



Keeping Harris County Moving:

A coordinated approach



Program Overview

- Administered by Harris County Community Services Department - Transit Division
- Target market – seniors, persons with disabilities and low in-come
- Service area – incorporated and unincorporated areas of Harris County and fill gaps within METRO Lift service area
- Subsidized trips for non-emergency transportation
- Demand response service
- Mobility Management – Mobility Coordinators (3)
 - Ambassador Service (8)
 - Coordination with United Way 211 Referral



Providing Transportation solutions that work!

A Seat For Everyone: (coordinate with 15 Agencies)

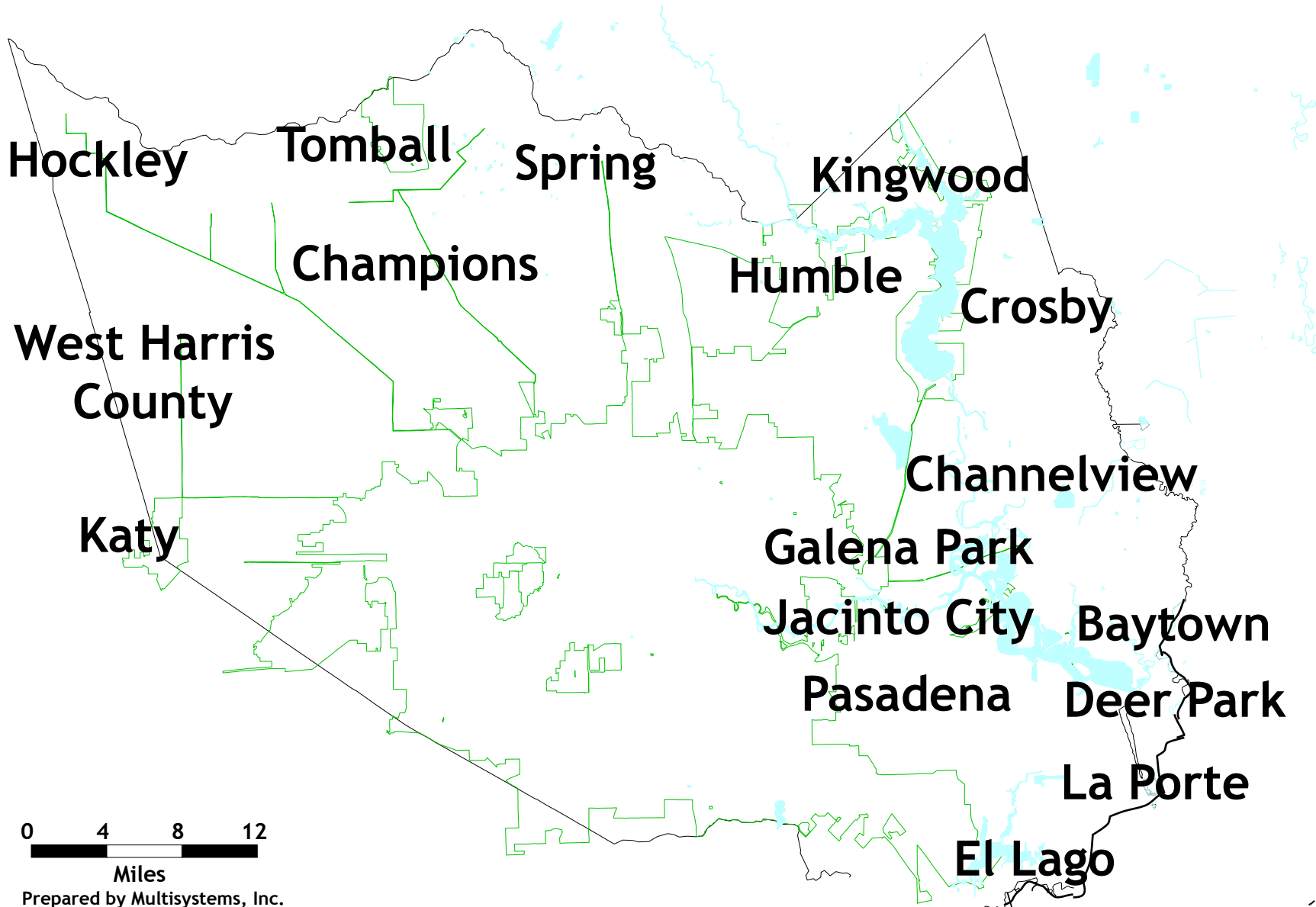
- Seniors
- Community based human services clients
- Personal care home clients
- Assisted Living Centers
- Veterans
- Adult Day Centers
- Senior Citizens Programs
- Women's Shelters
- ADA Paratransit
- Short-term Disabilities

Program Coordination

- Harris County METROLift
- Local Agencies
- Local Transportation providers
- Local Municipalities in unincorporated areas of Harris County
- Other Harris County & City of Houston Agencies



Identified Areas of Need



0 4 8 12
Miles

Prepared by Multisystems, Inc.

Customer Eligibility/ Service Area

Eligibility

- 60 + - Proof of age
- Disabled – Proof of disability
- Low in-come (\$21,450 individuals outside of METRO service area)
- Customer registration
- Fare card in hand

Service Area

- Unincorporated areas of Harris County/while filling in gaps within METROLift service area

Transit Coordination

One System - Many Offerings

Rides coordinates with MetroLift

- Through Public Information and Referral Process (websites linked)
- Harris County Transit Services has a joint venture with METRO to provide Commuter Park and Ride Services from Baytown to the downtown business district
- Harris County Transit Services in coordination with local municipalities provides “fixed routes” in Baytown and Pasadena



Agency Coordination

15 Agencies:

- Area Agency on Aging
- Alzheimer's Association
- Astrocare Class Inc.
- Bay Area Turning Point
- City of Baytown
- City of Pasadena
- Cypress Assisted Ministry
- Pct2 Together
- Gate Way To Care
- Gulf Coast Community Association
- Houston's Amazing Place
- Houston Area Parkinson Society
- Jewish Community Center
- Sheltering Arms Senior Services
- TIRR Memorial Hermann
- Touch of Class



Assist with:

- Customer enrollment/intake
- Customer education
- Ticket purchases
(*at discounted price*)

Agency Coordination

- Assist with customer in-take and education
- Purchase transportation services for clients with no charge to the client **or**
- Purchase discounted transportation services
- Fares are subsidized by grant funding – 50%



Providing the type of services seniors want

- No Trip Purpose (non-emergency)
- County wide services
- Same day service or 24 hours notice
- Availability 24/7- 365 days (taxis)
- Personal Safety
 - curb to curb
 - door to door on selected routes with Ambassadors; assistance with small packages and escort into Doctor's offices
 - high quality, reliable service
 - Customer Choices

Customer Services

- **Two choices of transportation modes**
 - **Seven contracts with local transportation providers**

Shared-ride van services – 4 Providers

- American Red Cross
- Genson Transit
- Regional Medical
- Medicab Transport

Taxi service- 3 Providers

- Greater Houston Transportation
- Lonestar/Liberty Cab Company
- Pasadena Taxi



Customer Entry into Program

- Two points of customer in-take:

Enrollment through Partner Agency

Enrollment directly through RIDES

Trip Pricing

- Shared-Ride vans – cost based on mileage/distance
 - Minimum \$6.00 (1-3 mile trip)
 - Maximum \$42.00 (20+ mile trip anywhere within Harris County)
- Taxi Cab – cost based on meter rate
 - Maximum \$48.00 fare per one-way trip
- All fares are subsidized at 50%

Rider Characteristics

- Primary destinations - medical and shopping
- 40% of riders are persons age 60+
- 38% of riders are disabled
- 22% of riders are low-income

Based on Survey data:

- 25% make all of their trips using **RIDES**
- If no **RIDES**:
 - 39% would get a ride from other people

28% would not travel without RIDES

Program Statistics



- **Over 4,000 clients registered in client database**
- **Delivered over 50,000 trips in 2010**
- **Total Program Trips since 2003- 352,000**
- **Average cost per trip - \$19.00**
- **Average trip length - 13 miles**

Blended Funding



- **Federal Funding:**
 - Section 5310 Elderly and Disabled
 - FTA 5307 Formula Funding
 - FTA 5317 New Freedom
- **United Way provides local match for New Freedom RIDES+ Program**

Highlights



- ✓ Implemented new electronic fare card access of services, eliminate paper tickets and easier
- ✓ Identified as Best Practice in 2011 Texas Department of Transportation Study for bridging gaps in transportation services within urban areas; presented as senior transportation model at the 2011 Area Agency on Aging National Conf;
- ✓ 2005 “Outstanding Innovation” award in Community Improvement category from Texas Association of Counties Leadership Foundation

Program Benefits

Flexibility



- Utilizing decentralized scheduling to reduce overhead
- Customer chooses best transportation provider for them
- Taxi-cab option provides expanded service hour coverage (weekends)
- Agreements with participating agencies
- Not free... but subsidized
- Affordable way for participating agencies to provide transportation
- Aid small transportation providers with marketing and customer base growth

Service Delivery Goals

- Help seniors and persons with disabilities maintain independence
- Provide elderly and disabled friendly service
- Provide good customer service – starting with Rides staff to dispatchers & drivers
- Provide reliable and on-time service
- Provide a coordinated approach linking customers, agencies and transportation providers for customers to improve & maintain quality of life

Next Steps

- Continue coordination with Agencies with **specific focus** in Northwest/west part of Harris County.
- Coordinate with other Transit Agencies to develop connectivity beyond Harris County line

Contact Information

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