In Governor Kitzhaber’s remarks to the Oregon Transportation Commission on December 13th, he stated, “We have to maximize the [transportation] system through using alternatives like rail, transit, walking, and bicycling”. That means us. The Oregon Department of Transportation – Public Transit Division and our partners, like you, are responsible for making sure that Oregon’s transit system is top notch. We have made tremendous strides in the last two years with the development of the Oregon Transportation Network (OTN) and the additional funding the legislature appropriated to make the OTN a reality.

There is still some work to do. We need to continue together, as partners, seeking a common goal. We need a linked system where every Oregonian has an alternative way to get where they need to go, in the state. This will happen, but won’t, without the help and support of the Public Transit Division’s partners. Our providers, agency partners, interested citizens and others are the key to maintaining and improving the vision of accessible, safe and affordable transportation that is available to anyone, anywhere in the state. This is a BIG vision, but we are doing it, together.

Currently, the OTN is estimated to increase rides for senior and disabled Oregonians by 2 million annually. That is over a 40% increase in transit.
When an organization decides they want to provide rides for people one of the first things that comes to mind is the need for a vehicle. However, buying a vehicle to use for public transportation is more complex than just paying a visit to the local dealer. Buying a public transportation vehicle takes both short and long-term planning.

In planning for a vehicle certain critical questions need to be answered:

- Who will be riding in the vehicle?
- What type of service will the organization be providing?
- Where will the vehicle be used?
- When will the organization need the vehicle?
- How will the vehicle be used?
- Why does the agency need the vehicle?

It is critical to evaluate who your organization will be serving and what type of service design will be utilized. Is your organization going to provide general public transportation, dial-a-ride special needs transportation, or client only services? Each of these factors will contribute to the type of vehicle needed. The amount of miles placed on a general public vehicle operating on a fixed route will quickly add up compared to a client only service. At the same time the client or special needs services may need a very specialized vehicle compared to the general public vehicle.

Another important consideration is where and how the vehicle will be used. Will your organization’s service be primarily in an urban or rural setting? Will the terrain be mostly flat or will the vehicle be regularly used in hilly areas? Geography, road conditions, climate, and length of routes are all factors that should be taken into consideration when choosing a vehicle and how the vehicle is equipped. The same vehicle can be equipped in several different configurations to accommodate your organization’s needs.

All of the factors to this point apply to both long and short term planning. The next two questions are critical to long term planning. Yet, it is unavoidable that this will start out with your organization’s immediate needs. The question of when the vehicle is needed will be dictated by fleet management practices. For long range planning a projection of vehicle replacement will be critical. Mileage accumulation rates and replacement targets should translate into a prospective date to replace the vehicle. If your organization is just starting out or find the current vehicles in the fleet need replacing, then the next vehicle purchased will become the starting point for your long term planning.

The final question is why. The ‘why’ provides the justification for getting the funds to purchase the vehicle. This is probably the greatest piece of the plan and requires a great deal of care. Vehicle design will rarely be challenged, but why your organization needs the vehicle will. This critical step is supported by a clearly defined understanding of the service need your organization is working to meet and how the vehicle your organization is requesting clearly supports this effort.

The planning used in applying for funds to purchase a vehicle is hard work, but once completed it creates a living document that will continue to provide a road map for your organization’s future vehicle purchases.
Transportation providers that apply for capital or operating grants through ODOT must be able to demonstrate they have participated in planning for local transportation needs. Local transportation planning activities include developing city and county Transportation System Plans (TSPs) and regional Corridor Plans. These plans require a public transportation component.

The Oregon Department of Transportation developed a Public Transportation Needs Assessment Task Checklist to assist small and rural communities with the planning process for TSPs and Corridor Plans. The checklist outlines six major steps required to conduct a thorough public transportation needs assessment and identifies numerous sources of information that may be referenced. The six steps are as follows:

1. Review plans and documents that contain relevant requirements, goals and policies;
2. Identify and inventory existing public transportation services;
3. Assess present and future population and land use conditions;
4. Assess shortcomings;
5. Assess opportunities;
6. Develop proposed programs.

The complete document can be obtained from Linda Willnow at (503) 986-4168 or by E-mail at: Linda.J.Willnow@odot.state.or.us

Local TSPs provide an excellent opportunity to address public transportation. These plans look at all elements of the local transportation system and how they interrelate.

Planning projects are eligible for funding from the state’s administrative portion of the FTA Small Cities and Rural Areas Program (Section 5311) funds. However funds from this source are very limited. For more information on the 5311 program, contact Kathy Stratton, ODOT’s Public Transit Division, at (503) 986-3408 or by E-mail at: KATHRYN.A.STRATON@odot.state.or.us.

Complaints - They’re a Good Thing!

Nobody likes complaints. Nobody wants to hear them. Complaints are generally regarded as a bad thing. If you can just change your perspective a bit, however, complaints can be a gold mine for ways you can improve transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities.

Complaints can show you where you may need to expand service to meet previously unmet needs. They can also be a great source of information when you are doing a needs analysis for service gaps and funding.

Complaining is a way that people can express their dissatisfaction with the status quo. Many of us who plan transportation services are not seniors or disabled and we may not know all of the needs they have. If we are willing to listen to their complaints, we can learn a lot.

A lot of complaints may be about things that we cannot control. In the real world, we cannot provide every transportation service everyone wants all of the time. Furthermore, some people just like to complain. Many complaints,
Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is a broad term for strategies that encourage more efficient use of existing transportation systems. In general, transportation can be thought of in the economic terms of supply and demand. The level of need for people to travel (demand) in many cases is outstripping the available means (supply) to do so in a timely, cost-effective manner.

To address this need, we in the transportation business typically see our jobs as providing the means to get from Point A to Point B, such as roads, trains, buses, airplanes, etc. But what people really need in many cases is not transportation, but access. People need access to employment, shopping, services, recreation, etc. Transportation can provide access to all of these, but there are times when access can be accomplished without the need for transportation, or in a means which lessens demand on the transportation system. This is especially true in today’s climate of ever-increasing congestion on our roads, longer commute distances, increasing travel times, high fuel prices, pollution, and diminishing revenues for maintaining existing transportation systems.

So if we think of ourselves as access providers, instead of merely transportation providers, we can then begin to build systems that more appropriately address that need. This is where TDM plays a large role.

For example, one form of TDM is the expanded use of technology. The recent explosion of the internet has made it possible to work, shop for practically anything you need, manage your finances and investments, and a whole host of other activities, all from the comfort of your home, thus reducing the number of trips necessary to accomplish these tasks. If businesses implement telecommuting programs for their eligible employees, trips to the workplace are thus reduced.

More familiar TDM measures are transportation programs that encourage or facilitate the use of modes other than the single occupant vehicle. Transit-pass programs, rideshare matching services, vanpools, and park and ride lots are among the more familiar TDM strategies.

Typically, TDM is most effectively applied in urban areas where congestion and air quality are issues. Applicable techniques (see sidebar) are implemented using a number of methods, but at a minimum they all involve working with employers to educate employees about their commute options. As TDM programs mature and gain momentum, they often begin providing additional services, such as incentives and bonuses, rideshare matching, shuttles and vanpools, transit-pass programs, etc.

Rural areas can also benefit from TDM efforts. Smaller towns in Oregon have not enjoyed the technology boom that has fueled the state’s growth over recent years. Family-wage jobs are harder to find in rural Oregon and may require workers to commute long distances.

- Employee Outreach/Marketing
- Carpooling
- Ramp metering
- Vanpooling
- Signal synchronization
- Park & Ride lots
- Bus bypass lanes
- Express Bus Service
- Trip reduction ordinances
- Bicycling
- Compressed or staggered work schedules
- Walking
- Flex-time
- Group transit passes
- Telecommuting
- Highway lane management
- Telecommunications
Commuting costs can often eat up a significant portion of a worker’s income. ODOT’s experience is that park and ride lots, in conjunction with carpool or vanpool organization, can provide great benefits both in terms of access and demand reduction.

The Public Transit Division operates the state’s TDM/Rideshare Program. If you are interested in finding out more about TDM and how it might benefit your area, please give Dan Kaempff a call at (503) 986-4131 or email daniel.c.kaempff@odot.state.or.us.

“Complaints” continued from page 3

however, have merit and can provide valuable insight.

Do you keep a log of complaints? This log can be a good source of information to identify trends. Is there any pattern to the complaints or the people who are making them? Are they dissatisfied with the schedules, the routes, the drivers, the fares, the wait time, or the vehicles?

The people making the complaints are trying to tell you what they do not like in the hope that improvements will be made. If they do not tell you where your services are lacking, how will you know what they want? Paying attention to complaints can be much less expensive (and more rewarding) than hiring a consultant to tell you what your customers need and want. It can also help you avoid losing customers due to lack of service.

Often the people making complaints will also offer some suggested solutions to these problems. If they don’t offer a solution on their own, consider asking them for potential solutions. Even though their solutions may not be practical, they may generate other potential solutions.

You don’t have any complaints at your place? That’s great! Give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done. Before you get too complacent though, you may want to consider why you don’t have any complaints. Are you asking for them, and are you projecting that you are receptive to complaints? Encouraging complaints and suggestions will help foster an environment where people will feel comfortable telling you what they would like to see. So, keep your ears open for people who want to tell you about a great idea they have—and then thank them for sharing the idea.

If ideas for how to meet your special transportation needs don’t come to you on their own, via complaints or suggestions, you can always solicit ideas. Local Special Transportation Fund Advisory Committees are in touch with seniors and people with disabilities and would be happy to help. You may also want to contact advocacy groups for ideas on how to improve your service.

In the meantime, try to view complaints in a different light and see them as a great source of data to identify potential service improvements. For more information contact Sharon Peerenboom at (503) 986-4414 or email sharon.k.peerenboom@odot.state.or.us.

Check out our new “Tidbits” section on our website. This section will contain information and facts that we have gathered that we think will be useful to our audiences. The URL for this site is: http://www.odot.state.or.us/tdb/pubtrans/tidbits.htm. Let us know what you think, or if you have anything you would like to see in Tidbits, please email Kari Seely at Kari.L.Scely@odot.state.or.us, or call at (503) 986-6579.
The U-Shuttle Success Story

Public transportation is more than regulations, statistics and paperwork ... it is about people. What really matters is how services like the U-Shuttle provide a means for people to remain connected to their community.

Steve Dickey
ODOT Public Transit
Capital Programs Manager

Prepared by Carrie Leavitt,
Ride Connection

Washington County, Oregon covers approximately 727 sq. miles of concentrated urban communities and expansive rural communities. The county is experiencing rapid population growth as high technology and business industries establish themselves in the urban areas of the county. The high cost of living in the urban areas forces some to move to the more rural communities of the county where housing can be more affordable.

Access to public transportation for Washington County’s rural communities is a critical need. People living in these areas need access to employment, job training, medical, shopping and other opportunities that the urban areas have to offer. Transportation providers have long found it difficult to provide transportation services to rural communities in part due to the long distance travel and rising gas prices.

Ride Connection is a private non-profit located in the Portland metropolitan area that coordinates community-based transportation. Ride Connection has primarily focused its services on the elderly and people with disabilities residing in Washington, Clackamas and Multnomah Counties. With a network of more than 25 service providers, Ride Connection coordinated more than 198,000 rides for the elderly and people with disabilities last fiscal year, 99/00. Much of this service is provided using volunteer drivers and escorts.

Ride Connection has long been concerned with the transportation needs of the rural communities in the tri-county area.

One of the unique features of this project is the diverse funding that allows Ride Connection to maximize its resources to provide efficient and effective service. Funding was awarded from ODOT’s Small City and Rural Areas Transit Assistance Program, ODOT’s STF Development for Elderly and Disabled Service, and Job Access Commute and Non-Commute through Tri-Met’s coordinated Job Access application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

On September 6, 2000, Ride Connection officially unveiled its new Rural Washington County U-Shuttle Public Transportation Program at the Hillsboro Hatfield Government Center MAX station. The program links the rural Washington County communities with existing transportation options, including Tri-Met fixed-route bus and MAX and local destinations. Capital Programs Manager for ODOT and Region 1 representative, Stephen Dickey, attended the U-Shuttle introduction ceremony and expressed how the Public Transit Division is “proud to be a partner with Ride Connection in helping make this a reality for people in rural Washington County”.

The program has been incredibly successful. Since the beginning of service more than 6500 rides have been provided for more than 272 rural Washington County residents. Ride Connection contributes much of the success of the program to the community who helped design their system to meet the needs of the community and also realized the need for efficient service delivery. The local city and county governments are highly supportive of the program.

Forest Grove City Manager, Vergie Reis and Forest Grove City Counselor, Edwin Dey, served as celebrity driver and escort for the event. City and county officials realize the opportunities that transportation options offer their community.
Anyone Got A Match?

Usually when the time comes to prepare for new grants, the predictable question that comes up is “what kind of match do I need?”. This article will hopefully help answer many questions about matching funds for grant. If you do have questions, please feel free to contact Judy Sherrard at (503) 986-4004, or email: Judith.K.Sherrard@odot.state.or.us.

The local match requirement for obtaining reimbursement on a 5311 operating grant or a STG operating grant is 50%. The local match for capital projects is usually 20%, although currently there are some capital grants with a local match rate of 10.27%. Check your grant agreement to determine which match rate applies to your project. The local match for planning projects is 20%.

The following information provides guidelines on eligible match for various grant types. Common to all grants, however, are two restrictions on match funds:

1. Match funds may be used only once.

2. Public Transit Division does not allow two different discretionary grants from US Department of Transportation to match each other (refer to ineligible match in each category below).

1. **FTA Section 5311** (Small Cities Operating & Capital)

   A. Eligible Match:

   Federal Funds. If your agency receives federal revenue directly in the form of a grant, such as Older Americans Act Title III B grants, which do not lose their “federal identity,” then no more than one half of your required match may come from this source. It is your agency’s responsible for documenting the permitted use.

   However, if your agency receives payments from another agency under a contractual agreement, whereby your agency bills the other agency for service provided, the funds are considered local even if they originally come from federal funds. These contract revenues can be used for some or all of your local match. It is your agency’s responsibility for documenting the permitted use. **If you use the revenue as match, you must also include the costs you incur to provide the service in the total project costs.** (See Service Contract Revenue on page 7 for more information).

   **State Funds**—STF Formula Funds may be used as match for 5311 grants. Other state funds from other state agencies can be used as match.

   **Local Funds**—
   - Any of the revenues listed under Locally Generated Revenue on the revenue form may be used as local match for your 5311 grant.
   - The value of non-cash donations, such as volunteer services or donated office space etc. is eligible match, but is limited to no more than one-half of your local match amount.

   B. **Ineligible Match**
   - Revenues from Farebox, Tickets, Passes are not eligible as local match.
   - Special Transportation Grants (STG) cannot be used as match for 5311 operating funds.
   - Neither the funds received to purchase a vehicle, nor the local match component, can be used as match on an operating grant.
   - Other FTA /USDOT funds are ineligible match such as FTA Sections 5307, 5309, 5310, 5311; Surface Transportation Program (STP), CMAQ, and Oregon Transportation Infrastructure Back (OTIB).

2. **STG Supplemental Operating**

   Continued on page 8
The Rural Transit Assistance Program is offering a free defensive driving class to all transportation providers called “Safe At Any Age”. This class is offered in a 3 hour or a 6 hour course. The 3 hour class will cover techniques specific to drivers of cars, vans and small buses as well as motor vehicle laws and responsibilities. The 6 hour class includes the standard defensive driving curriculum plus concentrating on helping those over 55 with tips and techniques to make their driving safer as they age. The class will go over the aging process to explain potential impacts aging has on driving and then offer practical advice on how to manage some of those impacts so aging Oregonians can continue to drive. The class will also cover pre/post activities designed to prevent accidents and breakdowns. The RTAP program sees this as very beneficial for all those transporting clients and passengers on a regular basis.

The class is taught by Pete Taylor from ParaTransit Professionals, and Mr. Taylor will infuse humor and fun activities into the class to make it interesting, dynamic and interactive.

If you are interested in finding out more about this class, or to request a class, please contact Jean Palmateer, (541) 296-2602 email: jean.m.palmateer@odot.state.or.us, or Kathy Straton (503) 986-3408 email: kathryn.a.straton@odot.state.or.us. Eligibility for the class is limited to providers of transit services. The class is provided at no cost; the host agency is required to provide the students (at least 15), the training site and beverages.
Our experiences in Southern Oregon make us believe that the best grant decision process grows out of an overall strategic plan for the region. We have learned that a thoughtful and open transportation planning process that considers all needs in the community automatically draws together those communities already joined by existing social and economic ties.

It is the vision of those of us in the Southern Oregon Region to improve transportation through coordination. We are committed to an immediate enhancement of mobility. There is a growing consensus in our region that a coordinated transportation network will improve economic development and the quality of life by providing mobility in support of employment, healthcare, recreation, commerce, government, tourism, education, childcare, spiritual fulfillment, and the environment. It is our vision that this coordination must be developed in concert with existing human service and public transit operations. It must also include win-win partnerships with the business community.

To ensure an environment conducive to win-win ideas, community leaders from Jackson and Josephine Counties, Southern Douglas County, the Rogue Valley Transportation District (RVTD), and state transit officials met in Grants Pass, Oregon, on June 21, 1999, to discuss regional transportation opportunities, barriers, and needs. The meeting resulted in a set of vision statements and strategies to coordinate the region’s community transportation needs. It also resulted in the creation of the Southern Oregon Rural and Community Transportation Options (SORCTO) Steering committee. Although this initial strategic planning session involved only RVTD, Southern Douglas County, Jackson, and Josephine Counties, there appears to be a growing consensus that Curry, Douglas, Klamath, Jackson, and Josephine Counties will join in building a coordinated, community transportation strategy.

Two of the seven key strategies developed by the SORCTO coalition centered on the funding and development and operation of an “integrated transportation network in Southern Oregon.” The new RVTD, TransLink transportation brokerage scheduled to begin operation in early 2001, is a direct outgrowth of the June 21, 1999 strategic planning session. RVTD’s TransLink is a centralized, coordinated ride scheduling system managed by RVTD. The call center will be staffed by experienced schedulers and assistants. Both volunteer and paid drivers will provide rides.

Initial participants are RVTD, Josephine County Health & Community Services, Department of Human Resources (DHS), Community Partnership Teams (CPT) in Douglas, Jackson, and Josephine Counties, RVCOG’s Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Agencies in Jackson and Josephine Counties, and Jackson County Mental Health Services, and Douglas County’s Umpqua Regional Council of Governments, and Douglas County’s Umpqua Valley disAbilities Network, Inc. Other representatives from Douglas County have also expressed interest and support to a regional transportation brokerage. All drivers, public and private who provide services to RVTD’S TransLink brokerage, will undergo a criminal history check, drug testing, extensive driver training, and receive updated communications training. Drivers will be equipped with “hands free” cell phone or other reliable communications for ready contact with the

Continued on page 10
call center. The center will be equipped with the most up-to-date, multi-tasking scheduling software available. It will handle ride scheduling, interagency ridership coordination, and agency payment tracking. The software will have the capability to automatically geocode rider data, origin, and destination information, which will be stored and retrieved each time that a rider calls to schedule a ride.

RVTD’s TransLink and SORCTO stakeholders include elected officials, user groups, human service agencies, city government officials, transportation providers, religious leaders, health care professionals, independent living center representatives, chambers of commerce representatives, and rural community leaders. The June 21, 1999 strategic planning session was the culmination of two coordinated transportation studies: 1) the Rogue Valley Council of Government’s (RVCOG) contract with The Job Council of Jackson and Josephine Counties and 2) the Washington D.C. based Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) Rural Transportation Study for the Sunny/Wolf Community.

RVTD and RVCOG jointly conducted a survey of providers in Jackson County and identified opportunities for increasing access to transportation for Welfare-to-Work clients in Jackson and Josephine Counties. The strategic plan sets forth five (5) specific program recommendations and two (2) policy recommendations for increasing the availability of transportation for Adult and Family Services (AFS) clients, elderly, Medicare, and disability clients. The study also identified seven (7) initial strategies to help implement the above recommendations.

RVTD’s planning effort in Southern Oregon reinforced the need to ensure that community transportation decisions are based on knowing where public transportation users live, where they work, and where they need connections to community resources such as child care, training centers, health care facilities, and other support services. The bottom line: The geographic location of all users, not just special needs clients, is important in designing the best transportation service solution. To accomplish this task, a computer based geographic information system (GIS) is essential. Fortunately, excellent, low cost GIS program software is available to even the smallest transportation agency. GIS services can be obtained through contracts with consultants, non-profit groups, Councils of Governments, transit districts, or through local colleges and universities. Good GIS street data is also becoming readily available throughout the country.

While GIS systems are readily available, obtaining compatible client address data is usually more difficult. Agencies using the address data must maintain adequate security and use only the address data and information needed to provide efficient and responsive transportation services. Confidential information must be protected. Some human service agencies are still using older computer equipment and software that is not easily converted to a format that is compatible with commonly used GIS programs.

An excellent geographic software solution is, however, already available on the market in the form of a combination dispatching, scheduling, and GIS system that has the capability to automatically geocode the location of clients as well as store needed information about clients to ensure responsive transportation services.

The need to have passenger origin and destination information as well as information about special needs clients is an important first step in analyzing community transportation needs. This information provides a solid baseline for developing a strategic plan as well as the successful awarding of grants. For example, how many clients already live within the service area of the existing transit district? How many clients live in outlying rural areas and outside the boundary of the existing transit district? Should the grant emphasize support for clients in urban or rural areas? This geographic information is
important in identifying grant parameters and grant partners.

As indicated above, partnerships and interested stakeholders were involved early in the planning process. Our first thoughts, second thoughts, and last thoughts are that working partnerships are crucial to building an effective community transportation system. Community transportation is aptly described “as more of a way of innovative thinking about transportation services than it is of providing those transportation services” (CTAA, 1999). Innovative ideas that are incubated within strong partnerships will be supported by community leaders that have built and nurtured the partnership.

For the Rogue Valley Transportation District (RVTD), Southern Oregon, partnerships are essential to building integrated community transportation solutions across all modes and jurisdictions. Cooperation helps speed implementation and leverages the investment of each individual agency. It is important to be proactive in seeking grants that allow the local communities to partner with public agencies. It is important to seek opportunities to forge partnerships with private companies that have resources and knowledge beneficial to community transportation.

Building partnerships early and expanding them at every opportunity is essential. This gives the participants the benefit of not having to rebuild relationships as new opportunities arise. The greater the number of organizations involved in building community transportation solutions, the greater is the ability of transit providers, brokerages, and other transportation services to disseminate information to customers.

In summary, some of the specific questions we ask ourselves to help decide what grants we should apply for and which grants we should not apply for are:

- How does the grant support the overall strategic vision of the region?
- What is the projected outcome?
- Who will be served by the grant?
- How will the grant impact and benefit the administering agency/agencies?
- Does the administering agency have sufficient staff resources to implement the grant successfully?
- How will the grant strengthen existing partnerships?
- Which partners and stakeholders would be most affected by this grant?
- How will the grant benefit to the whole community?
- How will it benefit the region both economically and from a quality of life standpoint?
- Does the grant provide opportunities for integrated transportation coordination?
- What is the timing for implementation?
- Is the grant designed for a one-time demonstration project?
- Will the grant provide the foundation for a sustainable program?
State Agency Transportation Coordination Project

The State Agency Transportation Coordination Project grew out of recognition that State efforts to provide special transportation assistance are insufficient to meet existing needs, and that service increases may be attained with existing resources through improved coordination. To meet the challenge of improved coordination, Governor Kitzhaber requested that representatives from state agencies who are the primary investors in public, student and client transportation to develop a strategy for coordinating transportation resources. This report, The Coordination Challenge, describes the recommended approach to coordination of state transportation programs. Included in this document are descriptions of the need for coordination, the benefits of coordination, a vision for transportation coordination in Oregon, barriers that stand in the way, a strategy for overcoming those barriers, and a discussion of the next steps in the process of achieving widespread coordination of state agency transportation services in Oregon.

The State Agency Transportation Coordination Project is now in the next stage. Governor Kitzhaber appointed Gary Weeks, Director of the Department of Human Resources, to be the lead in further developing the state-lead coordination plan. Grace Crunican, Director of the Oregon Department of Transportation, and the Public Transit Division, are also participants in the project, along with other key state agencies including Education, Veterans, Corrections, Employment, Housing and Community Services, and Administrative Services.

DHS and ODOT each appointed staff to facilitate the project. Questions regarding the State Agency Transportation Coordination Project may be addressed to: Luis Caraballo, DHS, 503-945-5999, Jean Palmateer, ODOT, 503-986-3472, or Lee Girard, DHS, 503-947-1199.

Transit continued from page 1

ridership. The OTN is providing 5 additional thruway bus routes and will add 279 additional transit vehicles statewide. Further, the additional vehicles will improve the state supported fleet from 68% to 80% “fair or better” condition. All this is evolving through a partnership of providers, agencies and legislators statewide.

Let’s not forget why we are going to all this effort. I like the way Steve Dickey, our Capital Programs Manager, said it, “Public transportation is more than regulations, statistics and paperwork…it is about people. What really matters is how services … provide a means for people to remain connected to their community.”

Thank you for your dedication, support and encouragement. Transit Division is ready to go forward with you to achieve even more in 2001!