



## New Coordination Requirements

Coordination is a major theme running throughout the new national transportation bill. The new bill entitled Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was passed on August 10, 2005. The coordination provisions in SAFETEA-LU aim to improve transportation services for persons with disabilities, older Americans, and individuals with lower incomes. The provisions ensure that communities coordinate transportation resources provided through multiple Federal programs. According to SAFETEA-LU, a coordinated plan for human services transportation enhances transportation access, minimizes duplication of Federal services, and encourages the most cost-effective transportation possible.

SAFETEA-LU requires the establishment of a "locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan" for all Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs for underserved populations: the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities program (Section 5310); the Job Access and Reverse Commute program (Section 5316); and the New Freedom program (Section 5317). In a recent Federal Register notice regarding the coordination mandates in SAFETEA-LU, the Other Than Urbanized Area Formula program (Rural Program Section 5311) was added to the list.

As with any new national transportation bill, the various components require elaboration. This usually takes the form of guidance published in the Federal Register and/or Program Circu-

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lars. Since passage of SAFETEA-LU, the FTA has held a series of 'listening' sessions and has subsequently published several federal register notices with guidance regarding coordination - one on March 15, 2006 and one on September 6, 2006.

### FEDERAL GUIDANCE

The two Federal Register notices have given transit planners the necessary information to move forward with developing coordinated plans. The guidance defines a coordinated plan, lays out the key elements, identifies a list of potential participants, and offers suggestions on who should lead the process and how the boundaries should be defined.

According to the guidance, "A coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disability, older adults, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation."

The elements of the coordinated plan should include: 1) an assessment of available services that identifies current providers (public, private and nonprofit); 2) an assessment of trans-

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It's that time again! The holiday season is upon us and the hustle and bustle has begun. We all, however, need to take the time to reflect on our achievements as well as the things in which we were not so successful during the year and resolve to do things better in the coming year.

Of course, things are better now than they were this time last year. It's hard to believe that Hurricane's Katrina and Rita struck our great state more than a year ago... of course it may be hard to believe since we are still spending much of our time working on issues surrounding the storms.

As some of you may know, the LA Swift FEMA-funded service between Baton Rouge and New Orleans was terminated on November 30th. Through our efforts and those of the Federal Transit Administration (thank you Bob Patrick and staff!), we were able to continue providing the service using Rural Section 5311(f) intercity bus funds. We contracted with the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority through an Interagency Agreement to provide LA Swift service until the end of March 2007. This "stop gap" measure enables us to properly develop a Request for Proposal to advertise and bid out the service to a commercial intercity bus company. Part of the funding will come from the Section 5311(f) Program; but, we will need additional funds from the State to continue providing the service after March. Continuation of LA Swift is critical to recovery and with proper

support from State and Federal sources, this service will continue.

Some things are back to normal... if you can call anything in the public transportation industry normal. DOTD is working on completing our safety & security reviews for the Section 5310, 5311 and 5307 providers. The review is for the plan templates that DOTD developed and sent to all of the providers earlier this year. Some of you have not submitted your proposed Plans for us to review and we encourage you to do so as soon as possible.

We are also developing a statewide human service transportation coordination plan. The plan will act as the umbrella plan for the locally developed plans now required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Starting next fiscal year, all Section 5310, JARC and New Freedom projects must be derived from a locally developed human service coordination plan.

The Annual Public Transit Conference was held in September at the Wyndham New Orleans. The conference was a huge success, thanks in part to the many vendors and NORTA, our host agency. We all wish to express our appreciation to the vendors and hope they will come see us every year. You can find out more about the conference in this newsletter. One of the highlights of the conference (one that my staff and I will cherish for a long time) was a surprise award from FTA. This coveted

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Seasons'  
Greetings

FROM THE DOT'S  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
STAFF!



## Events Calendar

### APTA Conferences

Transit CEOs Seminar  
January 27-30, 2007 Tempe, AZ

Legal Affairs Seminar  
February 4-6, 2007 Charleston, SC

TransITech  
February 13-15, 2007 New Orleans, LA

Marketing & Communications Workshop  
February 25-28, 2007 Las Vegas, NV

Legislative Conference  
March 11-13, 2007 Washington, D.C.

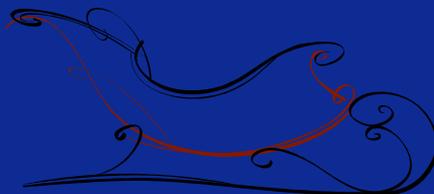
For more information: [www.apta.com](http://www.apta.com)

### Other Upcoming Conferences/Training:

South West Transit Association  
27th Annual Conference & EXPO  
February 11-13, 2007 Austin, TX  
Renaissance Austin Hotel  
For more information: [www.swta.org](http://www.swta.org)

TRB 86th Annual Meeting  
January 21-25, 2007 Washington, D.C.  
For more information: [www.trb.org](http://www.trb.org)

Railway Security Forum and EXPO  
January 22-23, 2007 Arlington, VA  
For more information:  
[www.railwayage.com/conference1.html](http://www.railwayage.com/conference1.html)



### NTI Courses:

Procurement Series I: Orientation to  
Transit Procurement  
January 8-12, 2007 Detroit, MI  
January 8-12, 2007 Raleigh, NC

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise  
January 9-11, 2007 Portland, OR

Comprehensive ADA Paratransit  
January 10-11, 2007 Concord, NH

For information: [www.ntionline.com](http://www.ntionline.com)

Transportation Safety Institute Classes  
Courses are offered around the country  
on various topics throughout the year.  
For more information, please visit:  
[www.tsi.dot.gov](http://www.tsi.dot.gov)





# LA SWIFT SERVICE EXTENDED



Spotlight on...



## Stopgap Measure Found for LA Swift Service

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, many of the evacuees landed in Baton Rouge, nearly doubling the state capital's population. In addition to relief workers, many of those evacuees were, and still are, living in Baton Rouge and traveling to New Orleans each day. To accommodate the huge demand for commuter services between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, FEMA funded a daily transportation service, LA Swift, with support services from the Capitol Area Transit System (CATS) and the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (NORTA).

LA Swift initially made 11 roundtrips on weekdays and 9 on weekends, with stops at Highland Road, Sorrento, and LaPlace. Because of the great demand, the service grew to 19 roundtrips on weekdays and 12 on weekends. This emergency bus service was designed to transport displaced New Orleans-area residents from Baton Rouge to New Orleans and back for jobs, job searches, and similar recovery efforts. Since the service was funded through FEMA, the rides were free.

The service was coordinated by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) with support from the Louisiana Department of Labor. After several extensions from FEMA, the service was scheduled for termination on November 30, 2006. Because there was still a great need for transportation to and from New Orleans, the DOTD and the Federal Transit Administration began working on a "stop gap" measure to continue the ser-

vice until additional state funding could be identified and the service could be bid out to a private intercity bus operator(s). Because of the lack of adequate funding, the service was reduced to 16 round trips on weekdays, 11 on Saturdays and 9 on Sundays. Additionally, the Highland Road stop was eliminated for various reasons. Using the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority's personnel and motor coaches, the DOTD funded the LA Swift service with Section 5311(f) Rural Intercity Bus funds through March 31, 2007.



Section 5311(f) is a set-aside in the rural transportation program to fund intercity bus service. The funds are primarily used for intercity travel between rural and small urban areas and a larger urban area(s) that has access to the national transportation system.

LA Swift makes several stops in Baton Rouge, including Florida Street in front of the Greyhound station and in New Orleans on Howard in front of the Union Passenger Terminal. Rides are still free, however, there are fares attached to connecting services on both ends.

As mentioned previously, the current service is a "stop gap" only. DOTD is in the process of developing a request for proposals to allow private providers the opportunity to bid on the service.

For more information on LA Swift, call 225/379-1232, or toll-free 1-877-4LADOTD (1-877-452-3683) or look it up on the web at [www.laswift.com](http://www.laswift.com). 



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Department of Transportation award stated, "Region VI Award for Excellence Presented to the LADOTD Public Transportation Division Team Under the Leadership of Carol Cranshaw, LADOTD, for Outstanding Performance and Dedication to Her Grantees Throughout the State of Louisiana, and Her and Her TEAM's Responsiveness to Their Needs During and After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, September 25, 2006 – Robert C. Patrick Regional Administrator – FTA Region VI – Fort Worth, TX."

On a personal note, I have been working with funding for disabled transportation services for most of my working life and recently had an experience that brought that work closer to home. In October, I had an unfortunate encounter with an obviously vindictive limb (believe it or not – courtesy of Katrina) in my yard and fractured the large bone in my right foot. The doctor put me in a cast and told me in no uncertain terms to STAY OFF THE FOOT. I was wheel-chair bound for six weeks and then hobbled around on crutches for another two weeks and have three more weeks to go. My husband had to drive me to work... which gave me an even greater appreciation for the work all of you do providing transportation services in our state. It also gave me a greater appreciation of what the disabled community faces every day of their lives.

So... thanks to all that you do and from all of us at DOTD Public Transportation: Have a happy and safe holiday season. We also wish you all a happy and prosperous 2007! 

One of the DOTD PT Section's mandates is to provide information and technical assistance to transit providers in Louisiana to assist them in meeting their requirements for FTA funding. These activities come in many different formats and venues. DOTD PT provides numerous training courses, workshops, and training material as well as a web site and annual conference. To keep all of our constituents up to date on DOTD PT's activities, DOTD On The Go features just a few selected items each quarter.

### Annual Public Transportation Conference

In September, transit providers and planners from all over Louisiana and other states attended the Annual Public Transportation Conference. The DOTD PT staff planned and organized a successful conference. They had wonderful assistance from the folks at NORTA and the LPTA.

### DOTD PT Excellence Award

Carol Cranshaw, Administrator of the Department of Transportation and Development's Public Transportation Section and her staff received an Award for Excellence from the U.S. DOT. The award was presented by Bob Patrick, FTA District VI Administrator at the Annual Conference in New Orleans. Bob noted that this is not an annual award, but is instead given only when there are exceptional circumstances that allow an agency to truly shine among their peers. 

*The Regional Transit Authority  
invites you to celebrate the return  
of the streetcars to the  
St. Charles Avenue/Lee Circle Loop  
Tuesday, December 19, 2006, 10:30 a.m.  
Howard Avenue at Lee Circle*

RSVP 225.929.8330 

# 2007 Annual Public Transportation Conference

This year's Public Transit Conference was held in New Orleans and was a huge success. As many of you know, three of the last four conferences have been cut short, moved to another date, or as in the case of last year, cancelled all together because of hurricanes. However, this year was a wonderful experience. There were presentations on timely topics of interest, inspiring stories of perseverance, awards for those who have gone above and beyond, and outstanding entertainment. Many thanks to the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (NORTA) for once again serving as the conference host city.



NORTA provides transportation to evening event

We kicked off the annual transit conference with a welcome luncheon featuring the Honorable C. Ray Nagin, Mayor of New Orleans as our keynote speaker. Mayor Nagin concentrated on the re-building and the recovery efforts and thanked us for doing our part in contributing to the local economy.

Following the welcome lunch, we heard inspirational and heartwarming stories from transit providers in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, and Cameron Parish. Members from the NORTA and the Capital Area Transit System in Baton Rouge provided an account of evacuation for Katrina and increased service to provide necessary mobility to evacuees. From Lake Charles came a story of assistance for Katrina victims and then mass evacuations in the face of Rita. Finally, from Cameron Parish came a story of evacuation, total devastation, and rebuilding. The common thread: service, stewardship, cooperation, and hope.

The topics focused mainly on the new federal transportation bill: SAFETEA-LU. Many of Louisiana's transit partners provided timely insights on how the new bill is shaping up and shaking out. FTA Region VI was in attendance to describe the issues surrounding the new requirements that are being promulgated at the federal level for Section 5310, JARC and New Freedom funding. Both the Community Transportation Association of America and the American Public Transportation Association provided their perspectives on the new groundbreaking bill and accompanying requirements.

Of course the conference provided the practical application training that most attendees expect. There were sessions on application procedures for the rural, JARC and elderly and disabled programs. There was also a very helpful and practical application session on implementing and recordkeeping for FTA's drug and alcohol program, which was filled to overflowing. The Clean Cities session was a big hit, providing valuable information on alternative fuel options to the urban transit systems. The Katrina devastation bus tour provided by NORTA was an "eye opener" for many who have not had an opportunity to get a first hand look at the desolate and ravaged

areas that are still so prevalent. In addition, kudos to NORTA again for providing transit passes to all attendees during the conference.



Dancing at evening event

Throughout the conference there were prize drawings. This year's vendor attendance far

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exceeded any previous year, which greatly contributed to the success of the conference. The vendors provided door prizes, many of the wonderful food and beverages for the breaks, and provided a wealth of good information for their products and



Carol gives Bob Patrick an Extra Mile Award for FTA Region VI

services. The vendors included: ACC Climate Control Elkhart, IN; Altro Transflor, San Francisco, CA; Bus Group, Inc. Slidell, LA; Carrier Transport Air Conditioning, Goshen, IN; Inter-motive, Colfax, CA; National Bus Sales, Marietta, GA; QStraint, Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Ricon Corp., Panorama City, CA; Sure-Lok, Inc., Bethlehem, PA; The Braun Corporation, Winamac, IN; and Trans/Air Manufacturing Corporation, Dallastown, PA.



Carol gives Cameron Parish an Extra Mile Award

As is customary, DOTD PT gave out 'Extra Mile' awards to those agencies and

individuals who went above and beyond during the past year... of course, this year there were a few more than usual. Following is a list of the 'Extra Mile' awards recipients: NORTA; CATS, Allen Parish Public Transit; Cameron Parish Public Transit; Lake Charles Transit System; Kiren Vemuri, CRPC (the first MPO award ever given by DOTD PT); Monroe Transit System; Bob Patrick and staff, FTA Region VI (the first award ever given by DOTD PT to a federal agency); Col. Tom Atkinson, DOTD Deputy Assistant Secretary (the first award ever given to an official at DOTD. A very special award (the first of its kind) was given by Carol



Award for Excellence

Cranshaw to her wonderful Staff for going the extra mile before, during, and after the hurricanes.

Bob Patrick, FTA Region VI Administrator, was in attendance and brought a surprise award from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Mr. Patrick presented Carol Cranshaw and her staff with the coveted FTA Region VI Award for Excellence. Bob noted that this is not an annual award, but is instead given only when there are exceptional circumstances that allow an agency to truly shine among their peers.

Entertainment. Oh, the entertainment!! For those lucky few who were able to snag tickets to the football game, a rare treat was in store. The first home game for the New Orleans Saints since Katrina devastated the Superdome coincided with the Monday opening of the conference. The Superdome was a mad house. The Saints took on the Atlanta Falcons and emerged victorious in front of a packed house.



Carol gives RTA an Extra Mile Award

Tuesday night, though not as raucous, was also filled with great entertainment. Conference attendees tramped, or road the streetcar with the gracious help of NORTA, over to the Jax Brewery. There was food, drinks and live entertainment of several varieties. There was music, dancing and several caricature sketch artists. Toward the end of the evening, our own Todd Sherman, from the Lake Charles Transit System, serenaded everyone to an impromptu song (which Carol especially loved).

Overall, the conference was well attended and a truly joyous occasion. There were stories of hardship, but service to others was the prevailing theme. The conference was a celebration of the spirit of hope that is visible in Louisiana today.



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portation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with limited incomes. [This assessment may be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service.]; 3) strategies and/or activities to address the identified gaps and achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and 4) relative priorities for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies/activities identified.

**The guidance and SAFETEA-LU continually refer to a 'local coordination plan.' However, plans can be developed at the state, regional or local level.**

The FTA guidance provides a list of potential participants and states that it is not comprehensive and should not limit participation. The list is, however, rather comprehensive. Public participation in any planning process is always a major concern. In the guidance, the FTA does give recognition to the difficulty in getting participation of people who have no legislative requirement or perceived vested interest in participation. FTA allows that where there is no mandate for participation the plan must show "evidence of outreach" to stakeholders, including customers of transportation services.

The guidance and SAFETEA-LU continually refer to a 'local coordination plan.' However, plans can be developed at the state, regional or local level. FTA says that the decision regarding who should develop the plan and on what geographic level they should be developed can be made at the state, regional or local level. This provision is meant to provide flexibility in the planning process.

#### LOUISIANA COORDINATION

Coordination has long been a topic of great concern in Louisiana. Efforts to coordinate public transportation services have been the topic of Gubernatorial Executive Orders over the past two decades. In 2004, the *United We Ride Framework for Action* initiative saw the creation of the "Louisiana Action Plan for Statewide Coordination," which provides a plan for developing an infrastructure for state agency level coordination.

The initiative is currently in its implementation phase.

However, to insure that FTA-funded programs meet the requirements and are eligible for funding in FY 2007, the Department of Transportation and Development Public Transportation (DOTD-PT) section is moving forward with developing local coordination plans. The DOTD-PT is developing a statewide coordination plan that will provide the umbrella plan for all other local coordination plans.

Included in the statewide coordination plan will be a toolbox for developing local coordination plans. The toolbox will include the federal requirements, a list of potential participants, an analysis of the need for transportation services in each parish, and a template for use in developing the local plans. 



## From Capital Hill...

The Department of Homeland Security received \$175 million for transit and rail security funding, a \$25 million increase over the amount provided for transit security in the FY 2005 and FY 2006 Homeland Security Appropriations laws (P.L. 108-334 and P.L. 109-90). This funding came when the House and Senate approved the FY 2007 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations conference report (H.R. 5441) on September 29, and President Bush subsequently signed the bill on October 4. The Department of Homeland Security will now decide how much funding will be allocated to transit and which transit authorities will be eligible for funding. Prior to conference, the Senate-passed bill included \$150 million for transit and rail security funding. The House version provided \$200 million for the program. 

