MEETING NOTES
Federal Transit Administration
Technical Assistance Center Coordination Meeting
March 3, 2020 from 9:30 am- 12:00 pm EST

Purpose: To prioritize a coordinated communication strategy across FTA and it's five national technical assistance (TA) centers that will effectively share information with state transportation agencies and rural and tribal transit providers on coordination opportunities and leading coordination practices in an accessible and informative way.

Objective: To resolve the outstanding GAO recommendation via *Public Transportation: Enhanced Federal Information Sharing on Coordination Could Improve Rural Transit Services*, by:

1. Generating a centralized, searchable library database cataloging all available transportation resources, cross linked on FTA-funded TA centers and FTA program webpages. (Under development by NRTAP);
2. Planning 2020 quarterly convening's (June, September, December) to share upcoming events and resources for cross promotion, and encourage ongoing coordination across the TA centers and FTA; and
3. Recommending future activities for coordination.

Introduction and Kick-Off

Marianne Stock (FTA) welcomed and thanked all attendees for coming. She shared that our purpose is to address the GAO recommendation to coordinate efforts and share information.

M. Stock also announced the new FTA initiative, Rides to Recovery, focused on reducing opioid abuse, to be launched on March 31. The initiative will focus on public awareness, guidance and grant assistance, and technical assistance. Programs include a national forum with CTAA and a grant program that National RTAP will develop.

FTA will host a webinar on Thursday 3/5 afternoon to discuss a transit response to the coronavirus.

Lastly, M. Stock outlined the agenda and attendees introduced themselves.

10-Minute TA Center Overview: What does 2020 look like for each center?

National Rural Transit Assistance Program (NRTAP)

Highlights:

- Increased engagement with State Programs
- Assisted FTA with development of tribal programs
- Built relationships with Federal Programs to enhance local collaboration
- Assisted with TRB Rural Public and Intercity Bus Conference as asset to Rural and Tribal stakeholders
- Maintained and built training resources and awareness for rural and tribal programs
- *Rides to Recovery Grant Program*

Key Issues:

- Funding
- Complying with regulations with limited staff and high turnover
- Finding and keeping drivers, competing with higher wage jobs
- Vehicle reliability and safety for rural conditions
- Keeping up with technology
- Outreach and Planning

National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM)

Highlights:

- Coordination activities
- Cross-sector activities
- Growing mobility management practices
  - Issue-oriented regional meetings
- Seeding transportation innovation projects
- Knowledge-building activities
- Performance measurement
  - Adding a dashboard to website show longitudinal metrics
- Research project with University of Minnesota
- Facilitated a cost allocation course created by Rich Garrity
- Planning grants and implementation/pilot grants
  - Ex: South King County – [Hopelink](#) –working with hospitals and discharge staff to identify patients where transportation may be a problem. (giving them a green sheet that has the number for Hopelink and two transportation credits. Call Hopelink and exercise new credits. Every time they follow through with a new suggested health-related activity, they receive more credits.)
- **Implemented a brand new very advance search feature, you can tick a box that searches content from all affiliates**
- Online community – mobility management connections (to exchange ideas resources and feature mobility management professionals)

National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC)

- Going through a recompete
- Focuses on section 5310 formula grant
- One prime area – grant making
  - Three rounds of grants
    - Innovation grants
    - Planning grants
    - New grant- focused on ready to launch plans (will fund up to 10 communities for 6 months at $30K)

Highlights:

- **Yearly Trends Report (2015 to present)**
- **National Surveys**
- **National Convening and Press Briefing**

- **National Roundtable – November 2019 ([data specifications, TCRP Report 2019](#))**
  - Another project, funded by ACL, launching a grant opportunity that will offer up to 3 communities the opportunity to work on demand-responsive transit (DRT)
- **Every Ride Counts National Campaign**
  - Requires registration
  - Meant to facilitate local promotion of services so that people know where to go to get information about transportation
  - Piloted during the thanksgiving/December holidays
  - Spanish translation option as well
- **Capitol Hill Briefing**
  - Grantees were able to report their innovative transportation program implementations
  - Created videos
- **Develop a Learning collaborative**
  - One-on-one help for each grantee
  - Assigned a program manager
  - In the process of helping them develop their performance measure
  - Biggest obstacle: having issues getting into the Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) system
- **Road Ahead**
  - Section 5310 Best Practices Compendium
  - Online resources: courses, webinars, toolkits, assessment tools et.
  - Website information clearinghouse with a Best Practice Repository and a Coordination Section
  - Environmental Scan to identify challenges and good practices on providing accessible transportation to target populations

Shared Use Mobility Center (SUMC)

- Focus on innovation and form successful partnerships
- Focus on strategic planning and implementation
- Applied Research
- Facilitate Partnerships
  - Annual National Shared Mobility Summit – March 17-19
- Knowledge Creation and Dissemination
- Learning Modules
- Case Studies
- Field trips – go onsite to test out services
- Coming soon: Integrated Mobility Innovation Project
  - FTA grant that build on Sandbox
- White paper with SUMC and NCMM

National Center for Applied Transit Technology (NCATT): Introduction of the newest center

- What is meant by technology?

- o Technologies that are newer and are reaching a usable phase. (riskier for how they can be planned for and adopted.)
  - o TA Centers are existing in venn diagrams
  - o Uses the other TA centers to reinforce and share work
- What are we doing/going to be doing?
  - o Developing website
    - Tech University component
    - Technology Procurement Playbook
    - Promising Practices Guide to make for better technology decision making
  - o Opportunities for Apply for Technical Assistance
    - Innovation Technology Strike Teams
    - State Technology Summits
  - o Calendar of events for all TA centers
  - o Social media

Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM): Danielle Nelson

- CCAM Update
  - o Danielle Nelson gave a brief overview of the CCAM and an update on current progress towards meeting requirements of the FAST Act.
  - o Used the Rural Bus Waivers example to highlight misinformation (no Federal Barrier)
  - o Webinar on Sept 30, 2020 – on the Report to Congress and the President
  - o Program Inventory Webinar Series – to address the biggest barrier to local transportation is the limited awareness
  - o Find local examples of where people are finding ways around barriers to transportation. (Concise statement for each on how to prove that vehicle sharing/match can be used.)
  - o Federal Fund Braiding Guide – a resource for federal fund recipients to help determine where local match is allowable
- Coordination of TA center resources at conferences
  - o Health and Transportation Meeting in August 2019
  - o Improve Healthy Food Access in Rural Communities via Shopper Shuttles by Connecting CDC HOP grantees and FTA Section 5311 grantees in GA and MS
- Coordinating with CCAM TA centers
  - o Cross-posting
  - o Send the FTA your big events for posting through GovDelivery
  - o Social media coordination
    - Follow HRSA, SAMHSA, USDA RD, ACF or ACL
    - CCAM agencies have their social media sites at the bottom of the page.
    - Send high-level activities and events
  - o Share drop-in slides
  - o Cross linking

NRTAP Efforts to Support GAO Recommendation: Overview and what is needed from each TA Center.

- NRTAP will treat TA center resources as a collection, updated regularly, has relevance

- Goal: to develop a sustainable methodology to standardize access to and discoverability
- **What we need from each TA center?**
  - At least one person from each TA center to serve as their center's project lead.
    - They will be the content specialist
    - The decider of what goes on their website.
  - And another person who understands how postings are posted online at each center (agency)
- Approach
  - 1. Conference call and shared documents
  - 2. Will collect coordination resources (either Cara or project leads)?
  - 3. Analysis of how the data are organized (title, date, keywords)
  - 4. Investigate and develop a technology solution collaboratively
- Technology options for the collection of coordination resources include:
  - Expansion of Resource Share
  - Database developed for FTA Website
  - Cloud-based database
  - LiftGuide – customizable, modular guide
  - Federated search engine
  - Discovery tool
- Considerations for technology options include taxonomy, ontology, metadata, subject headings, keywords, tags, and section 508 compliance.
  - Section 508 compliance is required for government websites for accessibility for persons with disabilities. (alternative text, etc.) We may need to hire additional help to make resources 508 compliant as it is a large undertaking.

Next Steps

- Quarterly meetings – which center will take the lead to plan June, September and December's meetings?
  - **June – N-CATT will host next TA coordination meeting**
  - Will decide which center will take lead for September and December meetings at the June meeting.

Questions/Open Discussion

- Future activities for coordination, e.g. shared calendar of events
  - Internal newsletter
    - Responsibility to draft and coordinate internal newsletter will rotate between TA centers
    - Will have the same template
    - NCMM volunteered to draft first newsletter and work with N-CATT
    - This newsletter should be brief and contain the most critical information for coordination and cross-fertilization.
    - Newsletter should share important events happening in the next quarter
  - Template for meeting agendas.
    - A bulleted list of these overarching themes to go through at each meeting. Organize agenda by overarching topical areas. (after a couple of

   meetings, they'll become pretty apparent) (Could use target populations for topical areas.)
- Create a standard meeting template with high-level areas to ensure consistency in meeting
- FTA and N-CATT will draft template
- Meeting format
  - Suggested that we do a webcast If meetings are virtual, because it makes it easier to connect with other when you can see them.
  - NCMM offered to provide Zoom Video Webinar platform if needed
  - In-person meetings once or twice a year.
- TA Center Program Managers
  - Make sure to communicate your TA centers various activities with your respective program managers to avoid conflicts.
- Meeting follow up
  - Post the meeting highlights
  - Share meeting recordings
  - Share PowerPoint presentations
- Statements of Work
  - Plan to coordinate with other TA centers before new SOWs are developed so that we are coordinating resources and efforts.
- *Functional question posed by Kelly Tyler: How do we decide which activities/events are duplicative, worth sharing or worth partnering?*