

JEFFERSON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION PLAN

December 2007

PREPARED BY:

SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**IN COOPERATION WITH
THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION**

Public transportation is one of the key elements of the Jefferson County Multimodal Transportation System and is a basic building block for developing a thriving and well balanced economy for Jefferson County. Public transportation provides benefits to a variety of individuals, businesses, and industries that rely on it, particularly the elderly, persons with disabilities, and low income persons. To ensure a comprehensive approach in the provision of public transportation, it is essential that a transportation coordination plan be developed for Jefferson County as an implementation tool when developing transportation services for the transit-dependent population so they can remain active members of the community.

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Jefferson County, the Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) has taken the lead in effort to prepare the Jefferson County Transportation Coordination Plan. To this end, SARPC has worked in collaboration with the other transportation providers and stakeholders in the County to respond to the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SFETEA-LU)” requirements, which were adopted by Congress in 2005. The purpose of the plan is to help improve the transportation services for persons with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with low incomes. The plan identifies proposed projects that will assist the transportation providers in better utilizing their respective resources in terms of address the transportation needs of this target group. The end result is to improve transportation services to the target and will enable eligible agencies and public transportation providers to apply for the following Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs:

- Section 5310: Formula Grants for Special Needs of Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities. This program is a discretionary capital assistance program. In cases where public transit is inadequate or inappropriate, the grants can be awarded to private non-profit organizations to serve the transportation needs of elderly persons and persons with disabilities. The program requires coordination with other federally assisted programs and services in order to make the most efficient use of Federal resources.
- Section 5316: Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC). The JARC program actually authorizes two kinds of grants: 1) Job access grants that are aimed at developing new transportation services for low-income workers and/or filling in gaps in existing services and 2) Reverse commute projects that provide transportation to suburban jobs from urban, rural and other suburban locations. The Grantee is required to provide a 50% match for operating costs and a 20% match for capital projects. The purpose of the program is to enhance transportation opportunities of the low income individuals to access places of employment.

- Section 5317: New Freedom Program. The New Freedom formula grant program goals are to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work force and full participation in society. Lack of adequate transportation to and from the workplace is a primary barrier for individuals with disabilities. The New Freedom Program grant program seeks to expand the transportation mobility options available to persons with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

▣ PLANNING PROCESS ▣

Development of the Jefferson County Transportation Coordination Plan involved the participation of all of the local transportation providers and others who desired to become stakeholders in the transportation coordination process. Also participating in the planning process were the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, Arkansas Department of Human Services, TEA Staff, the Cities of Pine Bluff and White Hall, and the SARPC staff who directed the process. Three informal Stakeholders meetings were held, and a public hearing was held in order to obtain public input from low income persons, senior citizens, person with disabilities, and other interested parties concerning their transportation needs. The meetings/hearings are summarized below.

- The initial stakeholder meeting was an informal meeting held for the purpose of collecting data on the type of transportation services provided by the participants, discussion of existing transportation coordination services taking place at this time, and what possible transportation coordination projects could be considered in the next five years.
- The second stakeholder meeting again was an informal meeting to discuss and adopt transportation goals and to determine what type of coordination projections should be considered in the future to better service those persons with low incomes, senior citizens and person with disabilities.
- The next step in the planning process was conducting the public hearing. Large print notices of the Public Hearing were published in the Pine Bluff Commercial and were also posted in the public library, Pine Bluff and White Hall city halls, Southeast Arkansas Area Agency of the Aging, Jefferson County Office of the Arkansas Department to Human Services, the local offices of the Arkansas Workforce Center, and the SARPC web-site. Only two persons were in attendance at the public hearing, however, the SARPC staff did receive a number of telephone calls concerning public transportation after the legal notices were published in the paper and several calls after the public hearing was held. All the calls received were requests that Pine Bluff extend the evening hours of its fixed route service and/or implement Saturday and Sunday service.

- After the public hearing was conducted, the stakeholder committee held their third meeting. At this meeting, the stakeholders reviewed the public hearing comments and then developed a list of projects to be implemented over the next five years that would address both the comments made at the public hearing and the goals the participants adopted at the second meeting that the stakeholders would try to address within the next five years.

STAKEHOLDER MEMBERS

Following are the participants in the Transportation Coordination Plan planning process:

Dixie Clark Area Agency on Aging of Southeast Arkansas	Dianne Adams Dianne Adams Health Daycare	Larnell Davis Jefferson Comprehensive Care
Melissa Hudspeth Jefferson Hospital Association	Zelda Hoaglan Jenkins Memorial Center	Clarence Perkins Southeast Arkansas Behavior Health Center
Annette Holmes St. Johns Alexander Towers	Jeannie Epperson Pine Bluff Housing Authority	Tony Barr Area Agency on Aging of Southeast Arkansas
Tom Eubanks Jenkins Memorial Center & Industries	William Campbell Arkansas Workforce Center	Lee Turner Arkansas Department of Human Services
Donna Stone Trinity Village Retirement, Inc.	Larry Reynolds Pine Bluff Transit	Allan Skinner Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission

GOALS

The following goals were adopted by the planning process participants:

- Strive to implement those transportation coordination programs and projects that will improve the quality of transportation services available to the citizens of Jefferson County.
- Increase the cost efficiency and efficiency of delivering transportation services.
- Expand the availability of transportation service to those persons with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with low incomes.
- Establish an on-going communication and decision-making mechanism among transportation providers to guide the plan implementation and address transportation

coordination issues that will provide for a more efficient method of providing transportation service.

A tentative goal that will be further refined as the planning process continues is to encourage cooperation and coordination with a consistent means of project development and selection for allocation of the identified financial resources.

STAKEHOLDER AGENCIES – SERVICES PROVIDED

PINE BLUFF TRANSIT

Pine Bluff Transit (PBT) is public transit system owned and operated by the City of Pine Bluff. PBT operates six buses on six radial/circular fixed routes. PBT also provides Para-transit service within the fixed route service area. Eighty-five percent of the City’s land area is within the PBT service area and eighty percent of the City’s residents live within the transit service area. PBT hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. excluding City holidays.

Service Area	City of Pine Bluff
Type of Clientele	General public
Type of Service	6 Fixed route and ADA para-transit Demand Response
Total Number of Vehicles	10
Average Seating Capacity per Vehicle	24
ADA Accessible Vehicles	10
Average Daily Ridership	210
Days of Operation	Monday through Friday
Hours of Operation	6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS, INC.

The Area Agency on Aging of Southeast Arkansas, Inc. oversees the operation of the Southeast Arkansas Transportation (SEAT), a rural public transit system that provides a full range of transportation services for all ages throughout a fourteen county area in Southeast Arkansas. SEAT also transports senior citizens to and from the local senior citizen center and provides medical non-emergency transportation service. SEAT operates a demand response transit system

in Jefferson County in areas outside of PBT's service area. SEAT's normal hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., excluding holidays. On request, wheelchair lifts vans are available for people with special needs.

Service Area	Jefferson County excluding PBT service area
Type of Clientele	General public, senior citizens, and qualified Medicaid recipients
Type of Service	Demand response
Total Number of Vehicles	73 (approximately 60 vehicles are operated in Jefferson County)
Average Seating Capacity per Vehicle	10
ADA Accessible Vehicles	60
Average Daily Ridership	230
Days of Operation	Monday through Friday
Hours of Operation	7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

JEFFERSON REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Jefferson Regional Medical Center operators' two vehicles for their indigent patients who have no insurance. The transportation service provided is for patients who need to be hospitalized and or have medical appointments at the Medical Center

Service Area	Jefferson County
Type of Clientele	Person with no insurance/Home health care/Trips for discharges from hospital and appointment to hospital facilities.
Type of Service	Demand response
Total Number of Vehicles	2
Average Seating Capacity per Vehicle	12
ADA Accessible Vehicles	2
Average Daily Ridership	15
Days of Operation	Monday through Friday
Hours of Operation	7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

JENKINS MEMORIAL CENTER

Jenkins Memorial Center is a day school, therapeutic center, and parent agency for programs that provide services for persons with disabilities from birth through adulthood. The Center provides transportation service to its clientele as on a need basis.

Service Area	Jefferson County
Type of Clientele	Clients enrolled in the various programs

Type of Service	Fixed routes
Total Number of Vehicles	12
Average Seating Capacity	12
ADA Accessible Vehicles	7
Average Daily Ridership	192
Days of Operation	Monday through Friday and on week- ends special events
Hours of Operation	6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

JENKINS INDUSTRIES WORK CENTER

Jenkins Industrial Work Center is a non-profit organization that serves adults with disabilities to provide educational and on-the-job training programs. The vehicles that operator are used to transport their clientele to and from the residence to the work center.

Service Area	Jefferson County
Type of Clientele	Clients enrolled in training work and training programs
Type of Service	Fixed routes
Total Number of Vehicles	3
Average Seating Capacity	12
ADA Accessible Vehicle	0
Average Daily Ridership	72
Days of Operation	Monday through Friday
Hours of Operation	6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

JENKINS HOUSING INC.

Jenkins Housing Inc. operators a residentially based facility for individuals with disabilities and who are over the age of 18 years. The provide medical care, and have staff that provides daily 24 hour a day, seven days a week to assist the residents. The vehicles the agency operators are used providing routine transportation services for the residence of the housing complex.

Service Area	Jefferson County
Type of Clientele	Residence of the Housing Complex
Type of Service	Demand response
Total Number of Vehicles	3
Average Seating Capacity	12
ADA Accessible Vehicles	1
Average Daily Ridership	77
Days of Operation	Transportation available to residence 7 days a week, year round;
Hours of Operation	Daily 24 hours a day

SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS BEHAVIOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, INC.

Southeast Arkansas Behavior Healthcare System, Inc. provides medical services for person who are suffering from emotional problem, substance abuse or mental illness. The agency services include patience's evaluations, treatment and emergency services. The vehicles that the agency operators are to provide transportation for those patience's that need transportation to and from the center.

Service Area	Jefferson County
Type of Clientele	Their patience's who qualify transportation services
Type of Service	Fixed routes
Total Number of Vehicles	9
Average Seating Capacity	16
ADA Accessible Vehicles	1
Average Daily Ridership	70
Days of Operation	Monday through Friday
Hours of Operation	7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

JEFFERSON COMPREHENSIVE CARE SYSTEM, INC.

Jefferson Comprehensive Care System is a primary provider of health care services to the citizens of Jefferson County especially for the underserved, uninsured and economically disadvantaged residents of their service area. They have clinic located in Pine Bluff, Althiemer, and Redfield. They have only one vehicle used to transport their clientele. They rely on the Area Agency of Aging to transport the majority of there clientele.

Service Area	Jefferson County
Type of Clientele	Clients that are receiving services at the three clinics
Type of Service	Demand response
Total Number of Vehicles	1
Average Seating Capacity	6
ADA Accessible Vehicles	1
Average Daily Ridership	25
Day of Operation Hours of Operation	Monday through Friday
Hours of Operation	7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

DIANNE'S ADULT DAY CARE CENTER, INC.

Dianne's Adult Day Care Center, Inc. provides in house day care services to for the elderly on Monday through Friday daily bases. The Vehicles the agency operator are used to transport their clientele to and from center.

Service Area	Jefferson County
Type of Clientele	Clients

Type of Service	Fixed routes
Total Number of Vehicles	3
Average Seating Capacity	121
ADA Accessible Vehicles	1
Average Daily Ridership	20
Days of Operation	Monday through Friday
Hours of Operation	7:00a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

ST. JOHN’S ALEXANDER TOWERS

St. John’s Alexander Towers is a low income elderly housing complex. They have one vehicle that they use for transporting their residence.

Service Area	Jefferson County
Type of Clientele	Residence
Type of Service	Demand response
Total Number of Vehicles	1
ADA Accessible Vehicles	0
Average Daily Ridership	5
Days of Operation	Available on daily bases year round
Hours of Operation	On a as need bases

TAXI CAB SERVICE

In developing this Plan the three taxi cabs that provide transportation services in Pine Bluff elected not to participate in the Planning Process. In one aspect the three taxi cab companies in the City of Pine Bluff operating in violation of The City of Pine Bluff City Codes in that none of them have paid the City occupation tax and have not furnished the City with proof that they have required vehicle insurance for their respective taxi cabs.

▣ SELECTED DEMOGRAPHICS ▣

BASIC PROFILE OF JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson contains 913 square miles and is home to 84,278 people according to the 2000 Census. The Arkansas River dissects the County from the northwest to southeast, dividing it into two portions. On the north side of the River is the Mississippi Alluvial delta plain and on the south side is the West Gulf Coastal Plain. The north side of the River can be characterized as rural and agriculturally oriented; less than 10% of the County’s population is located on this side of the River. The Cities of Altheimer, which has a population of 1,192, Humphrey, which has a population of 806, Sherrill, population 126, and Wabbaseka, population 324, are located on the north side of the River. The

south side of the River can be characterized as the urbanized area of the County., containing the Cities of Pine Bluff, population 55,135, White Hall, population 4,732, and Redfield, population 1,157, are located on the south side of the River.

POPULATION

The population of the City of Pine Bluff as well as Jefferson County as a whole has been decreasing since 1980. The Census Bureau 2005 estimated County population is 81,700, which represents a 3.1% decrease from the 2000 population, and Pine Bluff's estimated 2005 population is 52,693, representing a 4.4% decrease from the 2000 population. The only two Cities that have experienced a continuous increase in population growth since 1980 are the Cities of Redfield and White Hall. The Census Bureau's 2005 estimated population for the City of Redfield is 1,173, which represents a 1.3% increase from 2000, and the City of White Hall's estimated 2005 population is 5,114, which represents an 8.1% increase from 2000. Some of the County's out-migration of population is caused by residents moving to rural/suburban Cleveland County, Grant County, and Lincoln County and commuting to places of employment in Jefferson County. This is evidenced by the fact that Jefferson County's civil labor force has been growing at a very small percentage rate since 2000. However, the 2000 Census identified 3,372 households in the County or 11.0% of all the households as having no vehicle available, it would appear that transit dependent individuals continue to reside in the urbanized area Jefferson County where transit service is more available.

POVERTY, AGE, AND DISABILITY

According to the 2002 Census Small Area Income and Poverty estimates there were 17,276 people in the County that are living below the Federal poverty level, which represents 20.4% of the County population as compared to 15.6% for the State of Arkansas. The Census also shows that 10,888 (12.9%) of its population is persons 65 year of age or older of which 5,196 (47.7%) were classified as disabled. Furthermore, 11,406 (26.2%) persons between the age 21 and 64 were classified as disabled, 5,657 (49.6%) of whom were employed. Another 1,931 persons between the ages of 5 to 20 were classified as disabled, representing 9.4% of the population of this age group. The total number of person who are over the age 5 and over who are classified as being disabled are 18,533.

The Jefferson County Office of the Arkansas Department of Work Fore Service states that it serves between 300 and 400 persons through the TEA (Transitional Employment Assistance) Program. TEA is a time-limited assistance program to help needy families with children become more responsible for their own support and less dependent on public assistance. One of these services is providing transportation assistance.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONCLUSIONS

- Studies and population projections prepared by various organizations show that the number of persons over the age of 65 will continue to increase over the next 30 years,

