

**City of Lawrence Coordinated Public Transportation Development Plan**  
**Chapter 3**  
**Review of Peer Universities and Transit Systems**

**1. Introduction**

The public outreach efforts in the first phase of this study revealed several concerns related to coordination and/or consolidation of the City and University transit systems, within a context of general support for enhanced integration of transit services. Riders want to get from point A to point B as quickly as possible for a reasonable cost, and are generally indifferent to how transit is organized. Several stakeholders did raise finance, governance, and implementation issues.

In response to these concerns, the project team broadened the scope of a planned review of peer transit systems and universities. Team members contacted all Big 12 universities and the transit agencies serving these communities to gain a greater understanding of how transit agencies and universities work together (or not) to provide mobility for students, faculty, and staff as well as for the general public. The peer review focus is on Big 12 universities because their experiences would have the greatest relevance for the University of Kansas. Three other universities/communities (University of Illinois/Champaign/Urbana, University of Michigan/Ann Arbor, and Michigan State University/Lansing) were added to the peer list because all have had long-running, successful programs.

The project team developed an interview outline and contacted each transit agency and university, using web sites and the American Public Transportation Association's directory of transit agencies to identify preliminary contacts. Telephone interviews took between 30 and 45 minutes each, but yielded interesting background information that we would not have obtained with a printed survey. A few respondents could not be reached despite repeated efforts. Interview topics included:

- Provider of transit service at the university and off-campus
- History of the program
- Program structure
- Means to address student needs
- Funding and (if applicable) fee levels
- Governance, including roles of the transit agency, university, and students
- Stumbling blocks and resolutions
- Best features and drawbacks of the current situation
- Lessons learned

As shown in this chapter, there is no one model for coordination of transit in a university setting. The next section summarizes interview responses from both the transit and university perspectives. The responses indicate that different approaches have worked reasonably well from both perspectives. Following the summary of interview results, each university/transit agency program is described briefly.

**2. Peer Interview Results**

Peer interviews were conducted via telephone with the most knowledgeable representatives of the transit agencies and universities. University interviewees usually worked in the Parking and

Transportation Department or a similar department on campus, while transit interviewees were involved in the origin and/or operation of the program. Results are presented by interview topic in this section.

**Transit Service Provider**

The most common model is for either the transit agency or the university to provide all service on campus (see Table 10). The three cases where the university provides all service are in small towns without transit systems. At Texas A&M, the transit agency headquartered in nearby Bryan, TX offers semester passes and provides service to the periphery of campus, but no routes enter the campus. At Nebraska and Michigan, city buses serve the main campus and provide connections between campuses, but the University operates its own campus shuttles. At Baylor, the transit agency and the University jointly operate a shuttle serving campus and the nearby vicinity. At Colorado, the University operates an internal shuttle using old school buses and used transit vehicles and the City of Boulder contracts one route serving a dormitory complex, but all other service is operated by the transit agency.

In nearly all cases, service is provided both on and off campus. Colorado, Kansas State (K-State in the tables), and Nebraska operate shuttles that serve campus only (or connect campuses). At Oklahoma and Oklahoma State (OSU in the tables), the university transit system serves the City as well as the University; there is no City transit system in either Stillwater or Norman.

**Table 10  
Transit Service Provider on Campus**

| Transit Agency only   | Primarily Transit Agency | Both Transit Agency and University | Primarily University | University Only            |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Baylor<br>Iowa State<br>Missouri<br>Texas<br>Texas Tech<br>Illinois<br>Michigan State | Colorado                 | Nebraska<br>Michigan               | Texas A&M            | K-State<br>Oklahoma<br>OSU |

**History of the Program**

Dating the origin of campus transit programs is not an exact science: services and funding have changed over the years, making it difficult to say exactly when a program began. Table 11 shows a general trend toward additional campus programs with time. This coincides with national studies that have noted a growing trend in university-transit partnerships.

**Table 11  
Origin of the Campus Transit Programs**

| 1980 or earlier                       | 1981-1990                         | 1991-2000                                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Texas<br>Texas Tech<br>Michigan State | Oklahoma<br>Texas A&M<br>Illinois | Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Nebraska<br>OSU |

The primary motivation for transit agencies to become involved in campus transit services was to increase ridership by tapping into an underserved market of college students. As Table 12 shows, universities had a wider variety of motivations, including improved access, improved circulation on campus, reduced need for parking, access to transit agency expertise, and access to capital funds. As programs have continued, many universities have achieved benefits beyond those initially targeted.

**Table 12**  
**Reason for Initial University Interest in Transit Service on Campus**

| Expertise of Transit Agency | Special Events | Access to Capital Funds | Discourage Cars/Reduce Need for Parking | Improve Access to Campus  | Improve Campus Circulation   |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| Baylor<br>Missouri<br>Texas | Baylor         | Nebraska<br>Texas       | Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Illinois      | Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Missouri<br>Nebraska<br>Oklahoma<br>Texas A&M<br>Texas Tech<br>Michigan | Iowa State<br>K-State<br>OSU |

**Program Structure**

Major elements of program structure are shown in Table 13. Use of a student fee to fund transit is very common. In exchange for a student fee as a funding source, many transit agencies provide unlimited access to all transit services, not just those on campus. Texas A&M provides unlimited access to all of its services, whether on or off campus, but students must pay to ride the city bus. Nebraska uses a combination of student fees and parking revenue to fund transit service. Some universities also fund unlimited access for its staff and faculty.

**Table 13**  
**Program Structure**

| Reduced Fare or Pass on City Buses             | Free Fare on Campus Only      | Unlimited Access to All Transit  | Funded via Student Fee   | University Funds Staff/Faculty  | Funded via Parking Revenue |
|--|-------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Baylor<br>Missouri<br>Texas A&M<br>Mich. State | Baylor<br>K-State<br>Missouri | Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Nebraska<br>Oklahoma<br>Texas<br>Texas A&M<br>Texas Tech<br>Illinois<br>Michigan | Baylor<br>Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Missouri<br>Nebraska<br>Oklahoma<br>OSU<br>Texas A&M<br>Texas Tech<br>Illinois | Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Texas | K-State<br>Nebraska        |

Service levels vary. Some campus services operate only during daytime hours. Some offer late night services at least two or three days per week. Weekend service is not always provided. The most frequent routes are usually on-campus circulators.

**Means to Address Student Needs**

All transit agencies and universities mentioned that routes are designed with student needs in mind. The more interesting question is how student needs are transmitted and resolved. Some type of advisory role, either through formal committees or informal consultation with student government leaders, is the most common means, as shown in Table 14.

Students have no formal role at some schools, while at others their role is more important. Two of the six members on the Transit Board in Ames serving Iowa State are students. At Texas, students form a majority on the Shuttle Bus Committee, which has to approve any service change affecting campus routes. At Texas Tech, the Student Government Association has to approve the routes serving campus. At Baylor, the University has final approval over campus routes.

**Table 14  
Means to Address Student Needs**

| Students Have Final Authority | University Has Final Authority | Students Serve on Governing Board | Advisory Committees/ Consultation        | Monitor/ On-Board Surveys | No Formal Role for Students  |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| Texas<br>Texas Tech           | Baylor                         | Iowa State                        | Nebraska<br>OSU<br>Texas A&M<br>Illinois | Baylor<br>OSU             | Baylor<br>Colorado<br>K-State<br>Missouri<br>Oklahoma<br>Michigan<br>Mich. State |

**Funding and Fee Levels**

As noted earlier, a student fee is the most common means of funding campus transit. Table 15 shows that nearly all of the peer universities levy a student fee. Many universities pass on the proceeds of the student fees to the transit agency (some deduct an administrative fee) in exchange for transit service. The level of service is frequently but not always specified. Missouri and Nebraska levy student fees but negotiate contracts with the local transit agencies for service, a subtle difference that provides an intermediate step between student fees and service provision. At Michigan, the city transit system considers its increased Federal funding as a result of student ridership as unlimited access program funding. Oklahoma, OSU, and Texas A&M operate their own transit systems.

**Table 15  
Funding Campus Transit**

| Student Fee to Transit Agency                                       | Student Fee to University                            | University Contracts with Transit Agency | Transit Agency or State Funding              | University Funding   | Parking Revenue                    | City Subsidizes Added Service |
|---|--|--|--|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Baylor<br>Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Texas<br>Texas Tech<br>Illinois | Missouri<br>Nebraska<br>Oklahoma<br>OSU<br>Texas A&M | Missouri<br>Nebraska                     | Texas<br>Illinois<br>Michigan<br>Mich. State | Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Texas<br>Michigan<br>Mich. State | K-State<br>Nebraska<br>Mich. State | Colorado                      |

Student fees do not always cover the total operating cost of campus transit service. At Texas, the local transit agency contributes 35 percent of operating cost, while the university funds the entire cost of a shuttle to its research campus. At Illinois, the transit agency relies on a State program that funds 55 percent of all eligible operating expenses. Colorado pays \$75 per year per faculty and staff member to provide unlimited access through an EcoPass program. Texas pays \$10 per year per faculty and staff member to provide unlimited access. Iowa State subsidizes 50 percent of the cost of transit passes for faculty and staff. Iowa State also contributes additional funding in support of transit. At Nebraska, student fees cover 30 percent of the cost and parking revenue accounts for the remaining 70 percent. Kansas State funds its modest campus shuttle entirely through parking revenue. Finally, at Colorado the City of Boulder subsidizes additional transit service that does not meet the performance standards of the regional transit agency.

Table 16 shows student fee levels for transit at peer universities. A few peer respondents noted that the transit fee is not broken out separately from a broader activities fee or are included in a broader transportation fee, but the values in Table 16 represent the fee dedicated to transit. Transit fees range from \$12 per semester at Missouri to \$60 per semester at Texas A&M. The current student fee at the University of Kansas, which has historically charged lower fees than other Big 12 schools, is \$22 per semester including Safe Ride. The Michigan state legislature has defined any mandatory fee as tuition and does not permit dedicated use of such fees.

**Table 16  
Student Transit Fee Levels**

| <b>University</b> | <b>Student Fee</b>     |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Baylor            | Unsure                 |
| Colorado          | \$50 per semester      |
| Iowa State        | \$48.50 per semester   |
| K-State           | No fee                 |
| Missouri          | \$12 per semester      |
| Nebraska          | --                     |
| Oklahoma          | \$1.50 per credit hour |
| OSU               | \$2 per semester hour  |
| Texas             | \$52.50 per semester   |
| Texas A&M         | \$60 per semester      |
| Texas Tech        | \$3.50 per credit hour |
| Illinois          | \$38 per semester      |
| Michigan          | No fee                 |
| Mich. State       | No fee                 |

**Governance**

There are a variety of models for governance of campus transit service. Table 17 shows who has final decision making power regarding transit service. While most transit agencies and universities have evolved a cooperative approach to address transit issues, the power to grant final approval to a proposed change is generally vested in one party.

**Table 17  
Governance**

| Students Have Final Approval | University Has Final Approval   | Transit Agency Has Final Approval                              | Transit Board with Equal Representation |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Texas<br>Texas Tech          | Baylor<br>K-State<br>Nebraska<br>Oklahoma<br>OSU<br>Texas A&M<br>Michigan | Colorado<br>Missouri<br>Illinois<br>Michigan<br>Michigan State | Iowa State                              |

At one end of the scale, the Regional Transit District in the Denver area is the governing body for all services related to the University of Colorado. The University and its students have a voice through the public process for any significant change in service and can also work through the elected RTD Board member representing Boulder.

At the other end of the scale, the University of Texas has a Shuttle Bus Committee made up of four students, two faculty advisors, and a student council representative. This committee, housed in the Parking & Transportation offices, makes decisions on campus routes and must approve any service change. The transit agency is a non-voting member of the committee and serves as a technical advisor. A similar arrangement is in place at Texas Tech.

Several peers report that the university functions as the governing authority. Baylor has an arrangement very similar to Texas, except that the committee with final say is a university committee that does not have a student majority. Nebraska has a transit subcommittee (with student representatives) of its parking committee that makes decisions related to shuttles on campus. This subcommittee does not have authority over city routes; issues related to these routes are negotiated with the transit agency. The other universities falling under this category either are the sole transit providers in their cities (K-State, Oklahoma, and OSU) or operate their own system (Texas A&M). Governance for the city and university systems at Michigan is separate; while the two parties cooperate, each has final say over its own service.

The Iowa State model was explored by the University of Kansas Transit Task Force. The governing board for the local transit agency, CyRide, has six members. Two represent the City, one represents the University and a second citizen appointee is usually someone with strong ties to the University, and two represent students. Iowa State cites this shared governance model as one key to its success.

In some cases, Table 17 suggests a more black-and-white world than actually exists. To address Federal regulations regarding charter service, the transit agency serving the University of Illinois included a clause in the contract stating specifically that it has sole control over routes and schedules. In actuality, the agency works closely with the university and the students on

service-related matters. In other cases, governance is unclear. At Missouri, the university views the local transit agency as the contractor while the agency considers the university as one of many stakeholders.

The interview included a question about the roles of the various parties. Table 18 provides a summary of responses. Roles are varied, depending in large part upon the governance model.

**Table 18**  
**Roles of the Transit Agency, the University, and Students**

| <b>University</b> | <b>Transit Agency Role</b>   | <b>University Role</b>   | <b>Student Role</b>  |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Baylor            | Routing, surveys, operations   | Final approval of all routes   | No formal role   |
| Colorado          | Service planning   | Fee negotiation  | No formal role   |
| Iowa State        | Operator, expertise<br>City: 2 votes on Board  | Administers fee, funds<br>2 votes on Board   | 2 votes on Board   |
| K-State           | No transit agency  | Operates shuttle   | No formal role   |
| Missouri          | Service provider/<br>contractor  | Administration and<br>planning   | No formal role; several<br>student committees<br>have input  |
| Nebraska          | Service provider/<br>contractor  | Operates shuttles on<br>campus, administers<br>pass program                                    | Serve on shuttle<br>subcommittee   |
| Oklahoma          | OU is the transit<br>agency  | Transit operator   | No formal role   |
| OSU               | OSU is the transit<br>agency   | Transit operator   | Advisory Board   |
| Texas             | Operates through<br>contractor; provides<br>equipment and<br>expertise; plans;<br>responsible for bus<br>stops | Negotiates with transit<br>agency; Parking &<br>Transportation<br>designed late night<br>route | Majority on Shuttle Bus<br>Committee,<br>responsible for routes<br>and schedules for<br>campus service |
| Texas A&M         | University serves as its<br>own transit agency   | Manages system;<br>operates buses  | Advisory committees<br>99% of drivers are<br>students  |
| Texas Tech        | Schedules and<br>provides service  | Manages program on<br>the broader level  | Define service details<br>(routes, stops)  |
| Illinois          | Plans and operates<br>service  | Supports faculty and<br>staff usage  | Advise and consult   |
| Michigan          | Plans and operates<br>service  | Plans and operates its<br>own campus service   | No formal role   |
| Mich. State       | Plans and operates<br>service  | Negotiates with transit<br>agency; 1 non-voting<br>seat on transit board                       | No formal role   |

**Stumbling Blocks and Resolutions**

Universities and transit agencies were asked about stumbling blocks, either in reaching an original agreement or as the program evolved. Table 19 lists issues mentioned by at least two agencies or universities.

**Table 19  
Stumbling Blocks**

| <b>Campus Politics/<br/>Student Support</b>                | <b>University or Transit Support/<br/>Priority</b>    | <b>Funding</b>   | <b>Conflicting Goals</b> | <b>No Major Stumbling Blocks</b> |
|--|---|--|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Baylor<br>Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Illinois<br>Texas Tech | Baylor<br>Colorado<br>Iowa State<br>Texas<br>Michigan | Colorado<br>Texas<br>Texas A&M<br>Michigan<br>Michigan State | Colorado<br>Iowa State   | Nebraska<br>Oklahoma             |

Early and ongoing student support and the support and priority for the program on the part of the program partner (in some cases the university, in others the transit agency) were most frequently cited. Funding and conflicting goals were also noted. Communication, in the form of either formal weekly meetings or ongoing discussions, was the typical means of direct or indirect (in the case of funding) resolution of any problems. Several other stumbling blocks were mentioned by one interviewee, including:

- Governance
- Continued growth of the university
- Resentment by local riders
- Speed of implementation
- Equipment acquisition
- Type of vehicle
- Differing pay levels for city and university operators
- Mistrust
- Trademark issues in marketing the service
- Fuel cost
- Communication regarding complaints

**Best Features of the Current Situation**

Table 20 summarizes responses regarding the best features of the current situation, from the perspectives of both transit agencies and universities. Respondents mentioned a variety of best features. As might be expected, the most common response from transit agencies was increased ridership. Interestingly, universities cited increased mobility for their students more than any other response.

Transit programs allow universities to forego construction of additional parking structures or to site them at remote locations in conjunction with park-and-ride shuttles. Several respondents valued the expertise that transit agencies bring to campus shuttle operations. Other best features included good working relationships, the ability to improve service levels, and vehicle appearance. This last feature revealed a disagreement between transit agencies and universities. Transit agencies valued a unified look among all its buses. Universities preferred branding of campus services with a distinctive paint scheme and/or logo to encourage usage by students.

The “Other” category included the ability to purchase a new or more reliable fleet, low cost, positive environmental impacts, and administrative issues

**Table 20  
Best Features of the Current Situation**

| <b>Best Feature</b>  | <b>Total Responses</b> | <b>Transit Agency Responses</b> | <b>University Responses</b> |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Increased ridership/<br>increased mobility for<br>students | 10                     | 5                               | 5                           |
| Transit agency expertise                                   | 4                      | 1                               | 3                           |
| Effect on parking needs                                    | 4                      | 1                               | 3                           |
| Communication/good<br>working relationships                | 3                      | 2                               | 1                           |
| Frequency and service<br>improvements                      | 3                      | 1                               | 2                           |
| Vehicle appearance   | 3                      | 1                               | 2                           |
| Other  | 7                      | 2                               | 5                           |

### **Drawbacks of the Current Situation**

Table 21 summarizes drawbacks of the current situation as perceived by transit agencies and universities. Lack of communication and trust between the two parties was mentioned most frequently. This is a particular problem when changes in personnel or direction occur at the upper management levels. Good working relationships at the staff level and documentation of the program's benefits to both parties can ameliorate this problem, but there is always a danger on both sides of being viewed as a priority of the previous administration.

Campus politics (involving student government or other departments such as road maintenance that were not directly involved in the service) was also viewed as a drawback. Several respondents mentioned service issues such as the lack of evening service, mechanical problems or other concerns with the vehicles, and inadequate driver training. Publicizing the service was a challenge. Continued growth of the university (and therefore of demand for service) can create pressure on funding and resource limits, potentially resulting in service reductions or the inability to expand service where needed.

The "Other" category included a loss of control over service provision, lack of flexibility in making changes, difficulty in convincing staff to use transit, and cost. Two transit agencies (but no universities) responded that there were no drawbacks to current arrangements.

**Table 21**  
**Drawbacks of the Current Situation**

| <b>Drawback</b>                         | <b>Total Responses</b> | <b>Transit Agency Responses</b> | <b>University Responses</b> |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Lack of communication/<br>lack of trust | 5                      | 4                               | 1                           |
| Campus politics/issues                  | 5                      | 3                               | 2                           |
| Service issues                          | 4                      | 0                               | 4                           |
| Publicity                               | 3                      | 1                               | 2                           |
| Continued growth vs.<br>funding limits  | 4                      | 1                               | 3                           |
| Other                                   | 7                      | 4                               | 3                           |

**Lessons Learned**

The final questions for interviewees addressed potential pitfalls in replicating their programs elsewhere and whether they would do anything differently if they had to do it all over again. Table 22 summarizes responses.

**Table 22  
Lessons Learned as Reported by Interviewees**

| <b>Lessons Learned</b>                             | <b>Total Responses</b> | <b>Transit Agency Responses</b> | <b>University Responses</b> |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cooperate in a real partnership                    | 8                      | 5                               | 3                           |
| Clarify expectations and contract terms            | 6                      | 4                               | 2                           |
| Identify needed resources and funding sources      | 6                      | 3                               | 3                           |
| Begin and continue outreach to students/others     | 6                      | 4                               | 2                           |
| Focus continuous attention on operations           | 5                      | 3                               | 2                           |
| Build and maintain consensus                       | 4                      | 2                               | 2                           |
| Structure as unlimited access paid via student fee | 2                      | 0                               | 2                           |
| Realize your limits in designing service           | 2                      | 1                               | 1                           |
| Brand service (or not)                             | 2                      | 1                               | 1                           |

The need to develop a genuine partnership involving flexibility and trust on both sides was the most common response. Related to this was the need to clarify roles and expectations and to express these clearly in the contract terms. This is usually among the first steps toward building a strong relationship. Transit and university respondents both stressed the identification of necessary resources, particularly capital but also personnel needs, and of funding sources. One university respondent mentioned that, given a limited ability to issue bonds, an unlimited access program can convert a capital cost to an operating cost.

Outreach to students and others on campus was perceived as vital to any successful program. Obtaining buy-in from student leadership, clarifying how and why student fees would be used, and publicizing the program on campus were all cited by respondents. Once a successful program is up and running, ongoing outreach and publicity is still needed, since the student body turns over and new students may not have a clear understanding of program benefits. Related to this is the importance of building and maintaining consensus. Campus transit programs require coordination and cooperation from a wide variety of campus groups. A high-level supporter of the program on the university side helps greatly.

Ongoing attention to operations is also important. A focus on customer service was noted as a key factor in maintaining student support. Service on campus requires greater caution by the bus operator because of the sheer number of pedestrians. Ensuring that a sufficient number of vehicles are available to meet peak student demand and providing comfortable vehicles with amenities such as air conditioning are means to attract and retain riders. One respondent

stated that the vehicles do not have to be new; 12 to 15 year old vehicles in good condition are often available at a reasonable price.

Two university respondents emphasized the desirability of an unlimited access type of program, as opposed to bus passes for those who wish to purchase them. The benefits of an unlimited access program are that it is simple and it encourages transit use. Even with the resources provided through student fees, however, the program cannot be all things to all people. Respondents suggested the need to choose student markets carefully and to manage expectations.

The issue of unique branding for campus transit service was raised again among the lessons learned. It is true that branding reduces operational flexibility in terms of vehicles used in service, and can adversely affect the ability to introduce new vehicles acquired by the transit agency in campus service. University respondents view branding not only as an effective marketing tool but also as a means to communicate to students that “this is your service.”

### ***Summary of Peer Findings with Respect to the University of Kansas and the City of Lawrence***

Peer findings reported in this section shed light on issues raised regarding potential coordination and/or consolidation of transit services in Lawrence. Implications for some of the major issues are discussed below.

Use of student fees to fund unlimited access to campus and/or citywide transit is a common model at peer universities. Several peers transfer at least a portion of the proceeds of the fees to the transit agency. KU on Wheels is partially funded through student fees, but purchase of a semester pass or payment of the cash fare is required for KUOW buses and an additional payment is needed to ride the Lawrence Transit System.

The ability of an unlimited access program to reduce the need for parking construction on campus was specifically mentioned by several peers and was a side benefit to others. The University of Colorado noted that it has not built a parking garage since 1991.

Issues of control and governance are not unique to KU and Lawrence. The range of governance models among the peer institutions is interesting. The Iowa State model in which the City, the University, and the students have equal representation on the governing board has been cited in KU's Transit Task Force. Other models invest final authority over routes on campus with the University or with the students. The Denver RTD model is an example of the transit agency retaining control. Clearly, there are examples to address the issues of control that arose in the first round of public outreach; the problem is not unsolvable.

The challenge of upgrading capital equipment is not uncommon among peers. New vehicles are not always the initial answer (and sometimes not even the final answer), but a vehicle replacement program and contract language stating that similar types of vehicles be used for city and campus service are among the solutions to this problem.

Development of partnerships and trusts among all entities (transit, the university, and the students) has also been faced at many peers. Support of the students and high-level university administrators have been very important in making the decision to begin such partnerships. The peer results are cautionary regarding the need for continued communication and cooperation under whatever form of governance is selected.

3. Peer Experiences with Campus Transit Services

This section summarizes the interview results at each peer campus, reflecting both transit agency and university perspectives. Each peer section is organized to include information on:

- Program Structure
- Governance
- Funding
- Stumbling Blocks
- Best Features
- Drawbacks
- Pitfalls
- If Had to Do All Over Again

A large proportion of students living off campus can be an impetus to providing transit service. Each peer university provided estimates of total student enrollment and the number of students living on campus (in a few cases, web sites served as the data source). These are shown in Table 23. At most peer schools, the large majority of students live off-campus.

Table 23  
Estimates of Total Student Enrollment and Number of Students Living On Campus

| University  | Total # Students | # Students Living on Campus | % Students Living on Campus |
|-------------|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Baylor      | 13,000           | 4,250                       | 33%                         |
| Colorado    | 30,000           | 6,000                       | 20%                         |
| Iowa State  | 26,000           | 7,700                       | 30%                         |
| K-State     | 23,000           | 3,700                       | 16%                         |
| Missouri    | 28,000           | 6,000                       | 21%                         |
| Nebraska    | 22,000           | 8,034                       | 37%                         |
| Oklahoma    | 31,400           | 23,910                      | 76%                         |
| OSU         | 23,571           | 5,000                       | 21%                         |
| Texas       | 50,000           | 8,000                       | 16%                         |
| Texas A&M   | 45,000           | 11,000                      | 24%                         |
| Texas Tech  | 29,000           | 4,500                       | 16%                         |
| Illinois    | 30,900           | 8,550                       | 28%                         |
| Michigan    | 34,000           | 11,000                      | 32%                         |
| Mich. State | 45,200           | 15,000                      | 33%                         |

**Baylor University/Waco Transit**

Program Structure: Baylor University (BU) contracts with Waco Transit (WT) for service. Campus service has its own identity: Baylor University Shuttle, or B.U.S. All vehicles are ADA accessible, branded as Baylor University (three are replica trolleys; one is a small bus with a BU wrap). Four routes, identified by color, operate on class days every 15 minutes between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. B.U.S. service is free to anyone. B.U.S. serves two apartment complexes

with a combined 1,500 students just at the periphery of campus. Ridership is increasing this year, with the largest increases coming from the apartment complexes adjacent to campus. Construction on campus has removed between 400 and 500 parking spaces.

WT provides the assets and personnel as well as the transit expertise. WT makes recommendations and BU decides. BU's Campus Services will review recommendations with the Vice President of Student Life, the campus police, and directors of residence halls. Frequently, they will go out and drive the routes before deciding.

Waco Transit (WT) provides service on and off campus, and offers reduced fare on all WT routes for students (including college students) with a transit ID. Flag stops are used (all WT service is flag stop). Also, WT and Baylor negotiated a charter rate for special services; Baylor thinks of WT first now with regard to football and basketball games and other needs.

Baylor had looked at purchasing vehicles and running shuttles themselves, but realized how much was involved to it and decided to talk with WT. First arrangements were to run special services for football and basketball games, cooperation grew from there. Some apartments paid for shuttle services to campus. From WT's perspective, agency is always looking to enhance services. Baylor University was a natural fit.

Four years ago, service on campus was ineffective, with 30 to 60 minute headways and unreliable on-time performance. Now, service is every 15 minutes on all routes, and the routes are designed to circulate within 15 minutes so that each route needs only one bus. Continued growth of the campus forced this change, and continues to have an impact.

Governance: WT recommends routes; BU administration makes the final decisions. This year, Parking and Transit have been combined into a single department. The student role is advisory. WT constantly evaluates routes, looks at campus re construction, listens to students, faculty, and staff, and conducts on-board surveys and an annual route review.

WT handles routings, surveys, and operations. Baylor has final approval of all routes. Students do not have a formal role. Student needs are communicated through Student Life, and student focus groups are held.

Funding: Transit on campus is funded through a student fee. The transit fee is part of a broader student services fee. Neither interviewee was sure of the exact fee.

Stumbling Blocks: Local campus decisions: where is the route going to run, is a particular housing complex campus housing or not, which complexes do we serve, how do we cover all areas of campus? One challenge from WT's perspective was getting BU to think of transit first, not merely as an afterthought. Weekly meetings were held at first to discuss service and identify any issues. The team still meets frequently. When the university began discussions of a new parking garage, WT asked to be included and requested a bus pull-in at the stop serving the garage. Generally, resolution of stumbling blocks involves WT and Baylor working together to resolve issues.

Best Features: From WT's perspective, the possibility of getting a new fleet. WT handles capital needs. BU noted the transit expertise of WT resulting in good recommendations. WT also mentioned that its benefits package for operators attracts higher caliber of operator. WT uses campus service operators in the summer to run Medicaid trips and fill in for vacationing drivers on City routes, so flexibility is built into the arrangements.

Drawbacks: BU cited the quality of the vehicles on the routes as a significant drawback. Buses are in poor condition. New vehicles are on order, but delivery was delayed until January. Both WT and BU noted difficulties in marketing the service. WT has not previously participated in freshman orientation. This year, BU sent out a broadcast email and stuffed over 4,400 route maps in student mailboxes. BU also makes extensive use of its web site to publicize transit on campus.

The fact that employees work for WT suggests that BU has less control, but it also puts BU at arms length from employee disputes and supervision, according to WT. There is a strong complaint process, and complaints are shared with BU. WT also stated that campus politics sometimes cause problems. BUT, building a strong relationship between transit and the university helps here.

Pitfalls: There has to be cooperation by both parties. Transit and the university need to know expectations going into the program. Addressing these two issues leads to a win-win situation.

Changes in management on the transit side have had an impact. Some continuity and knowledge is lost whenever this happens. BU realized that it had taken the relationship with WT for granted.

On any campus, there are a lot of departments who need to move a large number of people. BU negotiated a fixed hourly rate for charter service open to all campus departments using vehicles over and above those used for B.U.S.

If Had to Do All Over Again: WT would have been a little more aggressive on the front end regarding customer service. We would have worked harder on publicizing service, making sure we are featured prominently on both WT's and BU's websites, and would have participated in freshman orientation from the start. We sometimes had the idea that once service was up and running, we could leave it alone to let it run itself. The program is a relationship, and it takes constant work and attention. The university is always growing and changing, WT should be anticipating needs along with BU.

BU is in the last year of our contract, so this is a real issue now. BU would probably not do anything differently. This is a good contract, with teeth, and the escalation clause capping increases at 5% annually has helped. Having an hours-based contract provides us with flexibility to add or take away service.

### ***University of Colorado/Denver Regional Transit District***

Program Structure: University of Colorado (CU) provides internal circulation only using old school buses and used transit vehicles. Funded by the Housing Department, the route operates through the middle of campus and serves a large residence hall complex, with peak frequencies every five minutes. Regional Transit District (RTD) serves campus with regular routes, most on west side of campus. City of Boulder contracts one route to private provider for dormitory complex. The Boulder Community Transit Network is essentially another layer within RTD.

Cooperation began about 40 years ago – CU decided that its campus should be more densely developed and more pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and that parking should be at the edges of campus. RTD pioneered an EcoPass program, in which companies purchased annual passes for all their employees. The Downtown Boulder business community was a strong supporter of

the EcoPass concept. Its first application was on the CU campus, where students paid \$10 for a semester pass. Current arrangements evolved from this. CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) grants were used as a funding source.

Students funded differently now, through a student fee. CU pays \$75 per year per faculty/staff member (anyone who works more than ¼ time), covering about 7,000 employees. 30% of employees use the bus every day. The EcoPass allows them convenient access to campus from other, more affordable areas of the region, and serves as a marketing tool for CU. CU has paid the local match to fund new services such as the Stampede (operated by RTD) through Transportation Improvement Program funds available only to municipalities.

Governance: RTD governs the process. As with any service change, a proposal regarding CU service goes through the public process. CU and students have their say through public input, but they are a big piece of the general public. CU and students can also work through the elected RTD Board member. RTD is one of three public transit agencies in the U.S. governed by a Board elected by the general public.

No formal role for CU, students, or the City of Boulder, although they have worked together so long and so closely with RTD that it feels like a formal role. City has a policy not to increase traffic above 1994 levels, and it pressed RTD for greater frequency, smaller and friendlier buses, marketing to make transit attractive, and amenities at stops. City and CU worked with the regional Council of Governments to apply for Federal funds, developed stakeholder group consisting of local businesses, employers, and neighborhood associations to design routes, improve amenities, and brand transit service. Six different grants have helped to double frequency, and to obtain new, nicer vehicles.

Funding: CU has an unlimited access pass program with RTD. There is cost sharing: CU, RTD, and the City of Boulder (through matching funds) all share in the cost. Students levy an activity fee (\$50 per semester), a portion of which goes to RTD to provide service. Again, most service in Boulder is geared to the University. There was originally a perception that Boulder and CU did not get as much as they should from the fee, but there is general agreement now that funding and service levels are equitable. Faculty and staff are included through the EcoPass program.

The City of Boulder subsidizes services beyond what RTD is willing to provide. The City pays up for more frequent service on routes where RTD performance standards would not warrant that level of service. The amount paid is approximately \$1 million annually.

Stumbling Blocks: From RTD's perspective, there was an inherent conflict among the application of service standards, funding, and the larger regional funding picture. Lots of discussions were required with Boulder and CU to get through these issues. RTD has an elected Board of 15 members, only one of whom represents Boulder, and at a time when all services were facing cutbacks, it became clear that services in Boulder would not be spared.

From CU's perspective, funding was the major stumbling block. Also, there was a "chicken and egg" problem of getting passes into the hands of enough people and getting people willing to try transit while at the same time working with RTD to improve service levels and develop amenities.

The student fee for transit is actually an administrative fee. For approval, a student fee needs a minimum percentage of students to vote in the election. To avoid missing this minimum, the

students voted on a referendum, and the CU administration agreed to establish an administrative fee if students clearly supported the concept. The fee is set up to allow up to a 10% increase each year without a vote, have gone out for votes twice: once for an increase allowing students to ride regional as well as local services, and once due to sharply increased RTD costs. The regional vote won by a 16-1 margin, the largest margin of victory ever in a student vote.

A few years ago, another stumbling block emerged: an element in RTD management proposed the elimination of the EcoPass program. CU and other employers went to pass holders and encouraged them to contact their RTD directors. The Board rejected the proposal, and ordered management to work with the stakeholders. But this created an issue of trust.

Best Features: From RTD's perspective, huge ridership on transit is the best feature. The transit network becomes part of the urban fabric in a college town and is valued as such. Everyone agrees that service standards apply, looks at the same playbook. The variety of services is not a problem, as long as they work together.

From CU's perspective, a good working relationship among all parties is a key benefit. The ability to improve fundamental service (frequency, stop amenities) has made the biggest difference. It also helps that the City committed to alternatives to the single occupant automobile.

Drawbacks: From RTD's perspective, CU would end-run the process if CU and the City wanted to do something that RTD did not see as making sense. This does not happen so much anymore, with the arrangement for the City to "buy up" to greater frequency than the service standards warrant. Frequent service, even on a short route, is very expensive. The only current drawback is a lack of coordination, which still happens occasionally on some issues. By and large, the current process works.

From CU's perspective, a current drawback is: how committed is RTD? The management proposal to eliminate the EcoPass was very worrisome. CU relies on transit, has not built a parking garage since 1991.

Pitfalls: RTD indicates that if money changes hands between the university and the transit system, the contract needs to spell out what level of service will be provided in exchange. The City and CU are not transit experts, and so what they want may not always be feasible. Base the system on good, solid service planning concepts, and choose your student market carefully – not all routes geared toward students work equally well. Be sure that all parties look at service issues from a proper perspective.

From CU's perspective, a program like this needs a supporter or two in high levels of University administration. The process of coordination and cooperation from a variety of groups on campus (students, administration, parking) is very time-consuming, and there is no logical sequence of where to start.

One challenge at CU was the funding formula for faculty/staff in terms of general fund vs. parking permits. It ended up 49% general fund, 21% from auxiliary groups, 30% from parking permits, almost a per capita formula since this tracked closely with budget breakdowns. Parking permit holders were upset, arguing that they were never going to ride the bus, so why should they pay for it through increased permit fees? CU answered that they would pay much less

under this program than they would if CU had to build another parking structure. This answer satisfied most.

**If Had to Do All Over Again:** From RTD's perspective, it was important to recognize that the university may not understand how transit works and that the process needed to get everyone on the same page. Getting to this point may involve operating poorly conceived service until everyone recognizes that it is not working. Be aware that institutional arrangements are subject to change. Also, be careful of using special paint schemes. This has complicated operations, since only certain buses are available for this service. It also has led to a public perception that RTD is not providing this service. Newer low-floor buses acquired by RTD recently are used elsewhere in the system, and not at CU.

CU notes that outreach is particularly important, since the student turnover is 20-25% each year. The funding formula pays for a Manager's salary within the Parking & Transportation Department and for marketing the pass program on campus. The parking situation can affect the outlook of University administrators. Given a limited ability to bond, an unlimited access program turns capital costs into operating costs.

### ***Iowa State University/Ames Transit System (CyRide)***

**Program Structure:** CyRide provides all transit service on and off campus. Campus transit service includes a shuttle for a large park & ride lot and campus circulators. The CyRide fleet includes 52 buses for peak service, 28 of which are accessible. Campus circulators are not accessible. The buses are of various sizes. There are seven citywide routes and three campus circulator routes. Headways are 10 to 20 minutes on city routes, 3 to 7 minutes on campus circulators. CyRide operates a "Moonlight Express" on Friday and Saturday nights from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. School buses are used as backup vehicles on campus in peak morning hours. CyRide adds extra buses in service during winter months, and has the flexibility to tweak service on short notice. No bikes on buses.

Transit began in August 1976 as a City Department. Ames Transit Agency was established in 1980. In August 1994, Iowa State University (ISU) began subsidizing student/faculty passes and allowing students to charge semester passes to their U-Bill. In 2001, several routes became free on campus. The current unlimited access program began in August 2002: the entire system is free to students with ID card. At the same time, CyRide began four campus circulator routes and instituted a policy of free boarding at all campus stops.

Ames is a pretty small town, when ISU is in session half of the town is students. ISU notes that many in the city take the students for granted, but CyRide pays attention to student needs.

Recently, park & ride at ISU has grown from a small program to one bigger than ISU wants it to be. CyRide understands the value of meeting the student needs by providing shuttles from the park and ride lots. The park & ride program began before unlimited access went into effect, now ISU is trying to discourage driving to campus and to encourage boarding the bus at your residence and riding into campus. Free boardings via the unlimited access program are very successful in reducing congestion on campus, cutting down the number of cars coming to campus, and reducing auto-pedestrian conflicts.

**Governance:** CyRide is governed by a Transit Board with six members: the City Manager, ISU's Vice President of Finance, a City Council rep, a citizen (usually an ISU faculty member), and two ISU students. This arrangement provides equal representation for the City, the

University, and the students, with no one faction controlling a majority on the Board. Any party can act unilaterally if it wants to, but there is a long history of working together that discourages unilateral actions.

CyRide operates the transit system and provides transit expertise. ISU administers the fee and also funds programs to support the Orange route and a park & ride shuttle. The Parking Division makes direct payment for the park & ride service. ISU has direct financial involvement because it is a direct user of both services. ISU pays for 50% of the cost of faculty/staff semester passes. ISU's Vice President of Finance sits on the CyRide board, involvement at that level is very important in resolving any problems that come up.

Student representation on the CyRide Board is very important, because it gives the students a real voice in what happens. As student concerns arise, the students active in Board work are actively engaged. In addition, many part-time employees of CyRide are ISU students.

Funding: In FY 05 the funding breakdown for CyRide was: 17% city, 8% ISU, 46% student government, 19% federal/state, 6% other, 4% farebox. Percentages can vary from year to year, depending on budget availability.

The student fee of \$48.50 per semester provides unlimited access to transit services on campus and in the City. The student fee was increased by \$13 to provide an unlimited access, fare-free system. Student voters approved the increase by a 79-21% margin, with double the usual turnout. Fees adjusted annually, based on CPI for Higher Education (typically somewhat higher than standard CPI).

ISU subsidizes staff/faculty passes at 50% level. ISU also makes a general contribution to the program out of the administration budget. This money is justified by the fact that the transit system helps the campus to be more compact than it otherwise would. Utilities are provided throughout the city, including on campus, and billed on a square foot basis. ISU sends a portion of this amount to CyRide.

CyRide uses Transit Intensive Cities funding to fund capital. This funding is good for two to three buses each year. Regarding CMAQ, the State of Iowa decides how to allocate dollars other than non-attainment funds. Iowa used to give all CMAQ funds to Des Moines, but now distributes the other than non-attainment funds across the state.

Stumbling Blocks: Governance was a stumbling block. The shared governance model, with the agency, university and students all represented equally on the Transit Board, was a major factor in the success of the program. The result is almost a transit authority, but the employees are City employees. Keeping the labor contract with the City was a cost control measure; there was a fear that an Authority could give away the store to employees.

Getting agreement from the University was another stumbling block. When the ISU President said "Let's make this happen," everything changed. The President at the time was very close to the students, and knew that transportation was a problem. The Facilities Department also realized that it would be cheaper to have a bus system than to build parking decks. Ecological and environmental factors also played a role.

Fee revenues are not tied to specific expenses. The first year, fees paid for evening/Sunday service and frequency improvements. Since then, money comes into one pot, goes out of one pot. Over time, there have been years when the City's or the University's budget has been tight

(fortunately never in the same year), and CyRide has been able to fill in from the other's budget in these cases. Without that flexibility, if we broke down the budget to the route level and something caused ridership on one route to sag, the entire system could be hurt.

Politics at the student level causes occasional problems. Students are generally supportive, but occasionally a group with an agenda comes into power and attacks the transit agency and the program. Admittedly this is a rare occurrence, and we just ride it out when it happens.

When City first established CyRide, routes went around campus. When routes went through the campus, ridership increased. Serving off-campus housing every 20 minutes guarantees good ridership numbers. Transferring to get to campus doesn't work, campus is the downtown! Transit can be competitive with the automobile if it goes directly to campus, given the time spent looking for parking and walking to class from parking.

From ISU's perspective, perhaps not a stumbling block, but a fact of life: the makeup of the Board makes it challenging to take a new direction. City and University have different interests (e.g., when the park & ride program was begun, bus ridership dropped). For the University community, safety is a huge issue, in both real and political terms. CyRide's willingness to light and locate stops based on safety is important. A program like this needs a very good staff that understands how to balance transit and university concerns, because we don't always talk the same language.

**Best Features:** From CyRide's perspective: frequency, frequency, and frequency are the best features. When the headway is less than 10 minutes, there is no need to consult schedules. Current plans call for an improvement from 40 minute evening service to 20 minutes, so that routes will run every 20 minutes between 11 am and the end of the service day (3 a.m. on weekends). Improved frequency encourages ridership; campus service needs to run at least every 20 minutes. CyRide through-routes almost all service on campus, so it cannot park buses on campus waiting for class to be over. Good frequency is the key. A 30-minute model requires you to arrive, drop, wait, pick up, and leave. Peak service is between 9 and 10 a.m., because 10 a.m. is the most popular class time.

ISU notes that the vehicles are very, very reliable, and branded with school colors. Branding makes it very comfortable for college students, many of whom (65 to 70%) come from places without buses.

**Drawbacks:** From ISU's perspective, expense is not so much a drawback as a fact of life re how the bus operates. There is always pressure to serve areas without service, and we always get some students who say why should I pay for this in my fee when it doesn't serve where I live. Also, some perceive bus congestion on campus. No one thinks of how many cars would be needed to carry the same number to and around campus. CyRide saw no drawbacks to the current system.

**Pitfalls:** CyRide notes the fickleness of students, unwillingness of the City to spend money, and contract issues as potential pitfalls. The contract should include a dissolution clause. In Ames, we have tracked all capital that has gone into the system, and it would be clear how to split up assets (buses) if the agreement is ever dissolved. Length of contract can be an issue. Ours is renewable every 5 years, and this works well. There were no major changes at the last contract renewal, the City changed its insurance coverage from \$2 million to \$5 million the previous time.

One thing that causes ISU grief is the effect of buses on roadway condition. Can the physical plant handle bus traffic?

If Had to Do All Over Again: CyRide would have added more staff, there is no planning staff now. Board composition might have been arranged differently: two City Council members would have been better on a policy board than one plus the City Manager. It has been helpful to have the City Manager and the ISU Vice President of Finance meet in a non-confrontational setting 12 times a year for fire and water issues, but not necessarily for transit.

ISU would have put the student fee in place as soon as possible. Free boardings make use of transit painless and thus encourage students to use the system.

### ***Kansas State University***

Program Structure: Kansas State University (KSU) operates only one limited shuttle on campus with three stops between the hours of 7:45 a.m. and 5:07 p.m. Some faculty and staff were relocated to outlying area of campus, and this shuttle provides a connection between the outlying and main campus areas. KSU uses a 13-passenger vehicle.

KSU is building its first parking garage, beginning in May 2007. During construction, KSU will run a shuttle from park and ride near the football stadium to campus. Depending on how well it does, KSU will (a) continue throughout construction and/or (b) continue after construction. KSU predicts very light usage.

The City of Manhattan does not have a transit system. If you put in transit on campus and force people to use it, after five years it will be part of the campus fabric. But KSU draws lots of students from rural western Kansas, the city is spread out, and it's hard to get anywhere without a car. There is no will to force transit usage, and it really would not make sense.

Governance: The University governs shuttle service on campus.

Funding: The shuttle is funded through parking permit revenue.

Stumbling Blocks: None.

Best Features: The shuttle provides a connection between outlying and main campus areas. International student housing is also in this area; these students use it most, followed by staff, followed by faculty.

Drawbacks: None.

Pitfalls: None.

If Had to Do All Over Again: Nothing different.

### ***University of Missouri/Columbia Transit***

Program Structure: The University of Missouri (UM) contracts for three different services and all contracts are with Columbia Transit (CT). The day service brings students to campus (three park-and-ride shuttles, each operating every 20 minutes on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The ADA complementary service on campus is arranged with riders in advance. The night system

operates seven days a week from 6 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. One of CT's routes (the Brown Route) serves campus and downtown every 15 minutes in the peak, 30 minutes in midday. CT operates between 6:25 a.m. and 6:32 p.m. on weekdays and between 9:35 a.m. and 6:32 p.m. on Saturday. The campus route is the most frequent; other CT routes are every 40 minutes in peak hours and every 80 minutes in midday. CT also operates evening service Thursday through Saturday from 6:20 to 10:25 p.m. Campus service that operates off-campus does not serve student residential areas, but does go to the mall and movie theater. Park & ride routes within campus are free to anyone. City routes are 25 cents for students.

In the past, UM had a service for disabled students. UM also tried a campus-run transit operation, but there were some safety issues. UM decided to put different services out to competitive bid. CT operated day service and a school bus company ran night service. UM did not like having different buses and dealing with different contacts, and decided to consolidate. Its stated goal was seamless entry into city system, with all campus stops looking like city stops. CT won the consolidated contract, and CT and UM just agreed to a 3-year extension. UM only pays the cost per hour, at about \$38 to \$42 per hour.

Columbia is spreading out, but CT had not changed headways or routes in 17 years. The Brown route alleviated some problems with traffic congestion and on-time performance. Now the challenge is to mirror this success in the rest of the CT system.

Governance: On campus, UM's Parking & Transportation Department sets up park & ride lot shuttles and deals with students regarding the fee level. At the city, governance is not an issue at present. The university and students are stakeholders, like others in the city.

CT is the service provider for the City and the contractor for on-campus service. UM administers and plans transit on campus. Students have input through several student committees. UM notes that the students are "committee'd to death". CT views all transit to be an integrated system, even though it's not technically.

Funding: CT receives funds from UM through the contract for transit services. CT does not receive student fees directly, and would like to move to an unlimited access system. UM's major funding source is student transit fee, currently \$12 per semester. Students board U-M service for free. City routes are half-price (25 cents) for college and other students. CT began a program with four student complexes off campus to fund transit service – had been a pass subsidy, but starting this year, the complexes will pay the cost of providing service. Students will get an ID card from the complexes showing that they live there and will be able to ride for free.

Stumbling Blocks: University's continued growth is a real challenge. UM needs additional service, but capital dollars for more buses are hard to come by. In the last four years, the number of buses for UM service has risen from four to 12.

There has been some animosity over the issue of why the university gets 15 minute service when our other riders have (at best) 40 minute service.

Fear about loss of control and a perception by some that an unlimited access program is only an attempt to get money from students for the City have precluded unlimited access from becoming a reality, despite support from the president of the University of Missouri system and the UM student association (which voted unanimously in favor of such a program). Unlimited access should be viewed in light of parking constraints and traffic congestion on campus.

**Best Features:** CT views the current situation as a step toward full integration. CT uses the same buses for both campus and city service, and UM noted that the coordinated contract resulted in continuity in buses on campus. Students understand this. CT had considered branding, but wanted to emphasize the continuity with City service. The only difference between campus and city service is the driver uniforms (black and gold for campus service).

From UM's perspective, unlike most other schools it does not have a parking capacity problem. A new parking garage is under construction even now. The issue is parking convenience, and the park and ride shuttles allow us to use outlying areas. UM also likes that everything is contracted under a coordinated contract. UM has no interest in building an empire. CT knows what it is doing, is very responsive, and can add service marginally without adding infrastructure. CT is also good at responding to complaints, and has more control over its operators than the University does over its employees. The routes that CT operates for UM are bid, if drivers don't like working with students, they don't bid these routes. All you need are good service and a good contract

**Drawbacks:** From CT's viewpoint, the chief drawback is that the systems are not yet fully integrated. Students have one set of rules/fees on campus, but everything is different off-campus.

UM sees lack of education of the public as a drawback. People think either that transit is free or that it pays for itself through the farebox. Many students have no previous experience with transit, and cannot handle a 10 to 15 minute delay.

**Pitfalls:** CT cited capital expense as the biggest pitfall. Trying to get public input without setting higher expectations than we can meet is a challenge. CT is just starting up a Gold Route, and is already getting calls about its seven-minute headway when it has nothing of the kind.

UM cautions that buy-in from student leadership is critical. Parking & Transportation has footed the cost of expansion up front for a year, with an understanding that the service in question will only be continued after one year if the student fee is increased. Student leadership has always supported the fee increase.

**If Had to Do All Over Again:** Neither CT nor UM would change anything in particular. UM noted that consolidation of the contracts took a while, and perhaps that should have been done sooner.

### ***University of Nebraska/StarTran***

**Program Structure:** Both StarTran and the University of Nebraska (UN) operate transit services. StarTran buses enter the main (City) campus, and UN operates 2 loop shuttles within campus. UN also contracts with StarTran for shuttles between the City and East campuses. All routes are free for faculty, staff, and students as part of the contract price. UN contracts with StarTran at an annual cost of \$300,000 for bus passes for students for the nine month academic year. 1993 was the first year of contracting with the city. Prior to that the University used a private motor coach service, but the service was not reliable. The contract price negotiated annually, and is more than the cost of running the inter-campus shuttles. StarTran runs until 7:10 p.m., and UN shuttles operate until 11 p.m.

UN reports that the current program started with negotiations between the Vice Chancellor and the city to find a way to operate between the two campuses. A major catalyst was a funding issue for capital purchases. StarTran was having difficulty arranging the local match. Part of the agreement with UN is that some of that money can be applied toward capital purchases to refurbish the bus fleet, resulting in a win-win situation for everyone. The current program succeeded a 1989 system using old buses to connect parking lots and the main campus during a really cold winter. The system grew in the late 1990's and by 2000 there was a ridership of 450,000 passengers per year, although those numbers have gone down in recent years.

**Governance:** Governance is arranged through the transit subcommittee of the parking committee at UN. StarTran and the contract between StarTran and the University govern the StarTran routes. There are student members on the transit subcommittee, which addresses student need for the intercampus system. Any type of needs with regards to StarTran can be negotiated.

StarTran operates transit service in Lincoln and is the contractor for UN shuttle service between the campuses. UN operates on-campus shuttles, administers the pass program, and oversees the contract with StarTran for inter-campus service. Students have a voice through the transit subcommittee

**Funding:** UN funds its own service and its contract with StarTran 70% through parking revenue and 30% through student fees.

**Stumbling Blocks:** Neither StarTran nor UN identified any stumbling blocks. StarTran noted that its relationship with UN is good, while UN stated that StarTran is easy to work with because UN adds ridership to the system.

**Best Features:** StarTran cited full buses and high ridership as the best features. There are 46 riders per hour on campus services, 16 on system as a whole. UN noted that the cost is very low compared to other university systems.

**Drawbacks:** The only drawback is the lack of evening service. StarTran only operates until 6:30 p.m.

**Pitfalls:** Both StarTran and UN emphasized the need to develop a relationship. From StarTran's perspective, the university should not be viewed as a third party. The transit agency must develop a real side-by-side partnership with the university. UN noted that the success of the program really depends on the town – gown relationship. Does the city have the resources and how willing is the city?

**If Had to Do All Over Again:** Neither StarTran nor UN would do anything differently.

### ***University of Oklahoma***

**Program Structure:** Metro Transit/CART began service in the mid-eighties. Now in partnership with the City of Norman (which does not have its own transit system), CART operates five city routes and three campus routes. The transfer station is located on the campus South Oval and serves a variety of residential neighborhoods, apartment complexes, public facilities, and shopping centers. There are four regular routes and a shuttle that brings students from a large parking lot to the campus which relieves a lot of congestion. There is no cost to ride for students.

The arrangement came about with the city due to lack of funding, so Oklahoma University (OU) expanded services to gain government funds and serve the city. Norman has since grown into a small urban area so there is now more transit funding.

**Governance:** Governance is arranged through the city planning department in the City of Norman. CART is run by the University as a city entity. The students are not represented, but they are served well by the routes. There is a route for the apartment complexes that is geared toward the students.

**Funding:** Service is funded through local, state, and federal funding to manage the transit for the entire city of Norman. Students also pay a per credit fee (\$1.50 per credit hour) as part of their registration fees.

**Stumbling Blocks:** None reported.

**Best Features:** CART serves the entire city. There is not a corner of the city that is not served. It serves the most popular places and all the residential areas.

**Drawbacks:** Norman is growing very quickly. It is a struggle to keep up it is expensive and difficult to catch up with the limited funds.

**Pitfalls:** Embrace your city. The city can be your best friend or it could be your worst enemy.

**If Had to Do All Over Again:** OU would not do anything differently.

### ***Oklahoma State University***

**Program Structure:** Oklahoma State University (OSU) operates its own transit service under the Department of Parking and Transit Services, started on campus in 1997. At first, an outside contractor managed the university transit system, but in 2002 the administration did a study and found that it was better for OSU to run its own system for the campus and for the Stillwater community (Stillwater does not have its own transit system). Buses were then purchased through the board of trustees. In 2003 the system became community-wide. There are three campus routes and six community-wide routes that also serve campus.

**Governance:** Public meetings are part of OSU's process. The transit system is run by OSU's Director of Public Services and there is an advisory board composed of members of the University, students, and representatives from outside OSU. The director of the transportation system manages the system and makes the decisions.

Students have a voice through student government and international student representation on the advisory board. Student meetings are held often and surveys are conducted. Modifications have been made in the last couple of years to meet the needs of students more closely.

**Funding:** The system is funded through student fees of \$2 per semester hour. Federal funds are used to pay for fuel, maintenance, and driver salaries through a grant from ODOT. Passengers pay \$0.50 to ride and there are discounts for elderly, youth, disabled, and Medicare recipients at \$0.25. There is also federal funding that goes into the system. OSU has recently talked to the city about providing some of the funding, but Stillwater is not too quick to put in funding since it already gets its system for free.

**Stumbling Blocks:** The biggest problem was the speed at which the system was implemented. It would take more time to file for 5311 and 5309 grants so the system didn't get much in terms of federal funding, where OSU could have saved money and received more federal funding. The system was originally all under the OSU Parking and Transit Services department. After the system had already started they brought in transit people. The ridership rose 285% in the first two years of the new service and, although we were told it should level out after that, our ridership increased another 30% in the past year.

When it comes to the city, there were no real stumbling blocks. The city puts in no funds, so the system is pretty much welcomed by everyone. Shelter siting and installation are a bit difficult and sometimes the city has to make some changes.

**Best Features:** The system has a close relationship with the education side of campus. IT students helped transit create a system for our paratransit services, Some PhD students helped work on route optimization projects, and the marketing students did studies on how to improve marketing on campus. They came up with a motto and will be handing out t-shirts this coming semester. There is still a need for more off campus marketing plans, though.

**Drawbacks:** The biggest problem has been that OSU purchased Bluebird buses in 2003 and they have had significant mechanical problems. We have not received the mechanical support we needed for it.

**Pitfalls:** Work closely with State Departments of Transportation before making any decisions to prevent losing out on any funding. Maybe they have funding that the university is not aware of.

**If Had to Do All Over Again:** OSU would look for federal funding upfront.

### ***University of Texas/Capital Metro***

**Program Structure:** Capital Metro (CM) provides all service through a contract with the University of Texas (UT). The program began around 1970. Metro provides UT with 87 buses, and a private contractor operates the service as a subcontractor to Metro. Subcontracting is done for a variety of reasons, mostly to keep costs down, and has the benefit of effectively creating a separate department responsible for this service. This separation helps in dealing with the seasonality of UT demand. CM assumed the private contractor that UT had prior to CM's involvement, easing the transition. There have been different contractors over time. CM included UT in contractor selection; UT had two votes on the panel. Despite contractor changes, continuity in personnel through contracts, the good and bad drivers are still around. Union drivers complain through students to pressure UT. The distance between UT and the drivers is good for the university, but UT would sometimes like more control.

The UT service operates six days a week – no Saturday service, and Sunday service does not start until 2 p.m. The UT service has 16 routes. Three UT routes circulate entirely within campus, and 13 operate off campus. Six of the off-campus routes go to Southeast Austin, where there is a heavy concentration of student residences, and there are complaints that the service is subsidizing these apartment complexes. But students decide where service goes. Regular CM routes also operate through and on the edges of campus. CM routes are numbered, while UT Shuttle routes are lettered.

In addition to the regular routes, there is E-bus service to the entertainment district on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. Local police originally suggested this service. Routes run from on-campus dorms, West campus, and Southeast Austin (where many students live) to Sixth Street. E-bus service averages 1,800 boardings per night.

The program began when UT wanted new equipment to operate the campus shuttles. UT also realized that it was not the transportation experts, whereas CM had a whole department of folks specializing in routes and schedules. CM could obtain capital money, and saw an established ridership base that would increase its ridership. CM and UT entered into an interlocal agreement (allowed by Texas law between two public agencies) that did not require an RFP. The interlocal agreement was signed in January 1989 and CM began operating the service (through the same subcontractor that had been used by UT) in the fall of 1989. The evolution was characterized as similar to that of a marriage, and they are now like an old married couple: they recognize that they work better together than apart and they argue about money all the time. CM provides all capital costs and pays about 35 percent of operating costs (the UT student fee covers 65 percent of operating costs). Taking capital and operating together, the split is more like 50-50. The 65-35 split was negotiated with UT. Some complain that students are double taxed in that they also pay sales tax, a portion of which funds transit locally. UT ridership is a huge portion of CM's ridership and revenue, which helps the agency get additional Federal funds. The percentage of the operating cost paid per passenger from student fees is better than the 50 cents per passenger average revenue for CM.

Structuring the agreement on a cost per hour basis hurts and will continue to hurt CM's ability to make service adjustments. CM conducts a ridership forecast and determines the number of hours that it can afford to provide. CM would prefer a "true" unlimited access approach where UT provides the dollars and CM works with UT to adjust service, especially because there has been a huge shift in student ridership toward non-UT, regular CM routes. The cost per hour basis reassured UT when it first entered into the relationship, and UT still fears that if it lets go of this, students will not get enough service.

Governance: The Shuttle Committee, which includes Student Government President or VP, representatives from the graduate school assembly and student Transportation Committee, faculty representative, faculty from the Center for Transportation Research, and non-voting CM planners who advise, makes decisions on routes, fares, and other items. The committee is housed in the Parking & Transportation offices. CM provides whatever Parking & Transportation wants. CM identifies options, after collecting and analyzing voluminous amounts of data. UT provides all student address data, Cap Metro staff looks at changes in where students are living. The shuttle committee makes the final decisions on routes, and this is entirely appropriate and needed, since student fee dollars pay for the service. The Committee has to approve any service change. Students determine how much service UT can buy (only a 4% increase each year is allowed in the budget). The Committee meets monthly during the school year (not during the summer).

Service has been cut in recent years. CM let UT lock into fuel rate, but it is now a direct pass-through billed monthly. If fuel prices continue to rise, will need service cuts mid-year, which are tough to implement because of union rules governing how often service can be changed.

There is a shuttle to the UT research campus that is paid for entirely by UT, not the students. It is not very productive, but it is needed.

CM operates service through its contractor, provides equipment and expertise, and is responsible for bus stops. UT negotiates with CM. Parking & Transportation has the biggest say, e.g., it designed the E-bus routes (the cost of these were originally split 50/50, but after ridership and service took off, CM agreed to fund 100%). UT administration plays a mediating role between CM and the Shuttle Bus Committee. The students have decision-making power through their role on the Shuttle Bus Committee, responsible for routes and schedules.

Funding: Funding is through a student fee, \$52.50 per semester currently, which gets students unlimited rides on all shuttle and CM service. Because it is part of the activities fee, students do not always realize that they are paying a fee for transit service. Fee charged to students is slightly higher than \$52.50, because UT charges a 1.75% administrative fee. CM receives proceeds of the fee and in exchange provides an agreed-upon number of hours of service. Due to rising fuel costs, the amount of service has been reduced. The university chose to reduce service rather than raise fees. No routes were eliminated, but frequency was reduced.

UT has a separate program with CM under which it pays \$10 per faculty and staff person per year in exchange for unlimited rides for faculty and staff.

Stumbling Blocks: From CM's perspective, acquiring equipment was a big stumbling block. The service began with worn-out school buses. CM now owns and provides all vehicles, and does heavy maintenance. Coming up with the buses and associated capital equipment such as radios and maintenance bays and facilities was the biggest challenge.

Pay levels are also a sore point. UT operators are paid less than CM operators in the interest of controlling costs. Until this year, UT operators had a separate contract and a separate union local from CM. The system weathered two strikes, primarily over pay issues.

Both UT and CM noted that money has been and continues to be a stumbling block. The most recent example of this is sharing the costs of the recent increase in fuel prices. This has led to a 7 to 8 percent reduction in service hours.

From UT's perspective, UT and CM are on the ninth amendment of the original contract, have been doing one year plus one, now going to a two-year contract with three one-year options. Previous stumbling blocks:

- Trademark issues. UT is very protective of its logo, which is used on buses and shelters. However, UT does not allow CM to use photographs including the logo in any presentations or marketing. CM has a hard time understanding this.
- Fuel costs.
- Type of vehicles. The agreement calls for same type of vehicles to be used for UT service as for regular CM service. The Purpose originally was to insure that UT does not get stuck with the oldest buses in the fleet. Now UT would like more hybrid vehicles on campus, but CM only has two in entire fleet.
- Complaints from students. These are funneled through CM. UT does not always see the complaints and would like to see more. UT recently set up its own email address for student complaints.
- Web site. CM maintains the web site, and there are some disagreements over how things are portrayed. For example, UT is expanding its stadium and over a two-year period many routes are being detoured. Cap Metro shows these routes under a separate Detours section of its website. To UT, two years is half of the students'

time on campus, so UT would like these detours to be shown on the regular route page. Also, riders can print out a pdf map and schedule for mainline routes, but not for UT shuttle routes. In the past, UT did not always provide timetables, would announce that a route came every 5 minutes or every 12 minutes, but with cutbacks in service over the past few years, the timetables are increasingly important. UT is pioneering efforts to get scheduling info to students via cell phone, CM is not there yet.

UT likes that its buses are branded with the UT colors (orange stripe) and logo. Also, UT shuttles load through both doors, don't need to swipe ID cards on shuttles (automatic passenger counters count boardings and alightings). Students do swipe ID cards on CM buses. CM is interested in moving to a single unified service, but UT likes a lot about its current branding even though it would probably be cheaper to unify services and eliminate duplicative routes.

Best Features: From CM's perspective, the best feature of the campus shuttles is that they carry so many people. UT has 50,000 students and 27,000 staff on campus, but only 1,500 parking spaces. Only 8,000 students live on campus. The UT Shuttle service provides mobility and reduces congestion on, around, and through campus. Also, over the last 17+ years, this has formalized the relationship between the City and UT and helps CM to make the argument for transit in the community.

From UT's perspective, the ease of unlimited access to mainline service is the best feature. Parking is so expensive on campus, but UT can say that it offers free rides via transit all over Austin. Branding is also a very positive aspect of service. The structure of the UT shuttles allow for direct express service to campus. Trips that could take 1 hour on the mainline system take 14 minutes on UT shuttles, because they travel directly from student areas to campus without intermediate stops.

UT also reported that CM staff is very responsive in planning for upcoming year's service, and pays close attention to efficiency. Each partner provides a staff person to serve as liaison with the other partner. CM's liaison works out of an office on campus. UT puts him up front to deal with everyone that comes in the office.

Drawbacks: CM reported limitations of what it can do with available resources. The students would like more service. This is a budget issue for UT. Also, the City of Austin donated campus streets to UT and the University responsible for upkeep. UT wants CM to assist financially, claiming that buses cause much of damage

UT would like to control the whole operation. Special events have been a sore spot. Cap Metro includes 200 hours of discretionary service each year, but it's not enough. UT now has a partnership with a local charter service, negotiated a 20% discount but still pays more than it would under the CM contract. UT would also like greater flexibility. CM changes its schedules twice a year through its public process, and is not always able to respond as quickly to situations as UT would like.

Pitfalls: Both CM and UT emphasized the need to be clear up front regarding funding, expenditures, and responsibilities. Every time a new player comes on board, there is a need to educate regarding the funding process.

For a start-up system, obtaining capital assets and finding a place to store them can be a major concern. Metro used to give UT older buses, but now UT capital needs are part of Metro's

capital purchases and the same buses (with different branding) are used for Metro and UT Shuttle.

If Had to Do All Over Again: In hindsight, nothing different would have worked for CM and UT. CM feels that this is a model system: it is unified, but separate (in that a subcontractor operates), and works for both the City and UT.

Maybe would consider different types of vehicles on campus – LSU uses trams.

UT emphasizes that UT shuttle service needs unique branding, and the service needs to be a little bit different. Very simple to tell new students to get on the bus with the orange stripe, actually harder than you'd think to explain the CM system and get students to use it, especially students from parts of the state without transit service. The trend to unifying the services is not seen as a positive.

### ***Texas A&M University/The District***

Note: The District was not interviewed.

Program Structure: Today, the Transportation Services Department at Texas A&M University (TAMU) has a fleet of 95 buses providing on and off campus, paratransit and charter services. The Transit area employs over 350 student drivers and only four full-time staff members. Students ride fare free.

Transit services include an on-campus circulator system consisting of 7 routes, an off campus service with 12 routes, weekend services, and a night service. The university also runs a paratransit service for those with disabilities, a Football Game Day Shuttle, and charter services.

In the 1970's the University was experiencing a period of robust growth and there was demand for a transit service between campus and area apartments. The University contracted with a contractor service and the University administered bus passes to students to use the service. The service eventually became costly and unreliable, and in 1982 the University decided to run its own service. In September of 1982, the Transit area began as Bus Operations by providing transportation for TAMU using a fleet of 33 buses as an Off-Campus shuttle service. As the University continued to grow, a need for an intra-campus shuttle system emerged. Therefore, in 1984, the On-Campus shuttle system was created.

The regional transit agency, The District, is headquartered in nearby Bryan, TX. It operates between 5:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays. Four routes serve the campus periphery, but none travels into the TAMU campus. A semester pass is available for college students for \$50. The two transit systems are separate.

Governance: TAMU serves as its own transit agency, managing and operating buses. There are advisory committees, but for the most part, TAMU's transportation administration decides on what services should be provided. Students have no formal role, but it is interesting that 99% of the drivers are students. The service could not run without them.

Funding: Students are charged a transportation fee of \$60/semester. Additional revenue is brought in by the university charter service although it basically covers costs.

Stumbling Blocks: In the early 1980s, when TAMU built the facilities and bought buses, interest rates were high. There was no reinvestment of the capital, so it was a challenge to meet the

funding for the bus service. Now the system is fairly solvent operationally, although long term it will be a challenge to recapitalize.

Best Features: Costs are low compared to other transit agencies. There is no union, and the salaries go back to students. It is better than contracting out to a charter service. If a contractor fell through at any time, there are no other services that could provide a quick replacement because TAMU is in a rural area.

Drawbacks: The students don't have the time for the required training. The University charges students for 15 credit hours now, so the students all take 15 credits which leaves little time for them to go through training and drive the buses. Also, the transportation fee will not be enough to manage the system in the long run.

Pitfalls: Avoid bus passes and favor a student fee instead. The reason for this is that all students think there needs to be a transit service to ease parking congestion, but everyone believes that other people should be taking the bus, not themselves.

Work out funding. TAMU is now in the early stages of considering teaming with the city for transit so that more funding could be provided as well.

Identify the service area because administration members are eager to provide service for all their students and are reluctant to say no to students. If the administration says yes to all students, they will send buses anywhere and it ends up wasting money. Some routes are politically driven. You need a strategy for when to add new routes.

Paratransit services are expensive and there has to be criteria for whom to say no to. Paratransit costs have really gotten out of hand here.

If Had to Do All Over Again: TAMU did not have another option at the time since there was no transit service for the city yet. The situation has since improved, and there may be an opportunity to partner with the city.

The first buses were un-air-conditioned school buses, but now we spend much more money (\$250,000) for air-conditioned buses. These are better received, but cost more to purchase.

### ***Texas Tech University/Citibus***

Program Structure: Citibus has operated since 1932, and began serving the Texas Tech University (TTU) campus in 1971. Service operates from 5:45 a.m. to 7:15 p.m. weekdays and from 7:15 a.m. to 7:35 p.m. on Saturday. Cost is free for students.

TTU is a large, spread out campus, so it needed buses and Citibus provides those buses. Citibus ferries the students between campuses and dorms. On-campus routes are very simple. They go clockwise and counter clockwise and have five minute frequencies. The express shuttle provides service from nearby apartments.

Governance: The Student Government Association meets with the Citibus Director to decide needed routes and stops. The routes have to be approved by the Student Government. The Student Government conducts forums and surveys on campus. These are used to develop service plans.

There is a Transportation Fee Committee is composed of four undergraduates, four university staff members, and one tie-breaker. It votes on fees. Its recommendation is transmitted to the Board of Regents.

Citibus provides service, designs routes (as defined by students), and prepares schedules. Students define the details of the service: routes, stops, and other specifics. TTU decides which students are on the free fare service. TTU manages on the broader level.

Funding: Service for students is funded by tuition fees. Current fee level is \$3.50 per credit hour.

Stumbling Blocks: Current stumbling block: off-campus service was provided to compensate for reduced parking on campus. As off-campus service grew in demand, fees increased. But the cost increases are outstripping the fee increases. Students are questioning why everyone has to pay these fees.

Best Features: Parking problems on campus are alleviated. Public transportation is used tremendously. Students choose apartments that have transit service. Texas Tech is the largest campus in the nation. TTU tries to keep classes within a 10-minute walk, but cannot always do so. Buses are critical on campus.

Drawbacks: The cost of running the bus service. There are 28 buses on campus at peak times.

From the student perspective, service is very expensive. Many on campus have mixed opinions. What do you provide? Is on-campus or off-campus service the priority?

Pitfalls: From the transit perspective, none really, other than the need to operate with extra caution on campus. Students are thinking about classes and not watching for buses before crossing the street. From the student perspective, don't provide more than you can pay for and don't initially provide a service that could expand. It is difficult to justify adding service in one year and not in another. Provide service on-campus first, off-campus only if you can do it, but be careful. See if apartments will pay for it.

If Had to Do All Over Again: Citibus would not do anything differently. Citibus pretty much has free reign. The students tell Citibus which services are needed and we provide it. Citibus just drives a circle by the dorms and the classrooms. The students and University allow Citibus to do what they think is best as long as they provide service to the areas that they define as needing service.

The students would charge the off-campus apartment complexes for service. A \$22,000 per complex charge was instituted this year, and service was cut to apartment complexes that did not join the program. This has raised approximately \$130,000.

### ***University of Illinois/Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District***

Note: University of Illinois was not interviewed.

Program Structure: Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (CUMTD) provides all transit service. There were no university transit services on the University of Illinois (UI) campus before the program began in 1989 as one of the first unlimited access programs. Core routes on campus now operate every 10 minutes until 3 a.m., and until 5 a.m. on Friday and Saturday

nights. Safe Ride operates between 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 a.m. CUMTD provides approximately 75,000 hours of service on campus annually, not including routes that serve the campus from other locations in the service area.

In 1986, CUMTD worked with the student body and UI to develop a transit program that could reduce the number of cars and need for parking on campus. The first proposal, a three-year program with student fees on the order of \$15 per semester, failed by a 55%-45% vote. In 1988, a second referendum was held for a one-year trial at a fee of \$10 per semester with some subsidy from UI. This passed with 55% of the vote. The one-year trial began in the Fall of 1989, with new campus routes, new evening service set up after extensive consultation with students, and free access to all city routes. The evening route did not make a lot of sense on paper, but it worked. A three-year extension of the service passed with 88% of the vote, and service has continued to this day. The extensive network of off-campus apartments (at the time, 35,000 students, with 10,000 in dorms on campus) suggested a promising market for transit. Unlimited access was the key. The city and campus buses have the same paint scheme; there is no separate identity or branding.

Governance: Federal regulations regarding charter service led to a clause in the contract stating specifically that CUMTD has sole control over routes and schedules. Realistically, we work with the administration and the students. Our goal is for both the administration and the students to agree on any changes. We encourage them to talk to each other if there is disagreement. The students do not always trust the University, especially if UI adopts an *in loco parentis* approach.

CUMTD plans and operates service. There is no formal role for UI and for students. Relations are occasionally strained. For example, UI formed a Transportation Committee several years ago with representatives from faculty, staff, and students, and CUMTD was not invited to be a member. Because a referendum is held every three years to renew the program and often to raise fees, the transit agency wants to be on top of student concerns. CUMTD would prefer to work closely with a committee of the student senate, but this has not yet come to pass. CUMTD recently created four advisory-Board level positions, one for the University, two for the cities (Champaign and Urbana), and one for the student senate. Ideally, the student senate would form its own transportation committee.

Funding: A student fee of \$38 per semester funds unlimited access to all CUMTD routes. The fee would be higher, but the State of Illinois funds 55 percent of all eligible operating expenses. The University contributes approximately \$500,000 annually for unlimited access for faculty and staff.

Stumbling Blocks: Getting the fees passed was the chief stumbling block. Proposing a one-year trial helped get around opposition to the initial three-year proposal from students who did not use and would never use transit. There was strong support from UI at the time of the original agreement. UI viewed this program as a cost avoidance strategy saving it from building more parking. In the intervening years, support has fluctuated with different administrations. The University has built two parking garages, neither for students.

Best Features: Unlimited access is the best feature. This has changed attitudes of suburban kids who had never been on a bus in their lives, to the point of 30,000 boardings per day. UI students make more use of transit than of any other service paid for through student fees.

Drawbacks: CUMTD noted a constantly changing atmosphere, with turnover at UI (CUMTD management has not experienced turnover). There is sometimes a lack of communication, and CUMTD and UI do not necessarily share a common goal.

Pitfalls: The most important thing is to maintain quality of service and keep on top of the operation. This has evolved to a 24-hour a day operation that requires supervision and a strong staff.

Build in flexibility to the operation to handle peak demand. Crush loads at class times can discourage use. Frequency is the key to maintaining student support. Two routes connecting big dorms to campus operate every five minutes. Bus size has increased from 35-foot to 40-foot to articulated buses to handle the loads, and we still need extras at 8 a.m., 9 a.m., and 10 a.m. – even at 11 a.m. and noon if it is raining. We have used buses in our fleet that we can obtain in good condition for a reasonable price.

The University can be frustrated because it is used to total control. Transit needs to work to gain the trust of the University in terms of its ability to handle the demand and its reputation. Changes in upper management on either side can affect all of this.

If Had to Do All Over Again: CUMTD would not really change anything, but might have hoped for better relationships throughout the process.

### ***University of Michigan /Ann Arbor Transportation Authority***

Program Structure: Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) and the University of Michigan (UM) each operates its own transit service. There are four campuses in Ann Arbor: central, north, south, and medical. The UM buses operate seven days a week until 2:30 or 3:00 in the morning on and between campuses. This operation is scaled back when classes are not in session. AATA discussed an unlimited access program for quite some time with UM, and it has been implemented. AATA buses have always operated on campus, but now students can ride either system free of charge.

Governance: The two systems are separate and are governed separately. Students have no formal role in either other than as another ridership group (although a significant one for AATA at one million boardings per year). When the unlimited access program began, AATA held meetings with students for input on where service was needed, and added 6,000 revenue hours of service oriented toward student needs. UM consults informally with its students, but its route structure has remained stable.

Funding: There is no student fee. The Michigan state legislature counts any mandatory fee as tuition. AATA treats its increased federal funding as a result of high student ridership as funding for the unlimited access program, although this federal funding is used for preventive maintenance and service is actually funded through general funds. The total cost is estimated at \$1.8 million, and additional federal funding is \$1.1 million. UM funds the difference with parking revenues and general funds. UM funds its own services through general and hospital funds (for the medical center shuttle).

Stumbling Blocks: The absence of student fees made funding more challenging. UM did not want to increase what it was paying directly, and wanted to be sure that AATA could respond to increased demand. The two sides agreed that AATA would add 8,000 revenue hours of

service, which it did by 2005. A potential stumbling block: who pays for more service if demand increases beyond what AATA can handle? We are not there yet.

**Best Features:** When the services are both free of charge through an unlimited access program, it enables joint planning. The fact that UM students can ride AATA free of charge takes pressure off the parking system.

**Drawbacks:** UM is pushing hard to get more staff to use AATA. The biggest problem is at the Health Center, especially the later shifts. A technical drawback is that AATA has no way to read the M card student IDs via its fareboxes. The operators have done a good job of requiring students to show IDs.

**Pitfalls:** A union issue arose when the two sides developed a plan for AATA to take over operation of a piece of the UM system. Neither side anticipated this. Thus, UM is still operating some inefficient routes even with unlimited access. UM also cited the need to get past the turf control issue and build a true partnership, which it has done with AATA.

**If Had to Do All Over Again:** AATA would have preferred to introduce the unlimited access program in the middle of the school year, but UM insisted on starting quickly. This actually worked well, despite the lack of publicity at the outset, because it gave AATA the chance to adapt its services to ridership demand. Given the political climate on campus and the union issue, UM would not have done anything differently; route rationalization of the UM system was not feasible. AATA noted that involving students directly is very beneficial. It has developed email lists and can follow up directly with students.

### **Michigan State University/Capital Area Transportation Authority**

Note: Michigan State University was not interviewed.

**Program Structure:** Michigan State University (MSU) had its own system, dating back to the 50s and 60s. University employees drove buses during the school year and worked elsewhere on campus during the summer, and students also drove part-time. Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) and MSU developed a joint transfer policy in the 1980s, but CATA was generally unsuccessful in gaining access to the MSU campus. Various contacts between the agencies led to a seven-year deal signed in 1999, under which CATA is responsible for all of the university's transit needs. Details were not divulged, but CATA noted that until year 5, MSU paid less than it had been paying to operate its own system (payment is tied to ridership levels).

CATA inherited the equipment (similar to buses in its fleet) and employees. There was antagonism from the MSU system management, although one manager did come over to CATA. Re employees, CATA agreed to take any current MSU full-time driver who could qualify and absorb him/her into its system with seniority intact. Only two applied, and only one was accepted, but he is currently sixth in seniority at CATA. Routes and schedules are typically negotiated with MSU. CATA has been adding service in recent years and is now using articulated buses on many campus routes.

**Governance:** CATA sets routes and schedules after negotiation with MSU. The university has a non-voting seat on the CATA Board of Directors.

**Funding:** No student fees are involved. MSU pays CATA an amount based on ridership. CATA is making a sustained investment of \$1 million dollars per year in campus service, and has

experienced a significant ridership increase as a result. State operating assistance is also used to fund the service.

Stumbling Blocks: Powerful people on campus did not want CATA there. The involvement of the MSU President was critical in reaching an agreement. The president championed the merger. It also helped that one of the MSU vice-presidents had been a part-time driver at CATA.

The fare structure was a big challenge. As noted above, the Michigan state legislature counts any mandatory fee as tuition and thus student fees are not common. CATA was prohibited from raising its monthly pass price. Eventually it settled on a semester pass at a cost of \$45 for five months.

Best Features: System integration, a reasonably priced semester pass, and increases in service have all contributed to ridership increases. CATA is experiencing increases on routes that do not go anywhere near MSU. Transit is important to MSU: its 2020 plan calls for no additional parking facilities.

Drawbacks: Negotiations are difficult. CATA notes that there is a large hidden expense in operating what is essentially a nine-month service, and has had to be very creative in its employee policies (encouraging summer vacations among operators is one example).

Pitfalls: Noted above in drawbacks.

If Had to Do All Over Again: An unlimited access program through student fees would be ideal.

## LIST OF CONTACTS

Interviewees, titles, and contact information for the peer transit agencies and universities are shown below.

Baylor University  
Chris Krause  
Assistant Vice President  
Campus Services & University Host  
254-710-6672

Waco Transit  
Allan Hunter  
Director of Operations  
254-750-1900

University of Colorado  
David Cook  
Manager of Transportation and Permits  
Parking & Transportation Department  
303-735-1015

Denver Regional Transit District  
Jeff Becker  
Manager of Service Development  
303-299-2148

Jeff Dunning  
Senior Service Planner & Scheduler  
303-299-2455

Iowa State University  
Doug Houghton  
Program Manager, Parking & Transportation  
(515) 294-1987

Ames Transit System/CyRide  
Bob Bourne, Director  
(515) 239-5563

Kansas State University  
Jeff Barnes  
Assistant Director, Parking Services  
785-532-7275

No local transit agency

University of Missouri  
Jim Joy  
Director, Parking and Transportation Services  
573-882-4568

Columbia Transit  
Mark Grindstaff  
Public Works Supervisor and Transit  
Operations Director  
573-874-7282

University of Nebraska  
Dan Carpenter  
Parking & Transit  
(402) 472-1800

StarTran  
Scott Tharnish  
402 441-8316

University of Oklahoma  
Kris Glenn  
Media Coordinator  
(405) 325-2278

No local transit agency

Oklahoma State University  
Steve Singleton  
(405) 744-1087

No local transit agency

Jan Cook-Hernandez  
(405) 744-4321

University of Texas  
Colleen Stahl  
UT Coordinator for UT Shuttle  
512-471-2737

Capital Metro  
James Cook  
Interim Contract and Services Coordinator  
512-232-1480

Dottie Lancaster  
Assistant Director of Transportation  
512-389-7439

Texas A&M University  
Doug Williams  
Associate Director of Transportation Services  
(979) 862-2538

The District  
Christine Box  
979-778-0607

Texas Tech University  
Chris Huff  
External Vice President, Student Government  
806-742-3631

Citibus  
Hoigt Day  
Transit Director  
806-712-2004

University of Illinois  
Pam Voitok  
217-333-7790

Champaign-Urban Mass Transit District  
Bill Volk  
Managing Director  
217-384-8188

University of Michigan  
Dave Miller  
734-647-0948

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority  
G. Christopher White  
Manager of Service Development  
731-973-6338

Michigan State University  
Jeff Kacos  
Director, Campus Planning & Administration  
517-355-9582

Capital Area Transportation Authority  
Jim Froehlich  
Service Planning Manager  
517-394-1100

Dave Smith  
Director of Operations  
dsmith@cata.org