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MORE-TMCC
Model Orlando Regionally Efficient
Travel Management Coordination Center

Final Technical Report

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13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) - The Final Technical Report for the Model Orlando Regionally Efficient Travel Management Coordination Center (MORE-TMCC) Phase 1 System Design presents a detailed review of the fifteen month process of designing a travel management coordination center. Its purpose is to provide the goals defined by the Mobility Services for All Americans (MSAA) initiative for a TMCC and the methodology for reaching these goals. MSAA goals included increased accessibility of public transportation and more efficient use of federal resources and funds. MORE-TMCC was one of eight demonstration sites selected to develop a system that is driven by the local community, provides travelers with simplified points of access to transportation, supports coordinated operations and streamlines program management requirements and procedures. The methodology used and the lessons learned during the system design provide other agencies with best practices for the design of a similar system.

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MORE-TMCC Final Technical Report

August 2008

Performing Organization

Model Orlando Regionally Efficient Travel Management Coordination Center

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Foreword

The Model Orlando Regionally Efficient Travel Management Coordination Center (MORE-TMCC) has been a joint effort on the part of the region's transit providers and human service agencies, with the primary goal to utilize existing resources to expand the customer's transportation options.

The proposed system will use technologies already implemented by the stakeholders, and as the system transitions from the implementation phase into long term use, the MORE-TMCC can easily support and integrate additional transportation providers, human service agencies and funding sources on a larger scale. Since the proposed Central Florida system is a vendor technology independent system that will employ technologies provided by multiple communications, hardware and software providers, other markets will be able to implement our solution in their region using much of their current systems, technologies, and vendors. The following stakeholders were involved with the MORE-TMCC Phase I System Design:

Public Transportation Providers:
The Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX)
Polk County Transit Services (PCTS)
Lakeland Area Mass Transit District (Citrus Connection)

Human Service Agencies:
Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Area Agency on Aging d/b/a Senior Resource Alliance
Florida Department of Children and Families
Seniors First
Seminole Community Mental Health
Goodwill Industries of Central Florida

Other Partner Agencies:
Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged
The Florida Department of Transportation

This document summarizes the processes, deliverables, and results of MORE-TMCC system design process, which began in March of 2007.

1. Abstract

The Final Technical Report for the Model Orlando Regionally Efficient Travel Management Coordination Center (MORE-TMCC) Phase 1 System Design presents a detailed review of the fifteen month process of designing a travel management coordination center. Its purpose is to provide the goals defined by the Mobility Services for All American (MSAA) initiative for a TMCC and the methodology for reaching these goals. MSAA goals included increased accessibility of public transportation and more efficient use of Federal resources and funds. MORE-TMCC was one of eight demonstration sites selected to develop a system that is driven by the local community, provides travelers with simplified points of access to transportation, supports coordinated operations and streamlines program management requirements and procedures. The methodology used and the lessons learned during the system design provide other agencies with best practices for the design of a similar system.

2. Summary

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate how the MORE-TMCC Phase 1 System design met the goals for a TMCC as defined by the MSAA initiative. The goals are listed as follows:

- Increase mobility and accessibility for the transportation disadvantaged and general public.
- Achieve more efficient use of Federal transportation funding resources.
- Be driven by the local community.
- Provide a simplified point of access for traveler support.
- Support coordinated and comprehensive service operations and management.
- Streamline program management requirements and procedures.

2.2. Results

The goals for the MSAA demonstration of the system design of a travel management coordination center were met by the MORE-TMCC. The first two goals were met by combining the available resources of all participating agencies in a way that would eliminate redundancies and provide additional service at the same core cost. The MORE-TMCC met the third goal by involving the local community as stakeholders in the process, including transportation agencies, human service agencies, customers and consumer advocates. The fourth and fifth goals were achieved by centralizing transportation operations in a way that benefits both the customer and the agency. The system simplifies the transportation process for the customer by providing all options in a central location. Agencies benefit by having centralized systems for billing, customer comments, call taking and other service operations and management functions. Finally, the MORE-TMCC met the goal for streamlined program management by completing all deliverables in a timely manner. These deliverables will be essential to the Phase II System Development as they include not only a Requirements Document but also a High Level Design and a Phasing and Implementation Plan.

2.3. Recommendations

Strategy: Plan and pace the project in a realistic manner that evenly distributes work over the lifetime of the project, but prepare to be flexible in the implementation of the design plan.

People: Form a cohesive team that understands the benefits of a TMCC and shares the common goal of providing more efficient transportation services to the public.

Process: Identify a Core Team to design most of the system in an effective manner, but reach out to the community for ideas and support.

Technology: Bring the vendors into the process as early as is prudent, and make sure they have a clear understanding of the project goals and design, as well as their role in the process.

3. MORE-TMCC Background Information

The Model Orlando Regionally Efficient Travel Management Coordination Center (MORE-TMCC) design project was developed as a joint demonstration in the partnership between the United We Ride vision and the Mobility Services for All American (MSAA) initiative. The goals of this initiative were:

- To increase mobility and accessibility for the transportation disadvantaged and general public.
- To achieve more efficient use of Federal transportation funding resources.

Eight demonstration sites were selected from the twenty-seven proposals reviewed (a total of thirty-seven proposals were submitted), with the task of creating scalable and replicable urban, small urban and/or rural models of Travel Management Coordination Centers that:

- Are driven by the local community.
- Provide a simplified point of access for traveler support.
- Support coordinated and comprehensive service operations and management.
- Streamline program management requirements and procedures.

The MORE-TMCC system design and development for the Central Florida area will serve rural, suburban and urban travel of senior citizens, people with disabilities, economically disadvantaged citizens, and Medicare and Medicaid recipients. In addition, through the provision of coordinated services, the system will be in a position to provide transportation for the general public in areas where no general public transportation service is operated. This has the potential to significantly improve mobility over a wide area within existing capital and operating budgets.

3.1. Document Purpose and Contents

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate the methodology, results and lessons learned from the year devoted to the design of the MORE-TMCC.

As part of the effort to design the MORE-TMCC, the Project Initiation has been completed, a Needs Assessment has been performed, a Concept of Operations has been developed, and the Requirements Document has been completed. The ITS Gaps Analysis Report and High Level Design were also completed. Finally, the Phase II Project Proposal was submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

This document has the following sections:

- MORE TMCC Background Information
- System Design Methodology
- MORE-TMCC Results and Findings
- Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

4. System Design Methodology

The MORE-TMCC project followed the guidance of the United Stated Department of Transportation (USDOT), FTA and project technical assistance consultants in approaching the Phase I system design of a travel management coordination center. The deliverables due to the USDOT that facilitated the design process were as follows:

Deliverable	Due Date
Concept of Operations	October 30, 2007
Requirements Document	April 30, 2008
ITS Gap Analysis Report	May 31, 2008
High Level Design	June 30, 2008
Phasing and Implementation Plan	June 30, 2008
Phase II Proposal	July 31, 2008

4.1. Concept of Operations

The MORE-TMCC Concept of Operations followed the format of the Generic Traveler Management Coordination Center Concept of Operations prepared for the USDOT Research and Innovative Technology Administration. In addition to meetings with all stakeholders and the core project group, needs assessment interviews with each

stakeholder provided the content of the MORE-TMCC Concept of Operations. The Concept of Operations covered the initial design concepts as well as system goals and stakeholder expectations for the project.

4.2. Requirements Document

Following the Concept of Operations, the Requirements Document was the result of a series of meetings not only with participating stakeholders but also the core project team. Several documents provided by technical assistance and the USDOT for writing system requirements were used to provide best practices information on the formation of this deliverable. The requirements document detailed what the MORE-TMCC policies and functions should be.

4.3. ITS Gap Analysis Report

For the ITS Gap Analysis Report, the project was evaluated in terms of the Regional ITS Architecture. As the stakeholders of this project fall under two regions, Regions 1 and 5 of the Florida State ITS Architecture were examined in a meeting with the Core Team. The gaps between the current Region 1 and 5 architectures and the MORE-TMCC architectures were identified.

4.4. High Level Design

The core project team met twice to discuss the High Level Design, which described how the system requirements outlined in previous deliverables would be achieved through vendor and technology independent means. Existing technologies employed by the stakeholders were considered during the compilation of the High Level Design, as were Documents such as prior deliverables, USDOT responses to those deliverables as well responses to a Request for Information from possible system vendors.

4.5. Phasing and Implementation Plan

The Phasing and Implementation Plan was compiled by the MORE-TMCC consultants with the assistance of potential system vendors as well as information technology and procurement personnel from the participating vendors. Additionally, guidance for the System Phasing and Implementation Plan was distributed by the FTA.

4.6. Phase II Project Proposal

The MORE-TMCC design project culminated in the Phase II Project Implementation Proposal. This deliverable drew on previous deliverables, USDOT responses to these deliverables, and the distributed guidance from the FTA. A Vendor Information Packet was distributed to current transportation agency vendors. Their input from several conference calls, as well as their responses to the Vendor Information Packet was an integral part of the proposal. A two day meeting to discuss and refine the proposal was held four weeks prior to the proposal due date. Conference calls were scheduled weekly and as many as three calls a week were made among core team members, vendors, and agency staff.

5. Results/Findings

5.1. Initiative Goals

Goal: To achieve more efficient use of Federal transportation funding resources.

Finding: One of the key features of MORE-TMCC is the coordination of resources among the participating agencies. For example, if two agencies are each providing similar trips to separate customers, then one agency can deliver trips to both passengers, while the other agency provides service in a different area. This lowers the cost per trip for both agencies, and allows them to use the same amount of Federal funding to provide a greater number of trips. The increase in the number of available trips leads to more transportation options for customers.

Goal: To increase mobility and accessibility for the transportation disadvantaged and general public.

Finding: Since the MORE-TMCC system is designed to be more efficient for an agency to operate, the agencies can provide more service to the transportation disadvantaged and general public. Additionally, the partnership of the three transportation agencies represents the possibility of an expansion of the service in overlapping geographic areas. For example, two of the agencies already have in place a successful partnership of this nature with the Poinciana PickUpLine. The MORE-TMCC system will allow for an easier implementation of comparable services. One of the participating Human Service

Agencies, Lakeside Behavioral Health System, has given the feedback that the MORE-TMCC will allow them to expand their agency's service area to include more customers who were previously out of their reach.

5.2. Targeted Outcomes

Target: A scalable and replicable system.

Result: The modular design of the MORE-TMCC system is scalable by allowing for the addition of more agencies as required. It is also replicable as any other agencies that want to implement the system can pick and choose the modules required no matter how big or small the system is. By incorporating design elements that are available primarily through commercial off the shelf (COTS) systems, other agencies are not limited to using specific vendors or technologies. Thus the system can be scaled and replicated according to the needs of the specific consortium of agencies. Additionally, the State of Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantage has been following the progress of the MORE-TMCC as a model for the implementation of other coordinated systems in the state.

Target: A system that is driven by the local community.

Result: The local community sent a group of transportation professionals and transportation advocates to Washington, DC, on two occasions – in 2006 to attend the Community Transportation Association of America's Institute for Coordinated Transportation and in 2008 to attend the Easter Seals Project ACTION's Mobility Planning Services Institute. The groups returned from both events with a better understanding of coordination and a realization of the need to increase coordination and utilization of resources within our community/region. Through the initial event in 2006, the concept of the Transportation Management Coordination Center for our Phase I grant application was developed based on a presentation from a similar system in the New England area. With knowledge of the MORE-TMCC project, the team members who attended the 2008 event were able to apply that concept while in workshops for a better understanding of how coordination would help our community.

The MORE-TMCC project is driven locally by the stakeholders: local human service agencies, local transportation providers, and customers and their advocates. All of these representatives participated in multiple stakeholders meetings, including one session where the United We Ride Framework for Action self-assessment tool was presented and facilitated by the United We Ride Regional Ambassador, JoAnn Hutchinson. Based on the results of these stakeholder meetings and our self-assessment exercise, the MORE-TMCC project to was molded to meet the needs of the community, help fill identified gaps in service, and help eliminate identified duplications in service.

Target: To provide a simplified point of access for traveler support.

Result: "No Wrong Entry" is a major theme within the design of the MORE-TMCC system. For transit related concerns such as trip booking, customer service, eligibility questions, there are three methods of entry into the system. The customer can call which ever number they are accustomed to using for assistance and choose whether or not to use the Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) system (first option), or work with a live representative (second option). As described in the detailed design document, if the customer wishes to speak with a representative, then the system will route the call to a representative from the agency linked to the phone number the customer originally called. If none is available, then the system will hunt for the next available person in the overall system. The third option a customer has is to use the MORE-TMCC website. This website will allow the customer to create and access a customer profile, begin an eligibility application or search for and book a trip with any agency in the system. These three options allow the customer, especially those eligible for multiple transportation disadvantaged programs to use just one point of access for his or her transportation needs. This compliments the MSAA and United We Ride concept of "one call for a ride." Additionally, the use of live representatives, IVR and the web gives customer the freedom to choose how they prefer to access their transit options.

Target: To support coordinated and comprehensive service operations and management.

Result: The MORE-TMCC allows participating agencies to simplify many aspects of service operations and management. Centrally optimized functions such as scheduling, eligibility determination and tracking, comments tracking, billing and reporting eliminates redundancies in all of these functions and gives agencies the opportunity to reallocate resources from these tasks to other areas. Customers also benefit from coordinated service operations. For example, the Citrus Connection is not open for business on Sunday; however, the phone system ensures that if a Citrus Connection customer calls Sunday during the business hours of another agency, then the customer will reach a live person.

Target: To streamline program management requirements and procedures.

Result: Most of the deliverables completed by the MORE-TMCC during the Phase I Design process will play a role during the Phase II system development. Particularly important to the system development process are the Requirements and High Level Design documents. Since these two documents are already complete, the detailed design process will move much more quickly for MORE-TMCC vendors. Additionally, since the core team and vendors have already viewed and approved the phasing and implementation plan, system development can easily begin immediately after notice to proceed is received.

5.3. Lessons Learned

Throughout the Phase I system design, the MORE-TMCC team built upon the lessons learned during the process. Compiled below, those lessons can be applied to not only the design process but also its strategy and team. Additionally, these lessons learned contain feedback for the reviewers at the Federal level and the technical assistance team.

5.3.1. Design Process

Focus with a Core Team

During the first half of the project, which included the needs assessments, the Concept of Operations and the Requirements Document, there was an effort to involve as many stakeholders as possible. However, by the time the Requirements Document was

submitted, the group whittled itself down to a Core Team that had the highest background and interest in the development of the MORE-TMCC system design. Because of its smaller size, the Core Team was able to make decisions more quickly and meet more easily than the entire stakeholder group. The core team met at the beginning of the development of each subsequent deliverable to brainstorm ideas. These sessions ensured that the deliverables would not only be developed quickly but also be edited and agreed on in a timely manner.

While the Core Team was the most efficient use of stakeholder time, more effort could have been made to regularly update the rest of the stakeholder team - including those participants who operate on the executive level. Monthly newsletters outlining the progress and next steps of the progress would have saved time in providing updates and background information to the entire stakeholder group at the times necessary to meet as a whole.

Make Use of Every Possible Resource

The MORE-TMCC team is comprised of stakeholders that vary in of size, jurisdiction, specialty and available resources. During the design process, we found it extremely helpful to pool resources and use the most efficient means possible to complete our necessary tasks. For example, when reaching out to vendors with a Request for Information during the High Level Design, the best course of action was to use the procurement department of Citrus Connection. Their process is the least formal of the transportation agencies involved and saved a significant amount of time.

Reach Out to the Community

Better public outreach could have benefited the MORE-TMCC project by providing additional buy in at the executive and local government levels. Additional community involvement would have not only educated customers to the benefits of the proposed system but also given them more opportunities to contribute their ideas to the process. If the MORE-TMCC design is chosen for Phase II System Development, more effort will be made on this level.

5.3.2. Development Strategy

Earlier Vendor Involvement

One of the tenants of a successful TMCC is to be technology and vendor independent. However, the Phase II proposal required estimates regarding system costs that could not be completed without the involvement of specific vendors. The MORE-TMCC team distributed a Request for Information (RFI) from vendors during the High Level Design process, however, in keeping with the philosophy of technology and vendor independence, this RFI was not specific enough to meet the needs of the proposal. Consequentially, the Core Team had to make decisions regarding vendors while the proposal was being written. If decisions involving vendors had been completed during the high level design, then all parties involved would have had more time to consider their options.

Legacy Vendors

While this may not be the case for all agencies looking to implement a TMCC system, the MORE-TMCC benefits from having similar systems provided by the same vendor already in place. Agencies should not predetermine to use a specific technology or vendor; however, it is prudent to consider existing hardware and software when designing the system. Using current investments in technology will save not only money but also time in system development and employee training.

Vendor Expectations

As soon as an agency decides which vendors to use, each vendor should be given appropriate background information on the system goals, design, and the vendor's role in the project. The MORE-TMCC design requires that several vendors work together in the development of the MORE-TMCC system. When competing vendors work on the same project, it is important that each vendor has a clear understanding of not only their role but also the role of the other vendors on the project. The MORE-TMCC team distributed a Vendor Information packet to each vendor during the development of the Phase II proposal that clearly explained the system and how each vendor would be expected to interact with the others.

5.3.3. Human Resources

Commitment, Knowledge and Scope

As soon as possible, each team member should have a full understanding of the scope of the project, and what this would mean to their agency. Having this understanding up front correctly sets expectations of staff time, financial involvement, and agency commitment. Additionally, relevant staff members from every agency should be able to contribute their time on a regular basis.

With any project involving the deployment of new technology, it is very important that each member of the Core Team as well as the Stakeholder Group has a clear understanding of the technologies and processes being designed. This ensures that all agencies, regardless of size or specialty, have the same level of input. The MORE-TMCC stakeholder team had a progressive outlook and made a coordinated effort to achieve its common goals. The shared purpose greatly contributed to creating a smooth design process.

Back Each Other Up

While the MORE-TMCC Core and Stakeholder Teams were consistent, cooperative and progressive, each member was not always available for meetings. It became very important for several team members to not only understand the project fully but also have a good working knowledge of project presentations. There were situations, such as regional FTA meetings, when only one representative of the MORE-TMCC would be present and would have to present the project.

Find Time Early

Since the MORE-TMCC team consisted of such a large group of stakeholders, it was sometimes difficult to find a time convenient for a majority of members. If meetings had been scheduled farther ahead in advance, then greater levels of participation may have been possible. In the future, meetings should be scheduled on a recurring basis as soon as possible then canceled if necessary.

5.3.4. Oversight

While technical assistance from SAIC and the USDOT and FTA were very helpful, there are a few points that would have been a welcome contribution to the Phase I System Design.

Project Pacing

Although timeline allowed fifteen months for system design, having the project deliverables spaced more evenly would have been a more effective use of time. While the project kickoff occurred in March of 2007, the first deliverable was not due until October of that year. The Requirements Document and subsequent deliverables were due at the end of each month beginning in April 2008 and finishing with the Phase II Proposal in July - there was even an instance of two deliverables being due on the same date.

Additionally, Information from the FTA was sometime issued after the submission deadline to provide further assistance for project sites who were late submitting. This gave them information that wasn't made available to the sites that had submitted by the original due date, and contributed to the due dates of further deliverables being pushed closer to the final project ending date. These actions contributed to a general sense that not adhering to deliverable due dates was rewarded instead of being detrimental to the late sites.

More balanced pacing would have most likely saved time and contributed to better stakeholder participation for the MORE-TMCC, and may have also improved turn around time for receiving feedback on deliverables.

Review and Feedback

Federal feedback on deliverables was helpful in the development of subsequent deliverables. However, input varied, such as whether our representatives wanted to review draft versions of deliverables to be able to feed meaningful input into the process or whether their reviewing these draft documents would "prejudice" their view toward other projects.

However, feedback from the reviewers was sometimes confusing and inconsistent. At times some reviews did not seem to have all of the background information necessary regarding the advice and direction given to the teams; these reviewers would, therefore, give comments that conflicted with the original guidance. The feedback given from the Federal level needs to be coordinated to ensure that issues raised by one responder do not conflict with either core system concepts or comments from another reviewer.

Federal Participation

Any feedback or participation on the part of the technical assistance team or the FTA was always welcome and appreciated. The presence of Michael Baltes from the FTA at one of the meetings for the development of the Requirements Document was very helpful not only for the document itself but also for the fact that their participation elevated the project from a local issue to one of wider importance. The attendance of Yehuda Gross of the USDOT at the Phase II Proposal development meeting was highly beneficial for exactly the same reasons. While travel to different demonstration sites is difficult, more frequent communication would be an asset to each site.

Peer Interaction

Encouraging or allowing more interaction among the demonstration sites would have been difficult, but beneficial. While the sites were told that they were not in direct competition with each other, progress and lessons learned were not shared during the design process. The midterm meeting was especially useful - and further sharing of ideas may have led to more complete system designs. A quarterly catch up conference call that included not only each demonstration site but also technical assistance and Federal participants would benefit everyone involved by answering questions and helping each site stay on track.

6. Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

This Final Technical Report for the MORE-TMCC Phase I System Design establishes that this project met each of the MSAA goals presented during the project kickoff. By designing a system that will meet these goals:

- Increase mobility and accessibility for the transportation disadvantaged and general public.
- Achieve more efficient use of Federal transportation funding resources.
- Be driven by the local community.
- Provide a simplified point of access for traveler support.
- Support coordinated and comprehensive service operations and management.
- Streamline program management requirements and procedures.

MORE-TMCC demonstrates that public transportation needs can be met in a manner that is both more efficient and more beneficial to the general public.

6.1. Recommendations

The main recommendations from the MORE-TMCC Phase I System design provide a condensed version of the lessons learned:

Strategy: Plan and pace the project in a realistic manner that evenly distributes work over the lifetime of the project, but prepare to be flexible in the implementation of the design plan.

People: Form a cohesive team that understands the benefits of a TMCC and shares the common goal of providing more efficient transportation services to the public.

Process: Identify a Core Team to design most of the system in an effective manner, but reach out to the community for ideas and support.

Technology: Bring the vendors into the process as early as is prudent, and make sure they have a clear understanding of the project goals and design, as well as their role in the process.

Each one of the lessons learned will assist both agencies that wish to design their own travel management coordination center as well as those agencies that participated in the Phase I system design process. The Final Technical Reports from every demonstration site should be presented together and combined so everyone can benefit from the lessons learned during this project.

7. Appendix A: Glossary of Terms & Acronyms

Citrus Connection   Business name of the Lakeland Area Mass Transit District, the transit authority for the City of Lakeland, Florida

COTS   Commercial Off The Shelf, an existing system that can obtained from retail sources not requiring research and development

FTA   Federal Transit Administration, a division of the United States Department of Transportation that provides funding and technical assistance for transit systems

ITS   Intelligent Transit Systems, the coordinated application of a variety of technology systems to enhance the operation and safety of transportation systems

IVR   Interactive Voice Response, a telecommunications system that can recognize and respond to the human voice

LYNX   Business name of the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority, the transit authority for Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties in Florida

MSAA   Mobility Services for All Americans, an initiative of the United States Department of Transportation to improve access to transportation services through the use of Intelligent Transportation Systems and the development of partnerships between consumers and human service providers

MORE-TMCC   Model Orlando Regionally Efficient Traveler Management Coordination Center, local project name

PCTS   Polk County Transit Services, the transit authority for Polk County, Florida

RFI   Request For Information, a formal request sent to product vendors to obtain general information related to product capabilities without requesting price or providing any intent to purchase

SAIC   Science Applications International Corporation, consultant providing technical assistance to the project teams

TDD   Telecommunications Device for the Deaf, a device that assists the hearing impaired individuals when communicating using a telephone

TMCC   Traveler Management Coordination Center, a center to coordinate all of an individual's transportation needs

USDOT   United States Department of Transportation

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