Paratransit Service in Rural Areas of Texas and Mexico

Paratransit

- Transportation service that is flexible and can be adjusted to individual needs.

- Paratransit offers some advantages over transit.

- Examples: taxis, jitney, dial-a-ride, vanpool and subscription service.
Transit in rural Texas

- 39 rural transit systems.
- Service types:
  - Fixed route
  - Dial-a-ride
  - Taxis

Para-transit in rural Texas

- Run by local governments (cities, counties, regional agencies)
- Most systems are dial-a-ride using minivans to vans.
- Local, State, Federal funding
- Some coordination with urban transit systems
Alamo Area

Socioeconomics in rural Alamo Area

- **Population**
  - 2 Million (2005)

- **Auto ownership**
  - **Texas**
    - 1 vehicle per 2.6 people
Socioeconomics in rural Alamo Area

- **Mode Choice**
  - **Urban**
    - 93% auto
    - 3% transit
    - 4% other
  - **Rural**
    - 96% auto
    - 0.2% transit
    - 3.8% other

Paratransit in rural Alamo Area

- **Service characteristics**
  - 24 hour call by noon
  - Vehicle availability, first come first served
    - Medical
    - Youth
    - Senior
    - General Public
Paratransit in rural Mexico

- Run by private operators with concession.
- For hire operations, 24/7 availability.
- For profit, no subsidies.
- Compete with and complement traditional transit systems.

Toluca Area
Socioeconomics in rural Toluca

• Population
  1.3 Million (2000)

• Auto ownership
  • Urban
    • 1 vehicle per 7 people
  • Rural
    • 1 vehicle per 19 people

• Mode Choice
  • Urban
    • 37% auto
    • 54% transit
    • 9% other
  • Rural
    • 1% auto
    • 60% transit
    • 37% paratransit
    • 2% other
Paratransit in rural Toluca

- **Service characteristics**
  - 24 hour by hire shared taxi in “terminals”
  - Vehicle availability always but no handicapped accessibility
  - Access to terminal required
  - No curb to curb service

- **Transit alternative**

Comparison

- **Texas**
  - Demand served
    - Transit dependent – handicapped – low income
    - High auto ownership rates
  - Service
    - Dial-a-ride van
    - 24 hour notice
    - Fares $0 - $3.50 - subsidized
  - Transit share
    - 3% daily trips

- **Mexico**
  - Demand served
    - Transit dependent – low income
    - Low auto ownership rates
  - Service
    - By hire shared-taxi
    - 24/7 availability
    - Fares $0.50 - $1.50 – no subsidies
  - Transit share
    - 97% daily trips
Next Steps

• Which is better?
  • Dial a ride – 24 hour notice vs. Access to terminal 24/7 availability

• Model/test Texas-style paratransit in rural Mexico
  • Increase accessibility
  • No phone

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