

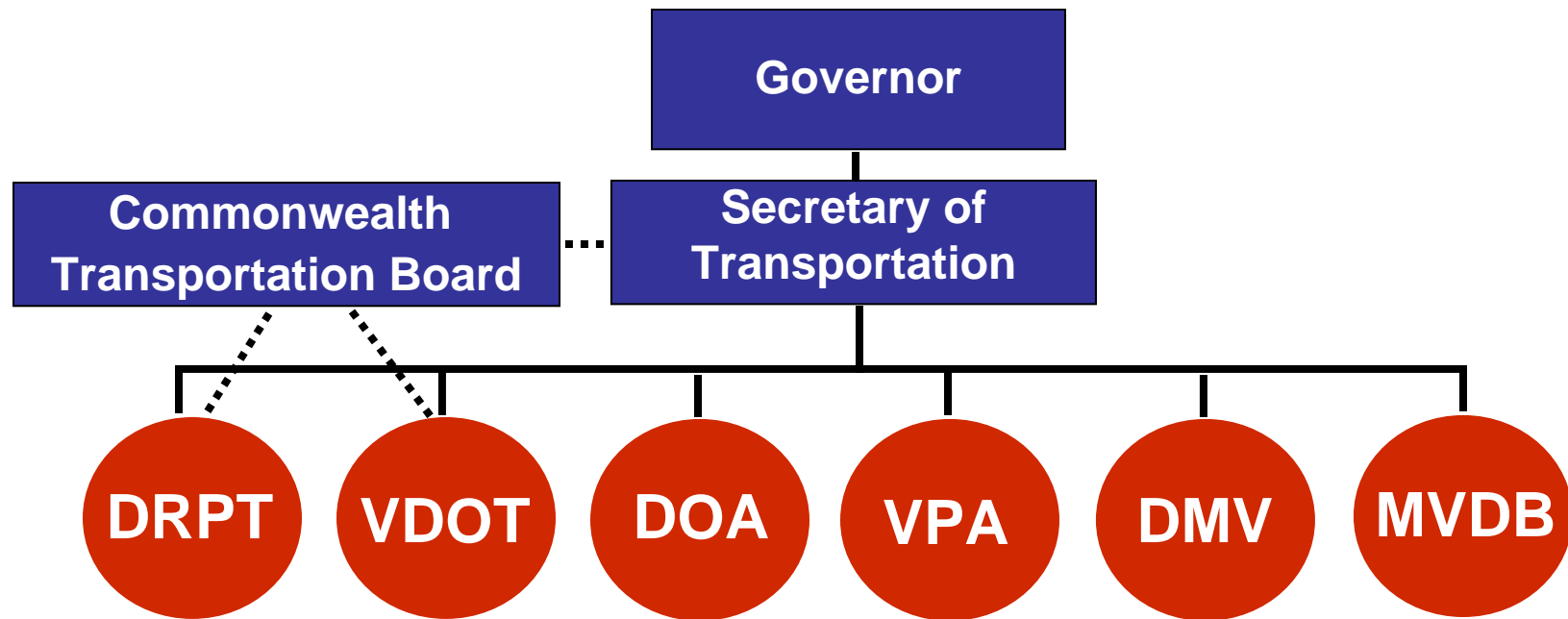
Update on FTA New Initiatives for Transportation Services for the Disabled

Virginia Department of Rail and Public
Transportation (DRPT)

A Presentation to the Virginia Disability Commission
November 13, 2006

www.drpt.virginia.gov

Who is DRPT?



- ❑ 40 employees, three offices
- ❑ Work with over 100 public and private partners to provide project management services, planning support, technical expertise, financial support and program advocacy



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Three Main Areas of Activity

- Funding Support
- Advocacy
- Planning and technical support

☐ Rail

- Freight rail
- Passenger rail

☐ Public Transportation

- Public transit systems and services
- Special needs transportation

☐ Commuter Services

- Ridesharing: carpools, vanpools
- Incentive programs for employers
- Telework



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Federal Programs Administered by DRPT for Persons with Special Needs: (prior to 2005)

- 5310 Program- Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Program
- JARC- Job Access and Reverse Commute Program



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In 2005, federal transportation programs were reauthorized in the SAFETEA-LU Act. The Act includes some significant changes...

**SAFETEA-LU
(Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient
Transportation Equity Act)**

Significant Changes in Existing Programs and a New Program:

- ❑ 5310 program: Now requires cross cutting coordination plans to access federal FY07 funds
- ❑ JARC: Now requires immediate coordination & changes program from discretionary to formula for all states
- ❑ New → New Freedom Program: Expands public transportation opportunities beyond ADA requirements for people with disabilities

Focus on 5310 program

- ❑ Since inception, program has provided great impetus for improvements in options for elderly and people with disabilities
- ❑ Grant funds distributed based on size of population
- ❑ Federal share 80%; Applicant 20%
- ❑ Eligible applicants include:
 - Non-profits corporations/associations
 - Approved public bodies
 - Public bodies where no non-profit is available

Successful 5310 applicants have:

- Sound managerial and operating strategy, including the capability to monitor and maintain equipment
- Efforts to maximize coordination of transportation services
- Time for planning (process occurs on annual cycle and takes approximately 14 months to complete)

With new SAFETEA-LU requirements,
DRPT will ensure that all
5310 applicants have:

- ❑ A cross-cutting requirement to develop a coordinated public transit–human services transportation plan



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DRPT has long maintained a commitment to advance coordination as shown by:

- ❑ Requiring 5310 grant recipients to have some experience in human service transportation coordination
- ❑ Applying for and receiving two Coordination Planning grants from the federal “United We Ride” Initiative



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The “United We Ride” (UWR) Initiative is Designed to Assist in the Implementation of:

- ❑ The 2004 Federal Executive Order on Human Service Transportation (#13330) which directed multiple federal agencies to work together to ensure that transportation services are “seamless, comprehensive and accessible.”

“UWR” Initiative promises the following benefits through transportation coordination:

- Increased availability and reduced overhead costs
- Less duplication of services with less cost shifting
- Better trained drivers and staff to assist all types of consumers/disabilities
- Better support from all levels of government

DRPT's United We Ride Grant Year I Accomplishments (2005):

- ❑ Increased communication toward the development of Virginia's Coordination Plan
- ❑ Completion of the 2005 Transportation Inventory examining:
 - Virginia's unmet transportation needs, resources and current levels/ types of cross agency coordination, or lack thereof



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DRPT's United We Ride Grant Year II Goals (2007)

- Build state level buy-in for required transportation coordination (retreat)
- Build local/regional buy-in for coordination by disseminating information on inefficiencies, duplicated services/opportunities/demos
- Formalize state agency coordination and promote changes in rules, regulations and legislation



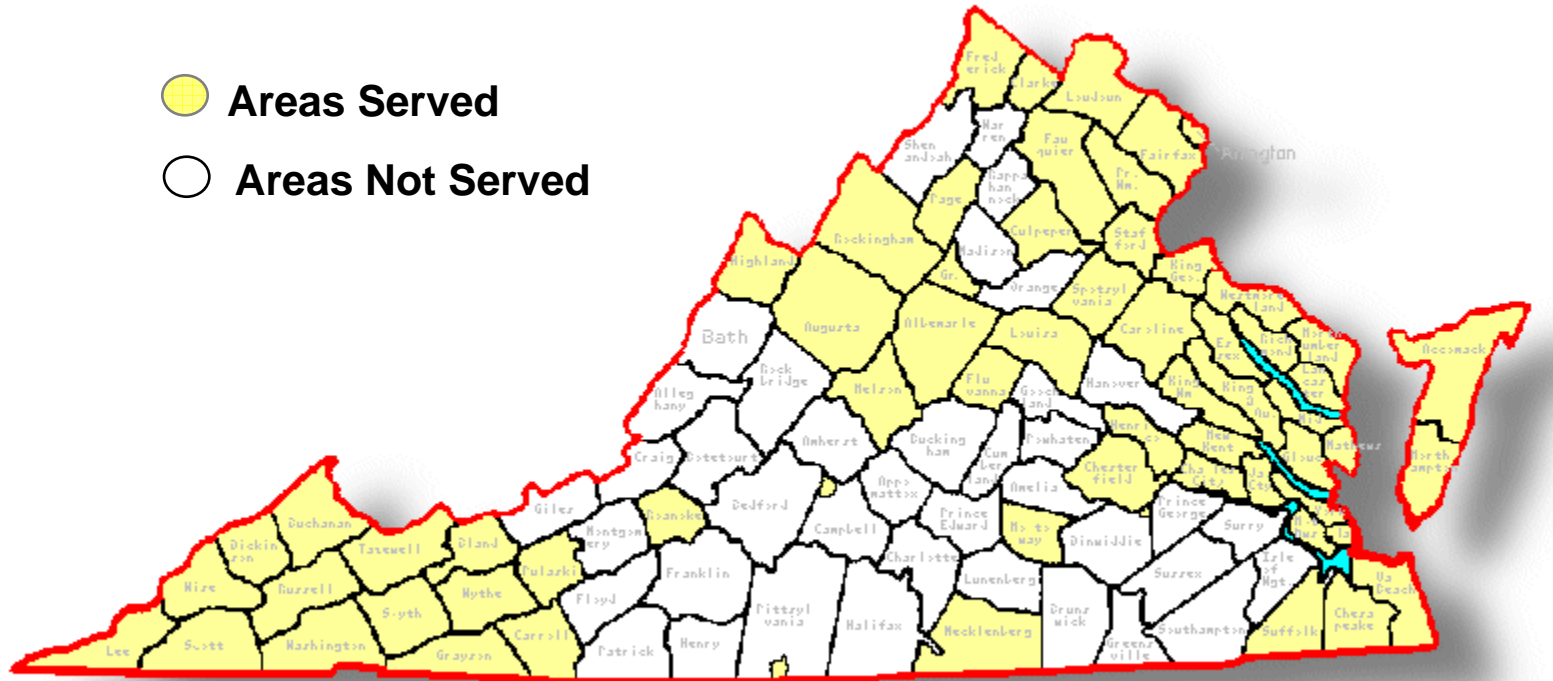
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**Why is transportation coordination
across human service agencies
so important
for the Commonwealth?**

Let's look at the facts ...

Areas of Virginia Served by Public Transportation

- Areas Served
- Areas Not Served



7-19-04

The uneven availability of public transportation in Virginia makes coordination across human service transportation essential for older people and those with disabilities who need more access to:

- healthcare
- social networks
- jobs or job training
- education
- social services



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To establish an accurate estimate of Virginia's coordination efforts, the UWR 2005 Inventory was sent to:

- Community Services Boards
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Employment Support Organizations
- Public Transit Operators
- Other DMAS funded entities



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Results from the Inventory

❑ Needs Identified:

- Significant unmet needs with elderly, low income, and people with disabilities
- Needs of persons who use wheelchairs are unmet in many areas
- Vast majority report that the needs of persons who request “off hours/weekend” transportation are entirely unmet (e.g., for shopping, social events, church or synagogue)

Limited Cross-Agency Coordination Efforts in VA Localities

- Only 1/3 of agencies attend meetings with other local agencies on transportation
- Very few report coordinating vehicle maintenance with other providers
- Few share radio, dispatch equipment or compatible software/accounting systems
- While 1/3 of AAA's report efforts to develop formal cooperative agreements, other agencies do not

Inventory Results Show Reasons for Lack of Coordination:

- Lack of accurate information
- Limited experience
- Fear of cost shifting
 - For instance, AAA's expressed concerns about possible loss of revenue now collected if coordinated transportation was mandated.

Some Important Models of Coordination Programs in VA:

- ❑ **AAA Initiatives:** Four County Transit, New River Valley Senior Services, and Bay Transit
- ❑ **Local Government Initiatives:** RADAR and JAUNT, Inc.
- ❑ **Targeted Coordination:** Fairfax County (FASTRAN) and Rappahannock Area/Fredericksburg Transit, CSB and AAA
- ❑ **Transportation and Housing Alliance (THA)** of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (funded by VBPD)

Other Coordination Efforts in VA

- ❑ The Community Transportation Association of Virginia (CTAV) successfully coordinated with Cabell Insurance Associates to provide a comprehensive insurance program tailored specifically for public transit organizations and multiple coordinating agencies.

More transportation coordination is needed in VA. To increase chances of success, agencies said they need:

- Clear cross-agency directives authorizing needed communication and actions
- Incentive funding to encourage experimentation
- Assurances that coordination will not reduce services to the populations currently being served or the resources to serve them

A State Coordination Plan for the Commonwealth is now being actively addressed by DRPT using:

- Year II United We Ride Grant
- SAFETEA-LU Resources



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