

Yellowstone-Teton Regional Transportation Cooperative Steering Committee Workshop, July 9, 2009

Supply Team Group Memory

The Transportation Services Provider Team (otherwise known as the Supply Team) met from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 9 as part of the Steering Committee Workshop for the Yellowstone-Teton Regional Transportation Cooperative. This document serves as a summary of the discussions that occurred during that meeting.

Participants

Participants in the Supply Team discussions included: Lisa Ballard (Current Transportation Solutions, Bozeman, MT), Anthony Bean (Yellowstone Airport, West Yellowstone, MT), Dave Hunt (Pocatello Regional Transport, Pocatello, ID), Steve Laflin (ChauffAir LLC, Idaho Falls, ID), Dan Martin (Karst Stage, Bozeman, MT), Jerry Perkins (Karst Stage, Bozeman, MT), Ted Pierce (AllTrans, Inc., Jackson, WY), Kathy Pope (Salt Lake Express, Idaho Falls, ID), Jeanine Roberson (Buffalo Bus Touring Company, West Yellowstone, MT), Randy Roberson (Buffalo Bus Touring Company, West Yellowstone, MT), Todd Scott (Xanterra), Lynn Seymour (Targhee Regional Public Transit Authority, Idaho Falls, ID), Michael Wackerly (START Bus, Jackson, WY). Jeff Osgood (Yellowstone Business Partnership) and Scott Zimmerman (Rocky Mountain Cooperative Development Center) stopped in for a portion of the discussions.

Wendy Lowe of P2 Solutions, Idaho Falls, Idaho served to facilitate the group.

Objectives

The three-hour meeting was designed to accomplish the following objectives:

- Clarify team tasks and desired outcomes
- Generate a preliminary list of issues and opportunities to address
- Identify potentially affected interests and how to involve them
- Determine team work plan and agenda.

Team Tasks and Desired Outcomes

Wendy Lowe explained that the feasibility study for formation of a Yellowstone-Teton Regional Transportation Cooperative must be completed by the end of this calendar year. The Leadership Team (composed of Yellowstone Business Partnership staff, Cooperative Development Center staff, several Technical Advisors, and the facilitators for the various teams) had met the previous day to outline a schedule for the next five months. She shared some suggestions for the role that the Supply Team will likely need to play in supporting the completion of the feasibility study. Additional activities might be necessary for the Supply Team to feel good about the overall project and its role in the development of the cooperative.

- The first step will be for the supply team to assess the capacity of the region to provide transportation services and assess the potential for procurement of necessary services. This will occur while the demand teams are assessing the potential demand for transportation services.

- The entire Steering Committee will then get together in October to pull everything together.
- In November, Yellowstone Business Partnership staff, along with the Technical Advisors, will identify appropriate inter-modal interfaces, select the routes and frequencies that should be assessed during the pilot phase, and design the Intelligent Transportation System needed to support the cooperative.
- In December, the Supply Team will likely want to help finalize the Marketing Plan.

If the feasibility study indicates that it is reasonable to proceed, then the next step would be a pilot phase to demonstrate the viability of the cooperative.

Preliminary List of Issues

The participants identified the following list of issues:

- The challenge of balancing the benefits of co-op membership against the costs to each member (including loss of autonomy, etc.)
- Should the transportation service providers allow the co-op to serve as its broker?
- The interface between the Supply Team and the other teams
- Costs – how much will it cost transportation service providers to participate
- Insurance coverage
- How to deal with the potential for competition between the transportation service providers that eventually become members of the co-op
- If the co-op were to receive 5311 funding, would that constitute competition with public providers?

Preliminary List of Opportunities

The participants identified the following opportunities:

- Additional marketing
- Exposure to the market
- Joint purchasing
- Opportunity to learn best practices, new ideas from each other
- Facilitate cross-fertilization
- Government affairs
- Increased efficiencies resulting from fleet/seat utilization
- Coordination of connections
- Internet interface for customers
- Opportunity for expansion of services and improved schedules

Potentially Affected Interests and How to Involve Them

The following entities might be helpful if they could be engaged in the work of the Supply Team:

- State Departments of Transportation

- Idaho National Laboratory
- Delaware North (Deb Friedel).

Some ideas were suggested that the Supply Team eventually decided against pursuing, including: Tour operators, the State's Departments of Tourism, travel agents, assisted living centers (human service providers), taxis, the Rollin Shuttle, other airport managers, and state insurance commissioners.

It was agreed that a letter from Yellowstone Business Partnership encouraging them to participate in this effort might be the best way to seek their involvement.

Team Work Plan and Agenda

A number of tasks were identified by the participants as being necessary to evaluate the feasibility of a transportation cooperative. They are presented below, organized by which month the participants felt they needed to be completed:

Already completed:

- Figure out who the potential players are. (The group felt they had already completed this.)

August:

- Develop a mission statement for the Supply Team
- Develop a survey to assess the capacity of the universe of transportation service providers throughout the Yellowstone-Targhee region. (The survey should include information about the type of services provided and the schedule of operations.)
- Figure out who to send the survey instrument to (options include DOT-certified operators, PSC-certified operators)
- Compile available data (a lot already exists)
- Find out all existing station points.

September:

- Identify and evaluate all requirements (federal and state rules and regulations) that would apply
- Figure out what can and can't be done given laws that prohibit collusion
- Identify the potential need for new station points
- Identify how the co-op will interact/coordinate with the ongoing state coordination activities
- Figure out who is interested in participating in the co-op (based on responses to a question included in the survey instrument)
- Develop a full inventory of the transportation services capacity in the region
- Represent the capacity on a map.

October:

- Establish minimum standards that would have to be adopted for vehicles and operators
- Figure out the potential benefits for all supplier co-op members
- Figure out what the requirements for membership should include

- Identify opportunities for joint purchasing
- Figure out how to handle reservations.

November:

- Establish a mechanism for providing opportunities to co-op members
- Figure out how to transfer passengers (and baggage, bicycles, etc.) between providers
- Figure out how to charge people (fares)
- Figure out how to split the revenue (interline)
- Figure out how the co-op should administer money.

December:

- This will allow for completion of tasks that have not yet been completed.

On an ongoing basis:

- Keep it simple
- Identify other funding sources
- In the future, the co-op could lobby for additional funding for transportation

The participants agreed that Wendy Lowe should develop a schedule of meetings. Mondays and Wednesdays are better than other days of the week and afternoons are better than mornings. She was urged to plan for conference calls that would not exceed an hour in length and to help keep the discussions moving along. All agreed that the objectives for each scheduled call should be outlined and that the group should keep moving. Wendy will discourage re-opening any discussions once they have been completed.

July 9, 2009 Participants

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