

# **JEFFERSON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION PLAN**

**December 2007**

**PREPARED BY:**

**SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

**IN COOPERATION WITH  
THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION**

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

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

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

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

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## ▣ PLANNING PROCESS ▣

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

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

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

**STAKEHOLDER MEMBERS**

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

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

**GOALS**

The following goals were adopted by the planning process participants:

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

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

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

**STAKEHOLDER AGENCIES – SERVICES PROVIDED**

**PINE BLUFF TRANSIT**

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

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

**AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS, INC.**

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

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

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

**JEFFERSON REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER**

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

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

**JENKINS MEMORIAL CENTER**

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

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

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

### JENKINS INDUSTRIES WORK CENTER

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

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

### JENKINS HOUSING INC.

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

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

**SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS BEHAVIOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, INC.**

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

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

**JEFFERSON COMPREHENSIVE CARE SYSTEM, INC.**

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

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

**DIANNE'S ADULT DAY CARE CENTER, INC.**

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

Service Area	Jefferson County
Type of Clientele	Clients



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

**ST. JOHN’S ALEXANDER TOWERS**

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

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

**TAXI CAB SERVICE**

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

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**▣ SELECTED DEMOGRAPHICS ▣**

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**BASIC PROFILE OF JEFFERSON COUNTY**

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

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

## **POPULATION**

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

## **POVERTY, AGE, AND DISABILITY**

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

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

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONCLUSIONS**

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

and thus, the senior citizen population will represent a higher percentage of the total population than what they represented in the 2000 Census.

- Disability rates on the whole are likely to increase due to birth rate survival rates and advances made in the medical field that will increase life longevity.
- Based on past Census data and the projected future population for Jefferson County, an assumption can be drawn that, for the foreseeable future, the percentage of low-income persons will likely remain similar as it is today.

The Institute for the Future of Aging Services sums the situation up thusly: *The following are "Givens" for the Nation by 2030: the population on the whole is aging; young disabled persons are surviving birth and will have extended longevity; and there is an increasing gap between "haves and have-nots".* Currently, it is estimated that between 12,000 and 15,000 people in Jefferson County are in need of transportation services at various time periods throughout the year. In the future whether based on age, disabilities, and/or income levels there will be an increased demand for transportation services other than depending on personally owned vehicles. The need to address the transportation services for the elderly, disabled, and low income persons will increase with time.

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## ▣ OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS ▣

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### **STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT**

The Jefferson County Transportation Coordination Plan participants (Stakeholders), while working with constrained budgets, do their best to meet the basic transportation needs of their respective target groups. The Stakeholders have been cooperating with each other in terms of coordinating their respective transportation services they provide the clients as best they can without the development of detailed interagency agreements. They did conclude, however, that certain coordination projects could be implemented to improve the transportation services to their clients and at the same time would improve the transportation to all the transit dependent residents of Jefferson County. The Stakeholders did agree that changes could be made in the services offered by PBT that would improve the quality of transportation services provide the public.

### **BARRIERS TO COORDINATION**

The Transportation Coordination Plan participants identified a number of barriers that need to be addressed in order to provide an integrated, coordinated transportation system that accommodates the needs of low income persons, senior citizens, and those persons

with disabilities. In order to adequately meet the transportation needs of the transit dependent, a continuing planning process with a dedicated financial resource to carry out a transportation program would need to be put in place. At this time, the Stakeholders have made a commitment to continue this planning process as on-going process to address the transportation needs of these residents. The following lists some of the barriers they have identified that need to be addressed in the future to insure that coordinated transportation may be implemented in Jefferson County.

- A Lack of Resources. Capital and operating funds to meet current needs are required. Our County's population is older, has a higher percentage of population living at or below the poverty level than the State average, and contains more persons with disabilities than the State average. This means that the demand for transportation services will continue to grow while at the same time, we will continue to lose population. Local funding levels will continue to decrease, whereas the demand for transportation services targeted group of persons will increase.
- A Lack of Formal Coordination from Agencies and Providers. Internal agency operations, policies, funding, insurance restrictions, and Federal and State grant restrictions poses a large hurdle to overcome in the coordination process of providing transportation services. Only through an open and continuous planning process between agencies will coordination be implemented.
- Cost of Insurance. That the cost of insurance rises faster than funding allocations means that more funds are pulled away from direct transportation services.
- Inflexible Medicaid Rules. Rigid Medicaid rules make it difficult for the operator of a transportation system to serve the overall transportation needs of its target group.
- Lack of Knowledge of Various Transportation Programs. The targeted groups as identified in the Transportation Coordination Plan do not fully understand the transportation services options that are available to them for the various trips they take.
- Demand Response Service. Demand response service does not work well in terms of providing transportation for large numbers of work-related jobs and for students attending classes.
- Subscription Transit Service. Many social service organizations provide subscription transit for their client. However, subscription transit service do not work well when the clients' destinations are those that operate outside the hours of transit service, such as dialysis units, medical rehabilitation agencies, mental health service centers, and senior/child care facilities.
- Awareness of Transportation Needs. There is a perception that many public officials and employers are often unaware of community needs when it comes to

transportation services for transit dependent residents and their ability to fully participate in work activities and community activities.

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Based on interviews with Pine Bluff Transit riders and various social service providers as well as the public comments from the Transportation Coordination Public Hearing, the following is a list of transportation issues that need to be addressed to meet some of the needs of transit dependent persons:

- Lack of late night and weekend transit service, especially for workers accessing places of employment.
- Limited transit service available to only the urban core area of the county.
- Time period between bus runs is too long.
- Current Para-Transit is only available within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile on either side of the bus route.
- Route and schedule information not readily available.
- Need of upgrading bus fleet.
- Lack of local governmental support to adequately fund transit programs.

## **OPPORTUNITY FOR IMPROVEMENT**

The Stakeholders have had a working relationship with each other over the years. This allows the transportation providers to have an excellent knowledge of what transportation coordination projects are practical in terms of implemented them within the next five years given their current staffing, financial resources, and program restrictions.

The following is a list of coordination projects that the stakeholders will to evaluate in terms of economic feasibility to implementing within the next five years to better serve the target population.

### **Coordination Projects**

- Joint fuel purchasing.
- Joint vehicle maintenance and operation supply purchasing.

- Group vehicle maintenance contracting.
- Group vehicle insurance purchasing.
- Joint transportation service website.
- Voucher ridership program for social service clients to use PBT services.

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## ▣ RECOMMENDED ACTIONS ▣

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Today our biggest problems are not having sufficient funds to meet transportation demands, and the entanglement of Federal and State governmental multiple funding and oversight of the local agencies that provided transportation services. In order to implement recommendations, the transportation providers must come together at the Federal, State and local levels collectively and be prepared to make both staffing and financial comments to implement the recommendations of this plan. The recommended coordination action requires a significant investment of time, research, technical assistance and funds to implement. Thus, stakeholders will have to meet on a regular scheduled basis over the time period in which the plan will be implemented to insure that work tasking is being carried out to implement the recommendations of the plan. The recommended actions in this plan will hopefully be implemented over the next five years and will require an investment of funding, research, and technical assistance to implement.

The Stakeholders agreed to try and implement the following coordinating actions that would assist each participant in improving the transportation services they provide. The description of each action item lists, respectively, the activity, what is involved regarding the action, the action item, which needs to take the lead, and suggested time frame when the projects can be implemented based on the constraints of the participating agencies.

### COORDINATION PROJECTS

#### Funding Initiatives:

- Secure funding to maintain current levels of service.
- Identify funding opportunities to expand service to transit dependent persons.
- Research the use of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) that could improve transportation services and be useful in coordinating transportation operations that would improve the quality of transportation service provided the transit dependent person and general public.
- Possible target date 2008

#### Cooperative Fuel Purchase:

- Each stakeholder enters into an agreement to purchase and fuel at a lower cost.
- Development of joint purchase agreement and development of procedures authorizing fueling up vehicles.
- Participating agencies and PBT.
- Possible target date 2010

#### Cooperative Bulk Purchase of Supplies:

- The stakeholders enter into an agreement to purchase those bulk supply items at a lower cost than per unit price.
- Determine what supplies items may be purchased at a lower cost than per unit price.
- Development of joint purchase agreement, and purchasing and billing procedures.
- Participating agencies and PBT
- Possible target date 2011

#### Vehicle Maintenance Agreement:

- The Stakeholders enter into an agreement whereby one Stakeholder agrees to perform routine maintenance on all the Stakeholders vehicles.
- Determine if it will be economically feasible to all the Stakeholders.
- Develop maintenance agreement and maintenance and billing procedures.
- Participating agencies and PBT.
- Possible target date Late 2011, early 2012.

#### Web Site:

- Each participating social service agency and private transportation provider would furnish the lead agency with the transportation related information they would like to have posted on the Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission/ Metropolitan Planning Organization web site.
- The Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission will collate the information provided by participating transportation providers and create the format to display the transportation information and place it on the web site.
- Those participating agencies willing to provide their transportation information.
- Possible target date 2009

#### Information Sharing:

- Sharing of service and client information, such as type of services available, eligibility requirements, operating policies and procedures, and other related transportation issues.
- This involves local networking and possible developing an outreach program that involves not only transportation clients but other non-transportation providers of

services to various segments of the community. All the participating agencies will agree to establish a regularly scheduled meeting for the purpose of sharing transportation information.

- This is an on-going project.

### PINE BLUFF TRANSIT ACTION

In 1974, the City of Pine Bluff purchased the privately owned bus system that had provided bus service to the citizens of Pine Bluff. Since then the City has provided public bus service by operating the bus system as a separate City Department directly under the authority of the Mayor and City Council. The overall goal of the City of Pine Bluff in providing transit service for the public is as follows: The transit system should seek to establish a level of service that meets the expressed public transportation needs of all citizens to the extent that is feasible. These expressed needs include those of minority groups, elderly, disabled, other transit dependent population of the City, as well as the general population. These needs also include service to all major commercial and employment centers within the City.

At the present time the City operates eight fixed routes each having a 30 minute headway, twelve hours a day, Monday through Friday. The service area population is approximately 42,000, and the service area covers approximately 85% of the City's land area. Over the years, PBT has obtained limited funding from the City General Fund and other local funding sources to provide an extensive transit program for the citizens of Pine Bluff. However, the City has not been able to provide local funding to match the available Federal Transit Section 5307 funds that are allocated to the Pine Bluff Urban Area to provide public transit service.

Based on the input obtained from the Stakeholders meetings, and the comments PBT has received from the public, the Stakeholders Committee established the following prioritized programs the Committee would encourage PBT pursue in terms of expanding its transit services. The Stakeholders realize that PBT is a City owned and operated bus system and the decision to fund and direct PBT to implement the prioritized programs is the responsibility of the Pine Bluff City Council and City Administration.

### PBT TRANSIT PRIORITIES PROGRAMS

1. Extended PBT and ADA Para-Transit System to serve the entire City instead of the current PBT service area.
2. Restore Saturday bus service.
3. Develop a comprehensive marketing and outreach program with emphasis placed on the following segments of community:
  - Create large employer and merchant ridership programs.
  - Create educational ridership programs for grade and middle school children.
  - Create general marketing for merchant ridership program.



4. Establish tripper transit programs to service large employers.
5. Extend the hours of bus service.