibility of Caltrain and BART announcements.

“The guardrail on the Caltrain wheelchair platform obstructs motorized wheelchairs during boarding and alighting”

More information is needed to determine the type of lift and the nature and severity of the problem.

Caltrain has available wayside mobile lifts for use in the event an on-board lift malfunctions. Mobile lifts require the customer in a wheelchair to make a right-angle turn within the confines of the lift. Oversized wheelchairs can be difficult or impossible to maneuver in this situation. New Bombardier cars are not equipped with on-board lifts, and all boardings will be by mobile lift.

As this comment was received without attribution, it is not clear whether it reflects the use of an oversized wheelchair.

Potential strategies:

Review complaints about mobile lifts by motorized wheelchair users to determine if this concern shows up among Caltrain users and how the concern was addressed. Educate consumers, wheelchair manufacturers, dealers and funding agencies about public transportation limitations of wheelchairs that exceed the ADA size envelope.

“Schedules between SamTrans buses and the trains are not completely coordinated”

SamTrans’ Scheduling department coordinates the schedules to the maximum extent possible. Since it is not possible to have each bus meet every train in each direction, more information on the specific lack of coordination is needed. Schedules are reviewed on an on-going basis.

Taxis

“Taxis are hard to find, and few are ramp-equipped for use by people with disabilities”

Some cities require taxi permits to operate within the city, while others do not. Only a handful of taxis in San Mateo County are wheelchair accessible. The Daly City tax ordinance now requires accessible taxis, and more cities should be encouraged to adopt ordinances requiring permitted taxi companies to operate accessible taxis. Cities without taxi permitting procedures should be encouraged to adopt them.

Additional analysis should research the process used in other suburban counties to strengthen taxi ordinances to require the use of accessible vehicles.

Potential strategy: Encourage city ordinances to require accessible taxis.

“Taxi drivers are often rude and drive too fast”

The extent of this problem is unclear. In many cities, taxi companies are required to have permits to operate. Citizen complaints to the city do have an impact on the willingness of the city to renew the permit.

The variety of responses available to an individual include complaining to the taxi company, riding with another company and telling the offending company why, contacting the city department that handles taxi permits, or calling a city council member in cities that do not issue taxi permits.

Cities should be encouraged to review complaints received from riders to determine if there is a pattern regarding a company or specific drivers.

Shuttles

“Menlo Park shuttle hours are too short”

Since this issue was raised, SamTrans staff secured additional funds for this program. Menlo Park has two consultants working on plans to adjust the schedule to serve the public better.

“There is insufficient local shuttle service in downtown San Mateo”

Since this issue was raised, San Mateo received additional funding, which doubled the existing shuttle program. SamTrans staff is working with the City to offer more service.

More service may be provided if merited by the ridership, but this is not currently the case.

Potential strategy: Ensure city ordinances require accessible shuttles.

“Foster City Shuttle service is mainly geared towards shopping trips, rather than medical appointments”

Potential strategy: Ensure city ordinances require accessible shuttles.

People with Cognitive Disabilities / Mental Health Issues

SamTrans and Redi-Wheels operators receive sensitivity training that includes serving passengers with mental health issues. Administrative staff received sensitivity training under a Joint Powers Board consent decree through February 2002. Plans are being developed to provide continuing diversity and sensitivity training for administrative staff

Additional information on the specific needs and difficulties of this group is needed. It is unclear if the problems cited in the outreach activities are isolated events for specific customers and a specific SamTrans driver or if they are broad in nature. However, some of the more specific comments are addressed below.

“People with mental health issues experience anxiety due to overcrowding on the bus and confusion when reading bus schedules”

It is unclear how many people are affected. Results of the SamTrans Strategic Plan household survey may inform this issue.

SamTrans tracks ridership and capacity on routes in order to minimize overcrowding. However, due to the goal of also maximizing productivity and variable ridership, overcrowding will inevitably occur on some routes. Riders or their aides can call the toll-free information number for schedule information and trip planning. CID and other service agencies can assist people in reading bus schedules. The buses have signs stating that the seats in the front of the bus are reserved for seniors and people with disabilities – this issue is addressed later in this section.

Continue to promote 1-800 number.

“Mental health association clients have had problems using the SamTrans 1-800 number”

It is unclear what types of problems people have or how frequent they are. More information is needed to follow up on this input.

“The lack of bus schedules at bus stops is a disincentive for clients to use the bus”

Since many bus stops do not have schedules, prospective riders often do not find the information they need at bus stops to use the bus. While the toll-free information number is available at every bus stop to call for specific information, this is obviously a less convenient option than posted schedules. Since there are budget constraints preventing this option, there will need to be continued marketing with an emphasis on calling for customer information.

Potential strategy: Continue to promote toll-free information number

“People with cognitive disabilities have difficulties handling cash fares. This can pose a problem if the individuals wish to use the SamTrans bus or Redi-Wheels and they are not associated with a facility that has a pre-payment arrangement”

SamTrans sells pre-paid ticket books for Redi-Wheels, tokens and monthly passes for SamTrans buses, and monthly passes for Redi-Wheels. Tickets are available in person, by mail or over the phone with a credit card.

Potential strategy: Continue to promote non-cash fare media

“The SamTrans helpline menu system can be too complicated for people with mental health issues”

More information is needed about the nature of these problems.

“Additional service to Cordilleras Center”

The Cordilleras Center in Redwood City is located near Highway 280, and is served by only a few scheduled bus trips. The center was recently re-licensed as a Mental Health Rehabilitation Center and expanded from 15 to 49 beds. Since their focus has shifted to maximizing their clients' independence by getting them out in the community as much as possible prior to community placement, they are concerned about the limited bus service. In addition, Redwood Center, a drug/alcohol rehabilitation program located very close to Cordilleras, has about 50 clients who aren't allowed to stay out for 8 hours at a time. The current SamTrans schedule is approximately 8 hours between pick-up/drop-off.

In addition, visitors using public transportation have difficulty getting there especially nights, weekends and holidays, and employees using public transportation are unable to work nights or weekends.

At the time of this report, SamTrans was waiting for the Center to determine potential ridership for expanded service. When additional information is received, SamTrans will work with the center to determine appropriate service options and report to the project Steering Committee on the outcome of these service discussions.

Potential strategy: Explore transportation options to Cordilleras Center

Recreational Trips

“Transportation for social outings of children who use wheelchairs is very limited”

The School District, which is responsible for transporting children with disabilities, should be contacted to determine the extent of the problem and a strategy for addressing it.

“Access to recreational areas is virtually non-existent on public transportation”

SamTrans serves a number of parks and other recreational areas. Agency staff is currently preparing a list of accessible parks for paratransit users. If a person wishes to travel to a particular location not within the SamTrans or Redi-Wheels service area, taxis may be available. However, additional accessible taxis are needed to address this issue.

Potential strategy: Accessible taxi

“Recreation trips are limited on Redi-Wheels (e.g. the vehicles won’t transport camping equipment)”

There are no campgrounds within the Redi-Wheels service area. SamTrans staff is preparing a list of accessible recreational facilities within the Redi-Wheels service area.

“Customers cannot carry large items on public transit”

Redi-Wheels customers are limited to 4 standard grocery bags or one piece of luggage and one carry-on item if the items can be safely stored under the seat, next to the customer or on an empty seat. Caltrain and the SamTrans buses have similar rules. Creative means of expanding the amount of items that can be stored on vehicles should be explored further.

Potential strategy: Explore options for carrying large items.

Employment Trips

“Job seekers with disabilities have had to turn down jobs because they were not easily accessible to the El Camino transit corridor”

SamTrans currently helps fund shuttle service to a variety of job sites that are described elsewhere in this document. The agency also distributes bus schedules to the Department of Rehabilitation and other agencies that assist disabled job seekers. However, many jobs are located in areas that are not easily accessible through fixed-route service.

Carpools or vanpools for people with disabilities should be explored through RIDES for the Bay Area (and the Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance) or an employee transportation coordinator. The RIDES program matches individuals who have similar travel patterns, and could potentially help those in the target population who do not require wheelchair accessible vehicles and who prefer carpooling to public transportation. Stakeholder input in the outreach process suggested that there should be expanded awareness of the program in San Mateo County.

Further analysis with organizations such as the Mayors' Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, will assist in determining the need for additional service specifically addressing job seekers with disabilities.

Potential strategy: Explore carpools and vanpools for commuters with disabilities through RIDES.

“Employers do not understand the need to be flexible with employees with disabilities who rely on public transportation with its variable schedule”

The number of individuals who travel to work by Redi-Wheels is estimated to be between 25 and 50, and a much greater, but unknown number use SamTrans. The on-time windows allowed for paratransit result in a service that is not well suited to jobs that require strict punctuality.

A public education campaign may be necessary to educate employers about the need to accommodate workers with disabilities who rely on public transportation. However, this will need to carefully avoid raising the concerns of employers who would otherwise be willing to employ people with disabilities.

Other Issues

“In case of emergencies during the late evening or early morning hours, there are very few options for wheelchair users”

Outside of the route 391 corridor, there is no SamTrans, Redi-Wheels or Caltrain service during the late evening or early morning hours. Community groups offer volunteer driver programs on a small scale, but they are generally not available on an

emergency basis. There are a few accessible taxis. Emergency ambulance service is available, though costly.

Potential strategy: Encourage city ordinances to require accessible taxis.

“Parents have fears about their children with disabilities using public transportation”

Neither SamTrans nor Redi-Wheels service is equipped to act in loco parentis for a child passenger. The agency does contract with RCH and Community Gatepath to conduct travel training for persons with developmental disabilities. When offering the training to a minor, Accessible Services staff contacts the minor or his/her parent to discuss the travel training program and their concerns.

Potential Strategy: SamTrans should create a brochure specifically for parents of children with disabilities, explaining and promoting the travel training process.

“On some wide streets in the City of San Mateo, the pedestrian lights do not allow sufficient time for seniors to cross”

This issue was raised at a community forum. There is no way to contact the individual who made this request to determine the specific streets to which s/he refers, although it is believed to be a street near the San Mateo Central Park.

Further research will be needed to identify the problem streets and determine the acceptable crossing time.

“Wheelchair users sometimes face inoperable bus lifts and poorly cut curbs”

In 2001-02, there were 6 complaints of this type for SamTrans buses and 10 for contracted services, for a total of 16. (During this period, SamTrans buses carried approximately 17,958,000 passengers.) The agency's standard operating procedure instructs operators what to do when a lift fails in service. Drivers are required to cycle the wheelchair lifts on their buses at the start of their shift. If the lift does not operate correctly, the maintenance division is notified and the driver uses a different vehicle for this run. Maintenance staff will continue to maintain expertise in any available new, more reliable technology, and report their findings to the appropriate advisory committees.

With regard to curb cuts, residents should contact city staff and elected officials about specific needs.

“Difficulties in orientation at transit facilities”

Many people with visual impairments report having difficulties in finding fare vending machines at stations, knowing where bus stops are located, or knowing when to cross a street. A relatively recent technology has been developed by the Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute in San Francisco to address this orientation problem. Talking Signs® technology is an infrared wireless communications system that provides remote

directional human voice messages that make independent travel possible for vision and print-impaired individuals.

The system consists of short audio signals sent by invisible infrared light beams from permanently installed transmitters to a hand-held receiver that decodes the signal and delivers the voice message through its speaker or headset. Talking Signs may be used wherever landmark identification and wayfinding assistance are needed. To use a Talking Signs system, the user scans the environment with the hand-held receiver. As individual signals are encountered, the user hears the messages. For example, upon entering a lobby, one might detect "information desk" when pointing the receiver directly ahead, "public telephones" when pointing to the right and "stairs to the second floor" when pointing to the left.

Talking signs have been installed in a number of locations in California (San Francisco Civic Center and BART stations) and on hundreds of buses in other cities, and will soon be installed at transit stations in Portland, Seattle, and Las Vegas. The Millbrae Caltrain/BART station is planned to have Talking Signs transmitters installed in the future.

Other suitable locations in the county should be explored to determine where this technology can be used most effectively.

Another option is detectable directional tiles. The tiles are bright yellow and have distinctive markings that can be detected with a cane or under foot. Blind or low-vision individuals can use the tiles to navigate to key areas at transit stops and stations. These tiles will be installed in the new Bayshore and Lawrence Caltrain stations to direct customers to the ticket vending machines and the boarding assistance areas. Caltrain staff worked with the Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired on this project. Directional tiles are different from the detectable warning tiles used to mark the train platform edge. In addition, educational efforts should ensure that those with visual impairments are aware of the availability of orientation and mobility training through the Peninsula Center for the Blind.

Potential strategy: Evaluate audibility of Caltrain & Bart announcements

Residents of Skilled Nursing and Residential Care Facilities

The outreach process did not produce sufficiently detailed information about the needs of this population to provide specific strategies. However, some of the strategies mentioned elsewhere in this chapter could benefit Nursing Facility residents, including providing volunteer assistants on Redi-Wheels trips. Further research will be required to determine the number, location, destinations and level of accommodation needed for this population. Advocacy at the County and State levels may be appropriate.

Children with Disabilities

"Children with disabilities spend too much time traveling to special education programs"

According to the County Special Education Transportation Office, only two out of the 1,542 children who travel to these programs are scheduled to be on the bus for two hours. However, over 300 are on the bus for an hour or more. The situation was reportedly significantly worse until this past year when service improvements were implemented.

In order to assess the industry standard for these types of trips, the consultant contacted the Regional Center transportation director. In the contract for providing transportation to adults with cognitive disabilities, passengers cannot be on the bus for more than one and one-half hours, although this does sometimes occur. This standard is fairly consistent with that of the Office of Special Education. The reason given for allowing longer ride times than those allowed on the service to Adult Day Health programs is that the clients on these programs generally have medical conditions that make long rides particularly arduous.

While the service appears to comply with industry standards, this does not mean that the allowable lengthy rides are comfortable or convenient for the riders. However, there appears to be no follow-up action that can be taken on this issue at this time.

Other Potential Strategies

Following is an assessment of other potential strategies that have not yet been discussed in the previous sections.

Public Education: One of the key findings of the outreach process is the lack of awareness of transportation options that already exist in the community. For example the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) TravInfo program provides the kind of information that one key informant wished was available in the community.

SamTrans Public Information Department currently employs one full-time Community Outreach Specialist, whose job is to promote transit service availability throughout the community. The Outreach Specialist attends approximately 100 events annually, including presentations at conferences, community centers, schools, and community groups. The Department has not focused specifically on accessibility from the perspective of those in the Plan's target group, except for a recent series on school children in which Spanish translators participated, but welcomes recommendations for community centers that should be addressed.

As part of the current community outreach efforts, SamTrans operates a Community Relations bus with a VCR on-board. The agency is currently in the process of developing a videotape promoting fixed-route services to seniors.

Mentor Program for Potential SamTrans Riders: Seniors who are already familiar with SamTrans' services can provide valuable peer support to those who are in the process of losing their drivers' licenses or who would like to learn to use fixed-route service. The goal of a mentor program would be to attempt to reach these seniors early on in this process and help them make the transition to riding a bus.

Escort Program for Redi-Wheels users: The first inception of the paratransit escort program was through the Senior Companion Program of Senior Focus. The program provided volunteers to escort paratransit riders door to door, but faced challenges that resulted in the Program's organizer revisiting the strategy for continuing with the Program. Senior volunteers were unable to sustain the daily demands of escorting, so the new program will recruit young adults and high school students in addition to younger senior citizens. Churches and fraternal organizations will be approached for volunteers. Under the revised program, volunteers will receive a one-and-a-half day training based on the approach taken by MV Transportation, the contractor for the Redi-Wheels program. The program will not receive funding and will rely entirely on volunteer efforts.

Volunteer Driver Program: Volunteer Driver Programs have been successfully implemented in other locations in the country, particularly Portland, Oregon and Portland, Maine. In Santa Clara County, the Road Runner program provides volunteer driver trips to El Camino Hospital. The FISH program has been mentioned earlier in this document. However, it appears that recruitment of volunteer drivers has become increasingly difficult for a variety of reasons, and it is unclear whether this strategy can present a wide-ranging solution to transportation barriers in the county.

Building Support for Transit Funding Among Seniors: Measure A, a key source of funding for senior and disabled transportation services in the county, is up for reauthorization in 2008. Key stakeholders are already beginning to organize to ensure continuation of this critical funding source. It is imperative that senior representatives continue to be present at the table as these organizing efforts get underway, and that a concerted organizing drive among the senior population be conducted as the deadline approaches in order to ensure its reauthorization. Stakeholders should consider an increased focus on city-based services, as there are many in the senior community who would prefer to have services in their own cities rather than relying on countywide service.

Formalized Housing Facility Casual Carpool Program: Designated casual carpool areas may provide a valuable means of transporting people who do not wish to, are unable, or cannot afford to drive themselves.

In large housing facilities that serve primarily seniors, there are usually some seniors who drive, and others who rely on them for rides. Observers at other sites in the state have noticed that some people wait at particular locations in the hope that a resident will drive past and pick them up. There may be some value in formalizing this "hitch-hiking" activity into a "Casual Carpool" program. The facility staff could either match volunteer drivers and riders or establish a specific location where both driver and prospective rider could wait. Incentives for drivers will be considered in the evaluation of this alternative.

Implementation Coordination: Staff should be designated at SamTrans, Aging & Adult Services and other agencies to coordinate evaluation and implementation of the plan's recommendations. When the most promising strategies have been selected, an implementation timeline should be developed.

Training: While training has been mentioned in a number of other strategies, there are specific training strategies that do not appear in the discussion above. Sensitivity training for drivers should be expanded to others who have contact with the target population, including medical providers, transit managers, taxi operators, driver licensing personnel, and social service agency staff (who may not be specifically aware of special transportation needs). SamTrans 1-800 staff will continue to be trained to respond to callers with disabilities.

Chapter 6. Strategy Evaluation

As a means of determining which projects should be developed in greater detail, the Working Group established evaluation criteria to rank the fit of the proposed strategies with the identified transportation needs. The primary goal of the strategy evaluation was not to determine the strategies that were most feasible but the ones that best served the needs of the target population. Consequently, the ranking activity intentionally avoided emphasis of implementation issues such as the availability of secured funding sources into the evaluation criteria. The list below describes the four criteria and the objectives that fall within each of them.

Evaluation Criteria for Selection of Transportation Strategies

Primary Criteria

1. Value to Target Groups

- Number of residents benefiting from strategy
- Meet significant unmet need
- Communities with greatest need
- Sustainability
- Holistic solution (serves multiple trip purposes)

2. Efficient Use of Resources

- Coordination with other transportation services
- Link to social services
- Cost-effective
- Easy to use

3. Consistent with Values of Aging and Adult Services & SamTrans

- Culturally sensitive
- Community support
- Available county-wide
- Community-based

4. Effectiveness

- Reliability
- Frequency/ Span of service
- Safety
- Employment opportunity
- Likely to produce results

Secondary Criteria

- Do-able within reasonable time-frame (Immediate – one year or less, Short-Term – 1–3 years, Long-Term – 3 plus years)
- Project Sponsor
- Funding availability
- Replicability

Prioritization

The evaluation criteria listed above were used, in combination with their feasibility of implementation, to determine which strategies should be designated as Tier 1 or Tier 2 strategies. Indications of a strategy's feasibility include:

- Reasonable time frames for a strategy's planning and implementation
- Supervising sponsor who will guide a strategy's application for funding, implementation, and coordination between all involved agencies, organizations, and contractors
- Availability of funding not only for the strategy's initial capital expense but also for its ongoing operating expenses.

The program evaluation process described above resulted in the list of Tier 1 and Tier 2 strategies presented in the Executive Summary. The discussion below presents more detail on each of the strategies included in the table.

Potential Strategies to Increase Mobility

The following table presents potential strategies to address the transportation needs identified in the outreach process. These have been divided into short-term, first and second tiers. Short-term items are those that can be done in the new fiscal year. The first tier includes those that are considered to be either feasible in the short term (up to two years), or critical strategies, or both. The second tier presents those strategies that will require resources that are not currently available, or are less important, or require additional research. They are designated as long-term strategies (five years).

Recommendations:

Study Recommendations

The SPATS study makes recommendations in several areas for addressing transportation barriers that can lead to the premature institutionalization of seniors and people with disabilities. The goal of these strategies is to improve mobility, by creating options so that seniors and people with disabilities remain engaged in the community, live independently, age in place, and prepare for changes in their mobility.

Immediate Recommendations ("Tier 1") (FY 2003-04)

Education

1. Provide transit education and trip planning to seniors and staff at senior centers and social service agencies, with an emphasis on those serving non-English-speaking clients
2. Create a video on fixed-route bus usage that is targeted towards seniors
3. Continue to promote the SamTrans and CalTrain toll-free information number, discounts for seniors and people with disabilities, large print bus schedules, non-cash fare media (e.g. monthly pass), and the RIDES carpool program
4. Continue to conduct outreach and consult with the community on transit route and schedule changes, find better ways to communicate these changes, and re-travel train affected customers
5. Make sure those with visual impairments are aware of the availability of orientation and mobility training through the Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (PCBVI)
6. Continue the current Redi-Wheels practice of educating customers about incorporating the allowable windows into their schedules
7. Continue to train Redi-Wheels reservationists and schedulers to help customers set appropriate travel schedules, to adjust schedules and to inform customers when insufficient time has been allowed
8. Explore expanding AARP 55 Alive Program to include non-auto options
9. Invite mental health representatives to participate in driver training

Service Improvements

1. Explore transportation options to Cordilleras Center
2. Explore carpools and vanpools for commuters with disabilities through the Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance
3. SamTrans should maintain the lifeline fares at the \$1 level
4. SamTrans, its contractor and the Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC)'s Consumer Corps should continue monitoring driver performance
5. SamTrans and its contractor should review the Multiple Stop Directory on an on-going basis, using the PCC as a review and advisory body
6. SamTrans and Redi-Wheels staff should ensure that the list of common destinations is regularly updated to include those locations for which it is difficult to specify an address
7. Maintenance staff and PCC should continue to review "state-of-the-art" equipment before the next vehicle purchase

Assistance

1. Continue paratransit escort program for Redi-Wheels users
2. SamTrans should continue to meet with customers who have problems using the bus because of the size of their wheelchair or scooter. If appropriate, the mobility device should be measured and the person assisted with practicing boarding and disembarking from a vehicle while it is out of service

Additional Research

1. Develop a list of the community groups that provide transportation

2. Provide Redi-Wheels reservationists with a list of accessible recreation areas in San Mateo County
3. Evaluate audibility of Caltrain and BART announcements
4. SamTrans should review its capacity at different times of the day to determine if there is space available to offer same day rides without adversely affecting service
5. Research availability of free and loaner children's car seats
6. Evaluate access issues for Bayshore residents

Follow up with Advisory Committees

1. SamTrans should review complaints to determine if there are frequent complaints about drivers starting to move before seniors are fully seated and / or not asking people to move from preferential seating or if there is a pattern of confusion when in-bound and out-bound routes operate on different streets
2. SamTrans should continue to monitor complaints about inter-county paratransit trips to identify if there is a systemic problem and report to the appropriate advisory group

Other

1. Build legislative support for senior transportation funding
2. Continue senior representation on Measure A reauthorization committees
3. Local senior advocates should work through the state legislature to introduce legislative measures to mitigate senior mobility limitations
4. Cities should be encouraged to review complaints received from taxi riders to determine if there is a pattern regarding a taxi company or specific taxi drivers
5. Refer people with complaints about lack of curb cuts to the Department of Public Works in the appropriate city, the Aging & Adult Services brochure "Removing Barriers through Self-Advocacy", and the Commission on Disabilities' web site (www.smco-cod.org)

Short Term Recommendations (Tier 2 –FY 2004-2006)

Education

1. SamTrans should create a brochure specifically for parents of children with disabilities, explaining and promoting the travel training process
2. Investigate the need for transit information in alternative languages and implement where feasible
3. Work with the DMV to send transit information to people whose licenses are being suspended or revoked
4. Develop peer-to-peer mentor program (which would train seniors to use fixed-route transit before they lose their drivers' license)
5. Educate consumers, wheelchair manufacturers, dealers and funding agencies about limitations on bus usage by large wheelchairs and scooters
6. Work with the local chapter of the American Medical Association to educate doctors on the dangers of people driving when it is no longer safe for them to do so and to counsel patients on their ability to drive safely
7. Review National Highway and Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) and American Society on Aging (ASA) community education program kit

Service Improvements

1. Expand travel training
2. Explore feasibility of renewing HealthRide service or other medical rides options
3. Explore options for carrying large items on Redi-Wheels vehicles

Assistance

1. Recruit more volunteer drivers for volunteer driver programs
2. Advocate for casual carpools and formalized housing facility Share-A-Ride Program including consideration of incentives for drivers

Research

1. Work with cities to reduce hazards, improve lighting, and improve the path of travel to bus stops frequented by seniors
2. Research the process used in other suburban counties to strengthen taxi ordinances to require the use of accessible vehicles
3. Work with Ombudsman to determine special needs of residents of skilled nursing and residential care facilities

Long Term Recommendations (Tier 3 – FY 2006 - 2014)

Education

1. Develop a public education campaign to educate employers about the need to accommodate workers with disabilities who rely on public transportation.
2. SamTrans and partners should develop a continuum of education programs, including travel education and travel training
3. Provide sensitivity training to professionals besides SamTrans staff

Service Improvements

1. Explore options to serve geographically isolated area (such as the Coastsides or "the hills") such as shuttles, deviated fixed-route, limited demand-response service, community bus, hybrid service, farm laborer vanpool, more accessible taxis, feeder service to El Camino Real, or assisting seniors to move closer to bus routes
2. Explore hybrid transit services in low-density areas
3. Evaluate increased feeder service to El Camino Real
4. Evaluate feasibility of Simme bus stop seats
5. Evaluate free transfers on SamTrans buses
6. Evaluate all day fare discounts on fixed-route buses
7. Evaluate paratransit options for emergency or same-day trips
8. Get additional Redi-Wheels vehicles and staff
9. Expand number of accessible taxis in county
10. Explore alternatives for funding and maintenance of bus shelters

Assistance

Travel training at senior centers

Other

1. Acquire on-going funding sources
2. Evaluate use of detectable directional tiles at Caltrain stations
3. Explore locations in San Mateo County where “talking signs” can be installed
4. Install curb cuts
5. Encourage city ordinances to require accessible taxis
6. Encourage city ordinances to require accessible shuttles

Chapter 7. Funding and Implementation Steps

Depending on which of the potential strategies listed in Chapter 5 are selected for implementation, additional funding may be required for many activities. Acquiring an ongoing funding source is critical to successfully implementing many recommendations. This is a particular source of concern as the main transportation provider in the county, SamTrans, is currently facing major budgetary constraints and several other providers have ceased to exist.

Within this context of shrinking available revenues and impending financial shortfalls, few components of the Strategic Plan are likely to be implemented unless aggressive efforts are made to tap every available public and private funding source. Creative funding arrangements will need to be made using a combination of federal, state, regional, and local monies. Appendix D: Funding Sources, summarizes the key funding sources available at all these levels and identifies the major qualifications needed for a program to receive an award.

Implementation Steps

Since the inception of this study, there have been two encouraging developments that will hopefully facilitate the implementation of some of the strategies recommended in this Plan. They are 1) the initiation of the SamTrans Strategic Plan study which includes an extensive household survey with over-sampling of seniors, low-income persons, and a survey of people with disabilities, and 2) the application for a Caltrans transportation planning grant that can be used to build on the planning efforts of the Strategic Plan for Accessible Transportation Services (SPATS).

Following are the implementation steps that will need to take place in order to ensure that the SPATS recommendations do not remain simply discussion items in a lengthy document, but rather are used to achieve improved mobility for the County's underserved population:

- Continue the functioning of the SPATS working group.
- Determine which of the Tier 1 strategies are the most likely to be implemented.
- Develop a timeline for implementation of the initial strategies once the most promising strategies have been selected.
- Ensure that items requiring further research will be brought back to the appropriate committees to determine who will be responsible for follow-up activities.
- Ensure that those items that have an educational or publicity component will be included in the educational strategies that are developed.
- Ensure that SPATS recommendations are integrated into SamTrans' long-term planning efforts.

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- If SamTrans receives the Caltrans transportation planning grant, ensure that there is minimal duplication and maximum follow-up from the present study.
- Coordinate with other agencies and stakeholders to ensure that recommended changes are congruent with the needs expressed in the SPATS study.
- Ensure that appropriate staff at SamTrans, Aging & Adult Services and other agencies are designated to coordinate implementation of the plan's recommendations.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

AAA - Area Agency on Aging. The local entity that plans senior services and advocates for the elderly within their communities, administering provisions of the Older Americans Act (see OAA).

ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act: Passed by the Congress in 1990, this act mandates equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in the areas of employment, transportation, communications and public accommodations. Under this Act, most transportation providers are obliged to purchase lift-equipped vehicles for their fixed-route services and must assure system-wide accessibility of their demand-responsive services to persons with disabilities. Public transit providers also must supplement their fixed-route services with paratransit services for those persons unable to use fixed-route service because of their disability.

Alternative Modes or Alternative Transportation – Any way of getting from Point A to Point B other than driving alone in a car, van or truck. Alternative modes include carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling, walking, or riding transit.

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) – A regional transit district providing rail service within the Bay Area.

Caltrans – California Department of Transportation: The state agency that operates California's highway and intercity rail systems.

Carpool – Two to six people traveling together in the same vehicle for the majority of the trip.

Community Bus Routes – Transit routes that operate on fixed route/fixed schedule that join key trip generators and attractors within the local community. The routes provide frequent service within a small service area to locations such as apartment complexes, senior residences, transit hubs, retail concentrations, educational institutions and employment centers.

Commute – Travel between work and home.

Demand-Response Service - The type of transit service where individual passengers can request transportation from a specific location to another specific location at a certain time. Transit vehicles providing demand-response service do not follow a fixed route, but travel throughout the community transporting passengers according to their specific requests. Can also be called dial-a-ride. These services usually, but not always, require advance reservations.

Deviated Fixed Route - This type of transit is a hybrid of fixed-route and demand-response services. While a bus or van passes along fixed stops and keeps to a timetable, the bus or van can deviate its course between two stops to go to a specific

location for a pre-scheduled request. Often used to provide accessibility to persons with disabilities.

Door-to-Door Service - A form of paratransit service which includes passenger assistance between the vehicle and the door of his or her home or other destination. A higher level of service than curb-to-curb, yet not as specialized as door-through-door service (where the driver actually provides assistance within the origin or destination).

Fixed-route - Transit services where vehicles run on regular, pre-designated, pre-scheduled routes, with no deviation. Typically, fixed-route service is characterized by printed schedules or timetables, designated bus stops where passengers board and alight and the use of larger transit vehicles.

FTA - Federal Transit Administration (before 1991, Urban Mass Transportation Administration). A component of the U.S. Department of Transportation that regulates and helps fund public transportation. FTA provides financial assistance for capital and operating costs and also sponsors research, training, technical assistance and demonstration programs. FTA was created by the passage of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964.

Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) - A program which offers, in the event of an emergency, a free ride home to employees who have traveled to work using a mode other than driving alone. Programs can be provided by employers or public entities, similar to the City or County. Free rides can be provided by a taxi service, fleet vehicles, or rental cars.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) - MTC is the transportation planning, coordinating and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. MTC functions as the regional transportation planning agency and as the region's metropolitan planning organization (MPO).

Paratransit - Types of passenger transportation that are more flexible than conventional fixed-route transit but more structured than the use of private automobiles. Paratransit includes demand-response transportation services, subscription bus services, shared-ride taxis, car pooling and vanpooling, jitney services and so on. Most often refers to wheelchair-accessible, demand-response van service.

Service Route - Another hybrid between fixed-route and demand-response service. Service routes are established between targeted neighborhoods and service areas riders want to reach. Similar to deviated fixed routes, service routes are characterized by flexibility and deviation from fixed-route intervals. However, while deviated fixed routes require advanced reservations, service routes do not. A service route can include both regular, predetermined bus stops and/or allow riders to hail the vehicle and request a drop-off anywhere along the route.

Shuttles – Transit routes serving specific travelers and specific origins and destinations. Private organizations and employers often provide shuttles for their memberships or employees.

Transit – Bus, Light Rail, Heavy Rail, Ferry, Shuttles.

TransLink®: MTC's prototype for a universal ticket valid on all transit modes, from BART to buses to ferries. Translink® is currently being tested in a pilot project involving six Bay Area transit operators.

Transportation Demand – Number of Travelers; People needed to get from Point A to Point B.

Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) – A federal funding source for planning studies and capital expenditures for projects that improve town centers, public transit hubs, or key streets as a way of fostering the link between transportation alternatives and land use.

Travel Mode – The method by which a person travels: car (drive alone or carpool); walk; bike; transit (bus, light rail, ferry, heavy rail); vanpool.

Vanpool

A prearranged ridesharing service in which a number of people travel together on a regular basis in a van. Vanpools may be publicly operated, employer operated, individually owned or leased.

Appendix B: Existing Transportation Resources

In the summer of 2002, Bay Area transportation agencies are experiencing significant declines in resources due to the downturn in the economy. There are fewer people riding transit – and therefore less fare revenues – and the revenues from sales taxes have also dropped significantly. Since sales tax revenues constitute a significant proportion of SamTrans funding, the agency is considering various budget saving measures. It is within this context that the following discussion of transportation resources should be viewed. The information discussed below was updated from the San Mateo County Welfare-to-Work Plan of February 2000.

Six transportation agencies serve San Mateo County: the San Mateo County Transit District, Caltrain, BART, San Francisco MUNI, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) and AC Transit. . The San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) provides fixed route bus service throughout the County and connects to train, the San Francisco MUNI and VTA fixed route bus services. ADA eligible persons who cannot ride fixed-route transit are served by Redi-Wheels, SamTrans' ADA paratransit service. Caltrain operates trains along a north-south corridor from downtown San Francisco to Gilroy in Santa Clara County. The BART regional rapid transit system currently extends as far south as the City of Colma, with extensions to South San Francisco, Millbrae, and San Francisco Airport expected in 2003. Additionally, shuttle bus services provide connections between Caltrain and BART stations and major employers on the Peninsula and in Santa Clara County. AC Transit operates the Dumbarton Express, which provides commuter service between San Mateo County, Santa Clara County, and Alameda County.

San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans)

SamTrans provides fixed-route service on the Peninsula between Daly City and San Francisco to the north, Menlo Park and East Palo Alto to the south, the San Francisco Bay to the east, and the Pacific Ocean. SamTrans operates 65 routes with over 300 buses. Buses run as early as 5:30 AM and as late as 11:00 PM depending on the route; a few routes run 24 hours per day.

The base fare is \$1.25 for local routes; monthly passes for this fare cost \$40 or \$63 with a MUNI transfer sticker. Fare for trips coming out of San Francisco into San Mateo County is \$2.20 per trip, or \$60 for a monthly pass and \$77 for a pass with a MUNI sticker. Express routes between San Mateo County and Downtown San Francisco cost \$3.50 per trip, or \$108 for a monthly pass and \$119 for a pass with a MUNI sticker. Tokens are sold in packages of 10 for a 10% discount over cash fares. BART Plus tickets are accepted as a local fare credit on any SamTrans bus at any time. Seniors, people with disabilities, and youth pay a discounted fare. SamTrans does not have a transfer program.

The Bus Improvement Plan earmarks system resources to provide "superior frequency in core service area[s] instead of maximizing service coverage." Weekday service

headways range anywhere from 10 minutes to two hours depending on the route and time of day. Community routes tend to operate on the largest headways. Most BART connection routes operate on 20-30 peak headways and 60-minute headways. Caltrain connection routes offer service between 30 and 60 minutes from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. However, only a handful of these routes operate after 6:00 PM. Intercity routes run on 15 or 20-minute peak headways, 30-minute mid-day and hourly headways after 6:00 PM. Most express service only operates on peak, with 15 or 20-minute headways. The KX and the BX operate all day, on 40 minute and 15 minute frequencies respectively.

Most weekend SamTrans service operates on an hourly basis. The BX, some BART connections and intercity routes operate on 20 minute or 30 minute headways. Most transit service operates between 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM.

San Francisco MUNI

MUNI provides fixed-route bus service in San Francisco and San Mateo Counties on four of its routes.

- Route 9, San Bruno, travels from downtown San Francisco near Market & Steuart to Geneva & Scherwin in Brisbane within San Mateo County.
- Route 14 travels from San Jose and Mission in Daly City to Downtown San Francisco.
- Route 28 travels from Daly City BART to the Presidio along 19th Avenue.
- Route 54 travels from Daly City BART to Hunter's Point

Fare for travel on buses, trolleys, and street cars is \$1 which includes a free transfer valid for 90 minutes to 2 hours for 2 additional boardings. A monthly Fast Pass costs \$35 for unlimited rides on MUNI. Discounts are given to students, people with disabilities, and seniors.

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

The Valley Transportation Authority operates light-rail and bus service in Santa Clara County including one bus that travels into San Mateo County. Route 22 provides service from Menlo Park to Eastridge in Palo Alto. Adult fare for regular buses and light rail is \$1.40 each way; express buses are \$2.25 each way. Bus fare is paid on the vehicle, and light-rail tickets may be purchased from ticket vending machines at the stations. Adult monthly passes cost \$45 and provide unlimited rides on regular buses and light rail. A monthly pass good on express buses is \$72. Discounts are given to students, people with disabilities, and seniors.

Caltrain

Caltrain operates commuter rail service through San Mateo County from downtown San Francisco to the City of Gilroy in Santa Clara County seven days a week. Fares vary based on distance traveled. Caltrain stations are divided into 9 fare zones and fares are calculated by the number of zones through which a passenger travels. Regular adult fares range from \$1.50 to \$7.25 each way, with discounts provided for seniors, people with disabilities and children.

Discounts are available by purchasing multiple-ride tickets. A 10-ride ticket ranges from \$12.50 to \$62.50, a monthly ticket costs from \$39 to \$195, and a discount monthly pass for seniors, people with disabilities and children ranges from \$29.50 to \$132.75. Monthly and Discount Monthly pass holders can purchase a Peninsula Pass with their ticket for an additional \$33. A Peninsula Pass allows unlimited rides on all MUNI service, Valley Transportation Authority buses and light rail, local fare credit or partial transbay fare credit (with transbay upgrade) on the Dumbarton Express, and local fare credit on SamTrans.

BART

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) provides rail service in Contra Costa, Alameda, San Francisco and San Mateo counties. San Mateo County stations include Daly City and Colma. A major BART extension is underway to provide service to South San Francisco, Millbrae, and the San Francisco Airport. Four BART lines serve San Mateo workers and residents. New schedules, effective September 9, 2002 serve San Mateo County all day not just during peak hours.

- The Richmond line runs from Richmond through San Francisco to Daly City.
- The Fremont line runs from Fremont through San Francisco to Daly City
- The Pittsburg/Bay Point line runs from Pittsburg/Bay Point through San Francisco to Colma.
- The Dublin/Pleasanton line runs from Dublin/Pleasanton through San Francisco to Colma.

BART service is available on weekdays from about 4 AM to approximately midnight. On Saturday, service is available from approximately 6 AM to midnight. On Sunday, service is available from approximately 8 AM to midnight. On weekdays, BART trains run every 5 to 15 minutes during morning and afternoon commute periods, every 15 minutes during the midday and every 20 minutes in the evening. On weekends, trains run every 20 minutes all day.

Fares for BART vary based on distance traveled. Single-ride tickets may be purchased using the ticket vending machines at the stations, and high-value tickets may be purchased as well. High-value tickets may be purchased at Safeway, Albertson's and other retail outlets.

The BART Plus ticket is accepted on SamTrans, MUNI, and other systems. This ticket has a set amount of BART fare that can also be used as a flash pass for unlimited rides on buses during a designated 15-day period, from the first of the month to the 15th, and from the 16th through the end of the month.

Dumbarton Express

The Dumbarton Express provides weekday express bus service across the Dumbarton Bridge, connecting Union City (BART), Fremont, Newark, Menlo Park and Palo Alto. Dumbarton Express service is provided through a consortium of AC Transit, BART, Union City Transit and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and is operated by AC Transit. Regular fare is \$1.25; a transbay trip costs \$2. A monthly pass is available for \$70 for transbay rides; 20-ride ticket books are available for \$40.

Redi-Wheels

Redi-Wheels is an ADA paratransit service for people with disabilities who cannot independently ride fixed-route transit. Eligibility guidelines fall under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires public transit operators to provide paratransit service to persons with disabilities comparable to the level of fixed-route service provided. Redi-Wheels uses small buses, mini-vans and sedans to transport registered users. Trips must be prearranged. Redi-Wheels cannot provide transportation for children to school.

All of SamTrans' fixed route buses are accessible and many people with disabilities are able to use the regular fixed-route bus service. Redi-Wheels registrants can ride fixed- route service for 25 cents during off-peak hours.

Social Service Agency Transportation Providers

When the Welfare-to-Work report was produced in 2000, nineteen private and non-profit social service agencies provided transportation to their clients traveling to adult day health and disability programs. The table on the following page lists providers for San Mateo County.

In addition to the services listed on the following page, Friends in Service to Humanity (FISH) provides volunteer driver transportation to residents who live between Redwood City and Millbrae. This service is only available for medical trips. In 2001 the Health Plan of San Mateo's HealthRide program provided over 20,000 trips to Medi-Cal recipients who had no other transportation options. Due to severe budget cuts, the program was eliminated in February 2002. Need-A-Ride provides transportation to ambulatory seniors who reside between Palo Alto and San Mateo. In addition, the American Cancer Society provides transportation to and from treatment centers for ambulatory cancer patients.

Figure B-9 Social Service Agencies Providing Client Transportation

Twin Pines Senior/Community Center	Belmont	Public	S
Coastside Adult Day Health Center	Half Moon Bay	Private non-profit	S, D, O
Coastside Opportunity Center	El Granada	Private non-profit	A, O, D, P, S, W
California State Department of Rehabilitation	San Mateo	Public	A, O, D, P
Family Service Agency of San Mateo County	Burlingame	Private non-profit	W
Mental Health Association of San Mateo County	Redwood City	Private non-profit	D
Mills-Peninsula Behavioral Health Services	San Bruno	Private non-profit	G, D, W
Mills-Peninsula Senior Focus ADHC	Burlingame	Private non-profit	S
Menlo Park Senior Center	Menlo Park	Public	S
Pacifica Resource Center	Pacifica	Public	W
SamTrans - Redi-Wheels	San Carlos	Public	A
San Bruno Senior Center	San Bruno	Public	S
San Mateo Aging & Adult Services	San Bruno	Public	S
Senior Coastsiders	Half Moon Bay	Private non-profit	S
Aging & Adult Services	San Mateo	Public	A, O, G, D, P, S
West Bay Home Health and Community Services	Daly City	Private non-profit	A, O, G, D, P, S
City of South San Francisco Adult Day Care Center	South San Francisco	Public	S

Key for Eligible Users:

- A- ADA Eligible
- O - Other Disabled
- G - General Public
- D - Developmentally Disabled
- P- Physically Disabled
- S- Seniors
- W - Non-disabled clients

Source: Collected as part of the San Mateo County Welfare to Work report in February of 2000.

TAXIS

Approximately twenty-three taxi companies provide service within San Mateo County. Most provide 24-hour service. Depending on the taxi operator, the initial flag drop fee is \$2 or \$2.50 plus \$1.60 to \$2.20 per mile. Because of cost, taxis may be an option of last resort for low-income persons.

After contracting with taxi companies in the 1990's, SamTrans is once again experimenting with using taxis as part of the Redi-Wheels program. In June 2002 the agency started a pilot program with two taxi companies.

Shuttle Services

Shuttle services are currently provided in Foster City, East Palo Alto and Menlo Park. In addition, the Palo Alto Margarita Shuttle serves the needs of some San Mateo County residents in adjoining communities. The funding for these services flows through the City/County Association of Governments (CCAG). Following is a description of the shuttle services currently available in the county:

Foster City Shuttle

The Foster City Sunshine shuttle is a free shuttle service for City residents and employees, which operates on 30-minute headways along four routes from 9:30 AM to 3:15 PM Monday through Friday. The shuttle carries riders to a full range of community amenities including the Foster City Library, community centers, schools, parks, shopping centers, and regional transit stations.

Palo Alto Shuttle

The Palo Alto shuttle operates on 20-40 minute headways between 5:00 AM and 2:00 AM Monday through Friday, and between 6:30 AM and 2:00 AM weekends. The shuttle serves key destinations along Highway 101, including the Stanford Medical Center and the Stanford Shopping Center as well as transfers to Caltrain, SamTrans and Santa Clara Valley Transportation.

East Palo Alto Shuttle

The East Palo Alto shuttle operates along one fixed route with six stops serving Caltrain in Palo Alto, providing regional connections to San Francisco, San Jose, and their surrounding areas. The shuttle runs three morning trips between 6:00 AM and 8:45 AM, and four afternoon trips between 2:30 PM and 7:00 PM. The shuttle is free to riders and is funded jointly by SamTrans and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority. The shuttle recently recaptured funding when it brought its ridership back up to 500 weekly riders. Revised routing serving residences and human services will take effect by August 2002 with the hopes of increasing ridership. Promotions of the shuttle have been limited to a multilingual brochure, promotional tickets, and a press release earlier in the year.

Harbor Industrial Shuttle

The Harbor Industrial Shuttle, established in 1997, is a 2.5-mile fixed route loop that operates Monday through Friday in San Carlos, making six morning trips between 6:00 and 9:00 AM and eight afternoon trips between 3:00 and 7:30 PM. The shuttle, which is wheelchair accessible, serves residences, businesses, and human services and is free to all riders. The existing route, which carries 100 riders per week, will be modified to provide rail connections in Belmont. The shuttle is funded jointly by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District Transportation Fund for Clean Air, the City of San Carlos, Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board and the County of San Mateo-Human Services.

Appendix C: Related Studies

The San Mateo County Welfare-to-Work Transportation Plan (2001)

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), in conjunction with the San Mateo County Human Services Agency (HSA) and SamTrans, sponsored this plan in order to develop a set of transportation strategies and implementation procedures to enhance the mobility of low-income individuals. The document discusses the characteristics of HSA aid participants, future job growth, existing transportation options, possible strategies for meeting unmet transportation needs, and possible funding sources.

Client Profile

The Plan describes the participants in the CalWORKs program and other low-income residents of San Mateo County. As of January 1, 2000, a total of 26,669 people received some kind of public assistance through the County's Human Services Agency (HSA). Of these recipients, half are children, 60% are female, and 46% are Hispanic. This group does not include seniors aged 65 and up, who are eligible for Social Security and therefore exempt from this type of public assistance.

Employment and Job Growth

According to the Plan, San Mateo County has about 380,370 jobs. Most of these jobs fall into the service sector. The rate of job growth in San Mateo County is expected to be the second slowest among the region's nine counties. The county has a good jobs and housing balance overall, with the exception of East Palo Alto and the Coastsides areas which have substantially fewer jobs relative to the population size. Coastsides residents tend to commute to job centers, while many in East Palo Alto are unemployed. Approximately one in five residents in East Palo Alto receive HSA aid.

The Plan defines self-sufficiency in San Mateo County for a family of three at \$45,000 per year or roughly \$22.50 per hour. However, half of the anticipated job openings pay an entry wage of less than \$10.00 per hour. Also, many of these jobs have less job security and benefits than traditional jobs.

Existing Transportation Resources

The plan combines this inventory of transportation resources with the results of the stakeholder interviews, focus groups and a survey to provide a good picture of transportation gaps and barriers for CalWORKs and other low-income families in San Mateo County. The Plan identifies the following seven barriers:

- Transit is too costly
- Inability to afford an automobile and associated expenses
- Infrequent or inaccessible public transit in certain geographical areas

- Transit which doesn't run early or late enough, especially on weekends
- Lack of transportation options for children to and from school and day care
- Lack of knowledge or confusion about available transportation options
- Lack of affordable options for emergency transportation

Strategies

In order to address these needs, solutions were discussed with the various stakeholders in this project, yielding the following results:

- Mobility Manager and Improved Information
- Emergency Ride Home Program
- Reduced Transit Fare Options
- Community Transit Service
- Carpool and Vanpool Incentives
- 24-Hour Bus Service
- Children's Transportation Program
- Improved Transit Service to One-Stop Centers
- Auto Repair and Insurance Assistance Program

The Plan evaluated each of these strategies in terms of four criteria: Responsiveness to needs, use of existing resources, near term implementation and long-term sustainability.

Funding Sources

Lastly, the Plan identifies potential funding sources for each of these projects. These sources include LIFT (Low Income Flexible Transportation) Program, Job Access/Reverse Commute Funds (JARC), Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Welfare to Work grants from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) Performance Incentive Funds, Transportation Development Act (TDA) Funds, Measure A Transportation Sales Tax, Regional Gas Tax, the creation of new public funding sources through legislation, and private funding partnerships.

Mid-Peninsula Transportation Working Group

This group of representatives from the cities of Palo Alto, Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and Stanford, has been working with a consultant for the past year to draft an action plan that specifically addresses transportation issues along the south county border area. Because of an awareness of the SPATS project, the group has not necessarily focused on senior issues, but has expressed a desire to ensure coordination between the two projects. Some of the issues being addressed by the group will benefit the SPATS target group, such as late night and weekend service and service east of Highway 101. More specifically, the cities of Menlo Park and East Palo Alto are exploring the development of a joint venture that will lead to a streamlining of the existing Menlo Park mid-day shuttle to improve productivity and be more customer-oriented, in addition to expansion of service to seniors and others in East Palo Alto.

SamTrans Strategic Plan and Short Range Transit Plan

SamTrans is currently preparing a 20-year Strategic Plan and 10-year Short Range Transit Plan (S RTP). The Strategic Plan will represent the long-range vision of SamTrans and will strengthen the link between policies and actual service delivery. The S RTP will be a detailed supporting document for the Strategic Plan.

The foundation of the Strategic Plan will be a comprehensive market assessment to better understand who currently uses the District's services, who will be using the services in the future, and what services will best meet the needs of the users. The market analysis will focus on San Mateo County residents and those working within the County, with special emphasis on specific groups, including seniors, people with disabilities, non-resident employees, and residents of East Palo Alto. Based on the results of the market assessment, the Strategic Plan will define a 20-year action plan for the District. The plan will set out a series of strategic initiatives for the organization to pursue in coordination with the stakeholders over the next 20 years. Objectives, performance measures, and implementation strategies will be defined for each strategic initiative.

The S RTP will function as the 10-year (mid-term) implementation tool for the Strategic Plan. It will outline specific programs and 10-year capital and operating plans for those programs. It will also include detailed plans for service operation and capital acquisition (e.g. vehicles, facilities and other equipment).

The plans are set for completion in spring 2003.

Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Lifeline Transit Study

MTC's "Blueprint for the 21st Century" calls for developing a "Lifeline Transit Network" for low-income residents. The program would build on MTC's existing Low-Income Flexible Transportation Program, whose "LIFT" acronym captures the intent: to give a boost to newcomers to the job market, and particularly to people making the transition from welfare rolls to payrolls. Among the dozen projects receiving funds from the first round of LIFT grants were van services that transport children between school and child-care or after-school programs while their parents are at work, and extended "owl" bus services to enable late-night shift workers to travel to and from jobs.

The Lifeline Transit Network would replicate these efforts around the region. As a first step, MTC analyzed gaps in transit services -- both spatial gaps (areas where bus and rail service is lacking), and temporal gaps (times of day when service is inadequate). At the same time, MTC also conducted a Transit Affordability Study that explored the possibility of providing free or discounted transit passes to low-income travelers, and particularly to youths confronted with the challenge of getting to a school that is often many miles away.

The study established guidelines for service hours and frequencies of transit routes depending on whether they operated in county's urban core or suburban and rural areas. MTC planned to work with the transit agencies in each county to attempt to achieve these performance guidelines on each of their lifeline routes. However, the economic downturn that has occurred concurrently with the release of the report has presented significant challenges to achieving these goals, as many transit agencies have cut rather than expanded services.

San Mateo County Station Access Study

Korve Engineering is developing the San Mateo County Station Access Plan, which will look at all 14 Caltrain Stations in San Mateo County, as well as the two existing and three soon to be opened BART Stations. The plan will assess existing and future market demand, consider the range of capital and operating improvements which can be implemented, and recommend the most cost efficient methods for accommodating station access needs. This plan will ultimately determine the best mix of access strategies for each station, which could include (but not be limited to): automobile parking, bike storage facilities, fixed route bus service, shuttle bus service, car-sharing programs, access for individuals with disabilities, and station-area bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Peninsula Corridor Plan

SamTrans, SAMCEDA (San Mateo County Economic Development Association) and the County of San Mateo are working collaboratively to promote the use of transit, reduce traffic congestion, encourage wise land use policies, and promote affordable/workforce housing. These agencies also wish to encourage cities with jurisdiction over areas containing transit facilities to promote pedestrian-friendly places at and near the transit facilities. Towards that end SamTrans has contracted for the services of the Project for Public Spaces to work with interested cities to create both short- and long-term, cost-effective improvements that will promote transit use and transit-oriented development. The Peninsula Corridor Plan is based on a community-oriented planning process and will be guided by key community stakeholders through a series of public meetings and workshops. Development of area plans is underway with the cities of San Carlos, Redwood City, and South San Francisco.

Appendix D: Funding Sources

Federal Funding Sources

Older Americans Act (OAA)

The Older Americans Act was signed into law in 1965 amidst growing concern over seniors' access to health care and their general well-being. The Act established the federal Administration on Aging (AoA), and charged the agency with advocating on behalf of an estimated 46 million Americans 60 or older, and implementing a range of assistance programs aimed at seniors, especially those at risk of losing their independence.

Transportation is a major service under the Act, providing needed access to nutrition and other services offered by the AoA, as well as to medical and other essential services required by an aging population. No funding is specifically designated for transportation. However, funding can be used for transportation under several sections of the OAA, including Title III (Support and Access Services), Title VI (Grants to American Indian Tribes), and the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) program.

Title III Access Services: Transportation is the second largest service element (after congregate and home-delivered meals) funded under Title III of the Act. In FY 2000, nearly 44 million rides were provided to program participants, at an estimated cost of \$69 million, 9.6% of the agency's Title III budget of \$719 million. These OAA resources were matched by an additional \$108 million in state and local transit assistance funds.

Much of the transportation available under the Older Americans Act is specialized, i.e., designed to assure that seniors can get to meals, nutrition and other program services offered by AAAs, as well as to medical and other outside community services. Dependence on these services is highest in rural areas, where roughly one out of four program participants received transportation assistance, compared with an estimated one out of eight AAA clients in urban areas.

Medical Transportation

The two large federal medical programs, Medicaid and Medicare, are both significant providers of transportation. The transportation provisions under the two programs are quite different, but both have significant impacts on older adults. Although Medicaid and Medicare are separate health insurance programs, there is an overlap between them. Medicaid covers about 42 million low-income people, of whom 4.6 million are age 65 or older and therefore eligible for Medicare. Medicaid covers some 13% of the population in this age group. Medicare covers 34.4 million adults age 65 or older, nearly the entire senior population, plus some 6 million people with disabilities or with permanent kidney failure.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a jointly financed and run federal/state partnership to provide health care coverage for low-income and disabled individuals. It is administered by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), formerly the Health Care Finance Administration (HCFA), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services. The federal government covers a minimum of 50% of basic health care costs in each state program. To make the program affordable in poorer states, the federal share increases up to a theoretical maximum of 83% in states with the lowest per capital incomes (Social Security Act, Section 1905(b)).

Types of Transportation Provided under Medicaid

Medical Transportation: Transportation to medical services was not included in the original legislation creating the federal Medical Assistance Program (more commonly known as "Medicaid") in 1965. The Medicaid transportation program that exists today is the result of an evolutionary process, reflecting a succession of federal court decisions and administrative rulings mandating that states guarantee recipients access to covered medical services. Today, federal Medicaid regulations require all states to "ensure necessary transportation for recipients to and from providers" and pay the cost of that transportation. These regulations establish so-called "access-rights." Transportation is provided for emergencies and for routine or non-emergency treatment.

Non-medical Transportation: Medicaid permits states to offer a range of non-medical services designed to assist older and disabled individuals receive care in their homes and communities, rather than in nursing facilities and other institutions. Known as the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) program, this initiative grew out of efforts to deal with skyrocketing long term care costs in the Medicaid program. Non-medical transportation is one of the services authorized under the HCBS program since individual mobility is recognized as an essential element in maintaining one's independence. Travel to groceries, pharmacies and other destinations can be prescribed and paid for under HCBS as it cannot be under traditional Medicaid provisions.

U.S. Department of Transportation

Section 5307

The section of the Federal Transit Act that authorizes grants to public transit systems in all urban areas. Funds authorized through Section 5307 are awarded to states to provide capital and operating assistance to transit systems in urban areas with populations between 50,000 and 200,000. Transit systems in urban areas with populations greater than 200,000 receive their funds directly from FTA.

Section 5309

The section of the Federal Transit Act that authorizes discretionary grants to public transit agencies for capital projects such as buses, bus facilities and rail projects.

Section 5310

The section of the Federal Transit Act that authorizes capital assistance to states for transportation programs that serve the elderly and people with disabilities. States distribute Section 5310 funds to local operators in both rural and urban settings, who are either nonprofit organizations or the lead agencies in coordinated transportation programs.

Section 5311

The section of the Federal Transit Act that authorizes capital and operating assistance grants to public transit systems in areas with populations of less than 50,000.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The TANF program is the primary federal funding source to implement welfare to work transportation programs, and would therefore be appropriate for strategies included in this Plan that specifically address low-income workers such as the farm laborers on the south coast. The TANF program provides block grants to states, which are then distributed to individual counties. TANF funds may be used for a range of transportation services as long as the expenditure accomplishes a goal of the TANF program such as promoting job preparation and job retention. The types of transportation services that may be funded with TANF dollars include, but are not limited to:

- Payment of start up or operating costs for new or expanded transportation services benefiting eligible families provided that such costs are necessary, reasonable, and are allocated to cover only those costs associated with TANF-eligible individuals.
 - The purchase of vans, shuttles, minibuses for the provision of transportation services for TANF-eligible individuals.
 - A contract for shuttles, buses, carpools, or other transportation services for TANF-eligible individuals.
 - Payment of costs incurred by state, local, or tribal TANF agency staff involved singularly or with other agencies in the planning of transportation services for TANF-eligible individuals. These costs would be considered TANF administrative costs.

The use of this funding will need to be closely coordinated with the county's Welfare-to-Work Transportation Plan.

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

JARC money is available from the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Association and is used to promote transportation services in urban, suburban and rural areas to assist welfare recipients and low-income individuals in accessing employment opportunities. The Fiscal Year 2002 DOT Appropriations Act

provides \$125 million for the JARC program, the guaranteed funding level under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

The goal of the JARC program is to improve mobility and economic opportunities for welfare recipients and other low-income people through the provision of new or expanded transportation service. The program is divided between Job Access Projects and Reverse Commute Projects. Described below is the way that these two types of projects are defined according to the JARC guidelines published in the April 8, 2002 Federal Register.

- A Job Access project is one that provides new or expanded transportation service designed to fill gaps that exist for welfare recipients and other low-income individuals to and from jobs and other employment-related services.
- A Reverse Commute project facilitates the provision of new or expanded public mass transportation services for the general public from urban, suburban, and rural areas to suburban work sites.

The JARC program funds both capital and operating expenses. Localities may use the funds for the following types of projects:

- Late-night and weekend service
- Guaranteed ride home Service
- Shuttle service
- Expanding fixed-route mass transit routes
- Demand-responsive van service
- Ridesharing and carpooling activities
- Bicycling
- Local car loan programs that assist individuals in purchasing and maintaining vehicles for shared-rides.

JARC program funds may also be used for marketing efforts. No more than 10% of a program's administrative costs may be funded with JARC money. Completely ineligible costs include those for planning or coordination activities, individual transit passes, or the construction of childcare centers and other employment support facilities at transit hubs.

For fiscal year 2002, \$109 million of the \$125 million in total JARC monies is earmarked for specific states, localities, or agencies including \$2 million for AC Transit and \$3 million for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Lift Program. The leading agency for a proposed program may apply for the remaining discretionary funds. The FTA expects to make grants of no more than \$500,000 for an urbanized area like San Mateo County. There is a 50% matching requirement for JARC funds, but the matching funds can include any other source except the federal Department of Transportation.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

The CDBG program is a federal program of grants to local governments, administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 established CDBG as a replacement for a variety of federal urban renewal, housing, and neighborhood development programs. CDBG was the first of the federal block grant programs. Both government agencies and nonprofit organizations are eligible for funding. Although a large portion of San Mateo County's CDBG funding is designated for affordable housing development, a portion of the county's allocation can be used for public services including transportation for special needs populations.

State Funding Sources

Transportation Development Act (TDA)

TDA monies are generated from the state sales tax and are earmarked for transportation purposes. The first priority for TDA funds is to support unmet transit needs. In compliance with state legislation (SB 325, enacted in 1971), each county in California has a local transportation fund (LTF) that is funded with 1/4 of one percent of the base statewide sales tax. Revenue is collected by the state and redistributed back to San Mateo County through the MTC.

Approximately 94% of TDA monies for San Mateo County are used by the San Mateo County Transit District for fixed-route and paratransit service, and the remaining 6% for Coastside service. Given the fact that TDA funds play such a critical role in financing SamTrans' existing transit services and that SamTrans is facing deficits in the current year budget and in next year's preliminary budget, it is highly unlikely that TDA funds can be used to fund local service improvements on SamTrans. In the long term, the District may negotiate a modification in the distribution of SamTrans funds. However, it is unrealistic at this point to assume availability of TDA money to fund SPATS.

State Transit Assistance (STA) Program

The STA fund was created by the California State Legislature as part of the Public Transportation Account (PTA). Funds are appropriated to this fund annually by the legislature. Revenues to the PTA are derived mainly from the sales tax on the price of diesel fuel and the sales tax on the 9-cent gas tax created by Proposition 111 of 1990. The funds are dedicated only to public transit operation and capital expenditures.

MTC has allocated \$3 million in STA funds to supplement funding from its LIFT program. However, up to \$2 million of the STA funds has been earmarked to support AC Transit's free/reduced student bus pass pilot program.

Local And Regional Funding Sources

County Measure A Funds

SamTrans provides staff support to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA), which was formed to administer funds collected through a half-cent sales tax for transportation projects approved by voters in June 1988. This tax, known as Measure A, was earmarked for upgrades and extensions of Caltrain, improvements to local streets and highways, and the creation of a self-sustaining \$25 million paratransit fund to improve transportation for people with mobility impairments. This fund provides a significant contribution to the Redi-Wheels operating budget.

Low Income Flexible Transportation Program (LIFT)

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission in 1999 created the LIFT program. The purpose of the LIFT program is to fund transportation projects identified through the countywide and regional welfare to work transportation plans that have been developed by transportation providers, social service agencies and other stakeholders over the past four years. Through these planning efforts, projects have been identified that, if implemented, would reduce or eliminate transportation as a barrier to low-income persons who are seeking employment.

The funding sources of the LIFT grants are JARC and FTA funds. Over the next three years, MTC has available \$6 million to provide grants up to \$600,000 per project over the three-year funding period. The LIFT grants must be matched dollar-for-dollar with additional non-DOT funds. Projects must be nominated by a county welfare to work transportation advisory committee and be consistent with the respective county's welfare to work transportation plan. Similar to TANF funding, any funds from this source should be closely coordinated with the County's Welfare-to-Work Transportation Plan.

Transportation for Livable Communities

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission created the Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) fund to strengthen the links between transportation investments and community needs. Initially, the program provided planning grants, technical assistance and capital grants to help cities and nonprofit agencies develop transportation-related projects fitting the TLC profile. In November of 2000, the program was expanded to include a Housing Incentive Program.

Community Transportation Plans

MTC's Community Transportation Plans are intended to provide a more fine grain analysis of the transportation needs of low-income households than the information gathered in the Lifeline Transit Network Study. MTC has awarded grants to develop plans for Richmond and east San Jose. Although this type of grant cannot be used to implement the programs from the SPATS, they could be used to fund additional

planning in San Mateo County neighborhoods with high numbers of low-income residents.

Peninsula Community Foundation (PCF)

The Peninsula Community Foundation (PCF) is a community foundation established in 1964 that serves communities in San Francisco's Silicon Valley and the Southern Peninsula. PCF awards nearly \$65 million to 1,500 organizations annually. The Foundation offers a host of grants geared towards general community development in areas such as education, health and the environment.

PCF does not directly provide transportation grants, however, a variety of funds and the issues they address are flexible enough to justify pursuit in the area of transportation. Two PCF funds make the Foundation a potential funding source for transportation in San Mateo: the PCF Health Fund and the Peninsula Faiths Partnership 2002.

The PCF Health Fund works to facilitate the delivery of health care to underserved and uninsured populations throughout San Mateo County and in northern Santa Clara County. Accessibility and affordability are the primary impediments to many seniors in San Mateo receiving health care, and a transportation element to any proposal for funding in this category would be logical.

The Peninsula Faiths Partnership 2002 works through congregations to address a broad range of issues that falls under social, economic and environmental conditions. In the past, small grants have been made to support transportation programs for agricultural workers, and to subsidize transportation that supports the distribution of food, clothing and personal care products, both for minority and low-income agricultural workers. The strongest argument for funding may be made in the area of environmental conditions, in which transportation must be considered significantly.

Caltrans Environmental Justice Grants

The California Department of Transportation, Division of Transportation Planning (DOTP) provides grants (up to \$300,000 per grant) to promote Environmental Justice: Context-Sensitive Planning for Communities. Grants are awarded to a variety of entities, including Regional Transportation Planning Agencies, cities, counties, Community-Based Organizations, transit agencies, and private non-profit organizations. Proposed projects should have a clear focus on transportation and community development issues that address the interests of low-income, minority, Native American or any other under-represented communities. Examples of eligible projects relevant to the Welfare-to-Work study include:

- Identifying and addressing transportation needs for the community;
- Identifying and involving under-represented groups in planning and project development;
- Improving demographic and socioeconomic analysis to identify emerging communities;

- Feasibility studies for transportation improvements;
- Improving cooperation in community development between public agencies and communities
- Assessing impacts of transportation plans and projects on the community;
- Bilingual services for hearings, workshops and promotion of transportation services;

SamTrans is currently in the process of developing a grant application for the next Environmental Justice funding cycle.

Other Potential Sources

Other potential funding sources that have been suggested as part of this strategic planning process include Medi-Cal Care Providers, Insurance companies, neighborhood or community groups, local businesses (bringing in customers), and adding taxes to residents' DMV registration or license renewal fees.

Appendix E: San Mateo County Seniors And People With Disabilities Abbreviated Intercept Survey, 2001

Hello, my name is _____ and I am conducting a survey of the transportation needs of (seniors/ people with disabilities) for San Mateo County Aging and Adult Services and SamTrans. We are surveying San Mateo County (Seniors/ people with disabilities) about the transportation services they use and the places they go to. The survey will be used to plan for future accessible transportation in the County. The survey will take less than 10 minutes. Would you be willing to take part in this survey?

SCREENING QUESTION:

Do you by any chance have a mobility problem that makes it hard for you to get around?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If YES, proceed with survey. IF NO, ask:

Are you 60 years of age or older? ☐ Yes

☐ No

IF YES, proceed with survey

1. Do you generally have a car available for most trips, either by driving yourself or by having friends and family members drive you in their car? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Could you please tell me your most frequent travel destinations, and how you usually get there?
3. Other than driving alone, or getting a ride with others, what transportation services are you aware of in your area?

☐ SamTrans (Big Bus)

☐ Redi-Wheels

☐ Caltrain

☐ Other door to door (or curb to curb) service Name: _____

☐ Other

Name: _____

4. Which ones do you usually use?

First choice: _____ Second Choice _____

5. Could you tell me why you don't use the other types of transportation?
6. Have you ever driven a car in the past?

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7. What one thing would make the bus more convenient or easier for you?
8. Do you often either have to change plans or appointments or find that you are unable to make plans or appointments due to lack of transportation?

Now I would like to ask you some questions about yourself. The information we get in this section will help us to know more about the seniors and people with disabilities we are trying to serve. Please be assured that all answers are completely confidential.

9. Which of the following best describes your age?
- ☐ under 18 ☐ 19-59 ☐ 60-80 ☐ Over 80
10. Indicate if: ☐ Male ☐ Female
11. Which group best describes you?
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White/Caucasian | <input type="checkbox"/> Latino/Hispanic | <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese- American | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese | <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
12. Do you have any other comments regarding transportation in San Mateo County?

Thank you for helping with this study. We plan to use the study results to try and improve transportation for people with disabilities and seniors in San Mateo County.

Appendix F: Transportation Options For South Coast Of San Mateo County

Service Option	Description	Advantages/Disadvantages	Follow-Up Action Required
Modified Status Quo	Maintain current system, with slight changes to schedule and potentially route configuration based on survey results. Undertake serious marketing of "new" service.	Probably minimal expansion in ridership. Low or no costs associated with changes	Planning group discuss merits of proposal.
Commuter Oriented/ Farm Worker Vanpool	Local entity coordinates vanpool program. SamTrans provides vehicles to two or three Pescadero residents who will be responsible for driving and maintenance (not the costs). Subscription service will form the basis of ridership, but open to general public and individual trips.	Service customized to the needs of the subscription riders, guaranteed number of riders, probably lower cost than current service. Requires responsible drivers who don't already have cars, may be hard to find. Vehicles would be out of service for the time they're sitting in HMB. Inflexible for non-subscription riders	Richard will call Central Valley contacts to find out their experience working with vanpools and similar population. Discuss with RIDES feasibility of rural vanpools
Community Operated Transportation Service	Local entity coordinates transportation program. SamTrans provides one or two Vans, community develops the routes/shuttles to meet local needs. Community provides infrastructure, drivers, etc	Concept unclear at this point	Needs further discussion in planning group
Route Deviation	Maintain existing service hours, but allow for route deviations within ¼ mile of route.	Captures greater number of potential riders. Relatively easy to implement. Will negatively impact ride times	Discussion of merits with group.
Hybrid (Fixed-Route and Route Deviation)	During peak hours, current service remains fixed-route, off-peak deviations allowed, priority to disabled and those within ¼ mile of regular route, but greater service area on space available basis	Allows for greater number of service hours than current two mode service. Could potentially be more costly than current service, but more ridership potential. Limited peak hour ADA requests would impact schedule adherence	Discussion with Graydon about the practicality of combining the current fixed-route and ADA services. Identify when current ADA rides occur.
Volunteer Driver Program	Local entity is sponsored by SamTrans to coordinate a volunteer driver program, with service available on same day/next day basis. Volunteers receive small stipend	Provides personalized service, generally low costs. Recruiting sufficient pool of drivers can be challenging.	Planning group should discuss feasibility of volunteer recruitment