



# GULF COAST REGIONALLY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

2016 TRANSPORTATION RESOURCE  
INVENTORY UPDATE

Revised July 8, 2016

## Introduction

One element of the Regional Coordination Transportation Plan (RCTP) is a comprehensive listing of the resources available for agencies and organizations that either provide or arrange for transportation services. This effort consisted of conducting a transportation provider inventory survey for agencies and organizations providing public fixed route and demand response services and those offering transportation services through private, non-profit, community-based organizations, health and human services agencies, workforce, and others.

The purpose of conducting the inventory survey is to better understand the challenges and opportunities associated with the delivery of regional public transportation services for older adults, persons with disabilities, persons of low income, veterans and youth. The inventory is intended to serve as a tool to support coordination by identifying the existing transportation resources in the Gulf Coast Area, and documenting current service parameters and geographic coverage identified by respondents.

Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Public Transportation Division (PTN) updated the 2011 provider inventory for the direct recipients of funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the entire Texas region. That is located in appendix ---.

## Methodology

The questionnaire was created in close consultation with H-GAC staff and management. Survey invitations were sent for 184 contacts. Invitations were sent out electronically via email to 108 contacts and through regular physical addresses to 76 contacts. An online survey was used to update the inventory. The link to the survey was available on [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) to provide convenient means of completion for participants. Considerable effort was expended to construct a master database that would reflect the fullest possible breadth of human services, public and private transportation organizations in the region. This list of contacts was compiled using a variety of sources including contacts from the 2011 Coordinated Plan Inventory, contacts provided by United Way (UW) and Harris County RIDES program, and input from Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee (RTCS) members. Additionally, research on the internet generated further listings and current address information for senior centers, adult day care centers and provider organizations, and other related contacts. There are hundreds of social agencies, private agencies and public agencies providing some form of transportation in the Gulf Coast region. Staff focused their efforts on agencies receiving funds from the federal, state or local government.

The survey tool, included as Appendix --, was designed to make it as convenient as possible for stakeholders to respond, by including questions that were short and easy to understand. The survey included a number of check-box and closed-ended responses. In addition, the survey was intended to be applicable to agencies and organizations that do not operate transportation, as well as those who do operate transportation. The first nine questions of the survey were designed to be answered by all respondents and sought information about the responding agency/organizations. Stakeholder agencies and organizations operating transportation were asked to complete all survey questions, which included providing specific information on service-related issues and financial information. The survey was tested informally in-house and significant attention was paid to the language and sequencing of questions. The final version included 33 questions, as follows:

- 6 agencies characteristic questions;
- 17 questions to obtain resource information about transportation services operated; and
- 11 questions on annual expenditures and revenues

On April 14, 2016 the survey instrument was presented at the RTCS meeting and approved by members. Email and regular mail invitations were distributed on May 12, 2016. All responses were requested to be submitted by June 3, 2016. One of the challenges of survey administration is to ensure that the survey instrument is ultimately completed by the appropriate person within the agency/organization representative in cases where no names were included, the mailing label identified "Current Director" as the addressee. To

improve the response rate, Regional Transit Coordination Committee members were asked to distribute and promote completion of the survey. In addition, the survey is still open and H-GAC staff are making an attempt to call key agencies to encourage their response.

As of June 23, 2016 the survey had an 8.7% response rate of the 184 organizations invited to participate. Survey respondents were as follows:

- 1) Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center of Houston
- 2) Fort Bend Seniors
- 3) Family Services of Greater Houston;
- 4) Interfaith of the Woodlands
- 5) Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club
- 6) Lone Silver Transportation
- 7) City of Baytown
- 8) Houston Transportation Services, dba Lone Star Cab Company
- 9) Katy Area Ride Service
- 10) The City of Conroe
- 11) On the Go Transportation Inc.
- 12) MyMediTransit.com
- 13) Bryant Transportation Services
- 14) Wharton County Junior College Senior Program
- 15) Medical Transportation
- 16) Mounting Horizons Inc.

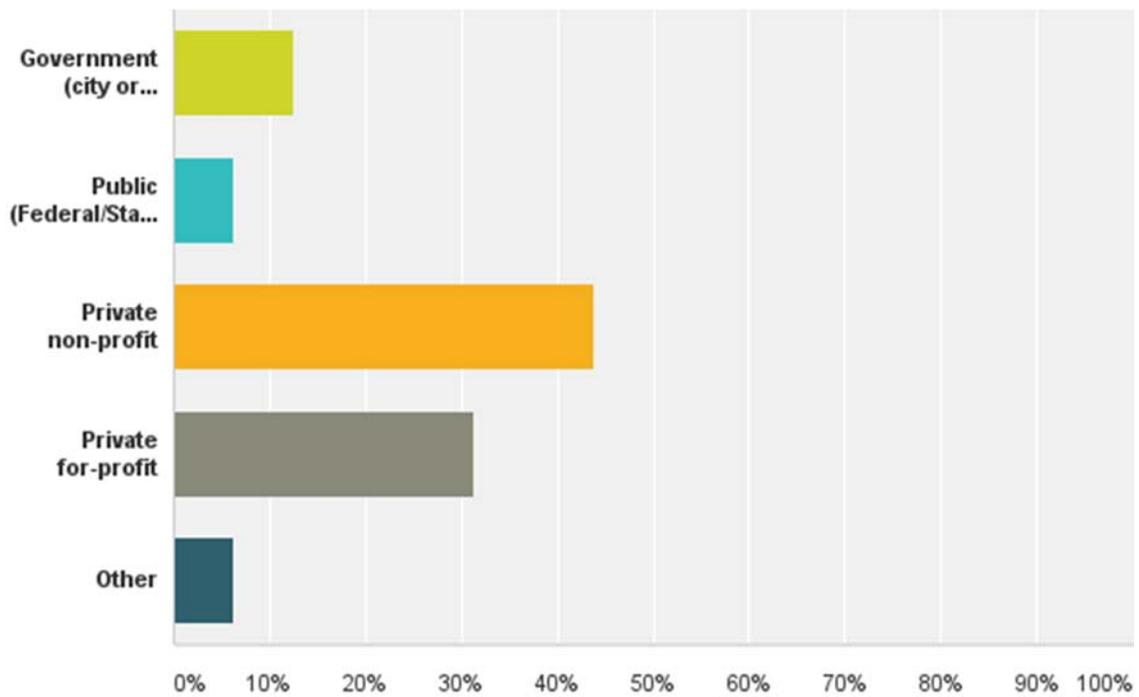
## Summary of Responses

The survey instrument covered major topics. The summary below discusses each of these topics separately, highlighting major trends in the responses and some unique answers.

### Characteristics of Responding Agencies

Figure 1 shows the largest group of responding agencies were private, non-profit (7 agencies - 44%), followed by private for-profit at 31%.

**Figure 1- Type of Organization Summary**



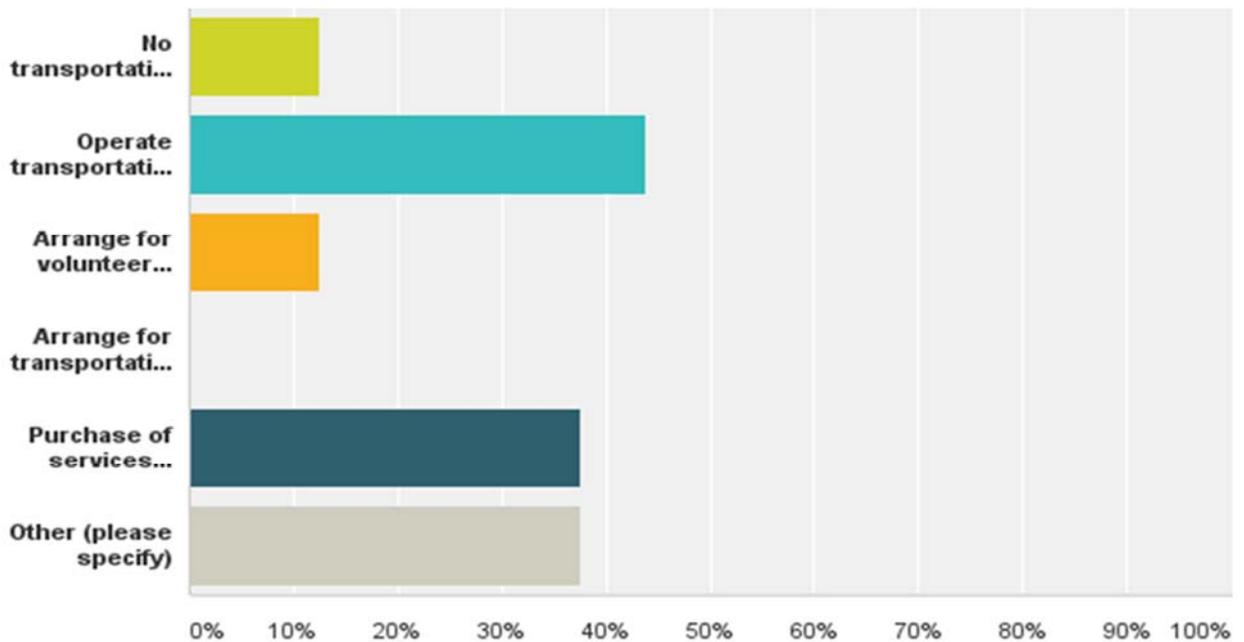
## Transportation Services Provided

Organizations were asked to describe the transportation they may provide and were offered a number of ways in which to characterize that service including:

- No transportation operated, contracted or arranged
- Operating transportation with full responsibility by this agency
- Arranging for volunteer drivers
- Arrange for transportation with information assistance
- Purchasing transportation

Figure 2 presents the responses from stakeholder agencies and organizations.

**Figure 2 – Transportation Services Provided**

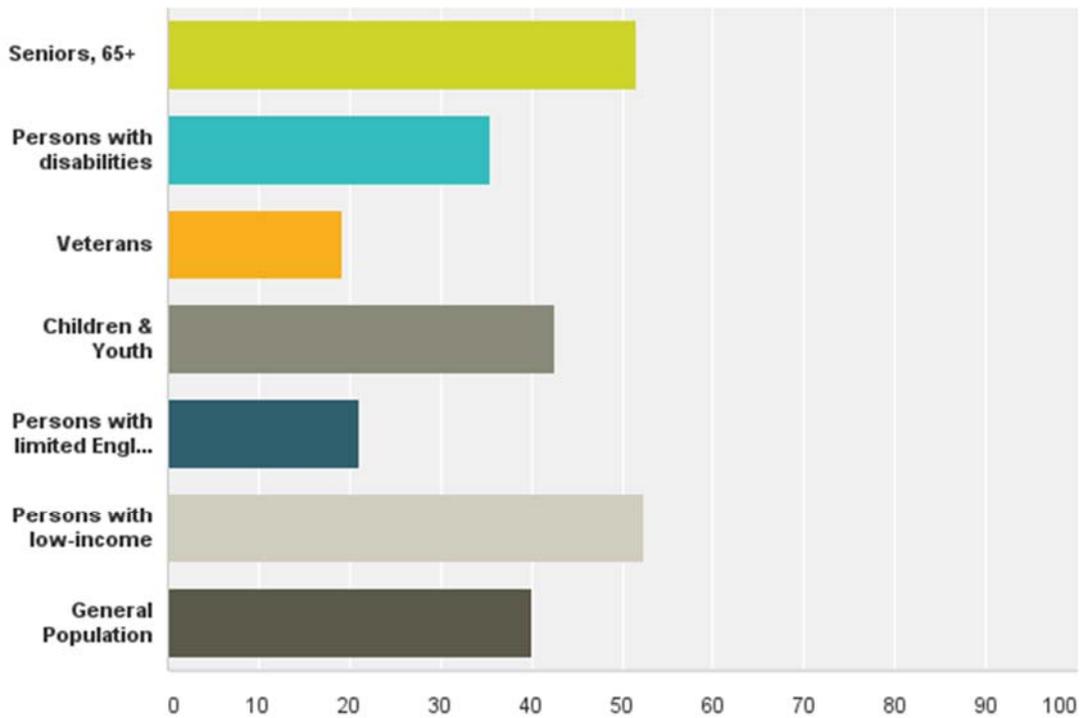


Over 40% of all respondents indicated that operating transportation services is their full time responsibility while only 15% agencies/organizations indicated they do not operate transportation. Most of these agencies are purchasing services or arrange for volunteer drivers for their clients. Slightly more than 37% indicated providing specialized services such as after school pickups, summer camps; emergency medical transportation for their clients; and essential shopping trip.

## Primary Clients Served

Respondents were asked to identify the percentage of each client population that their agency serve, and there is some overlap among client populations served by the responding agencies. Figure 3 shows that overall, seniors and persons with low income are the largest groups served by responding agencies (52%). Agency and organizations serving the veterans and persons with Limited English Proficiency were reported as served by a small proportion of all respondents, just less than 20%.

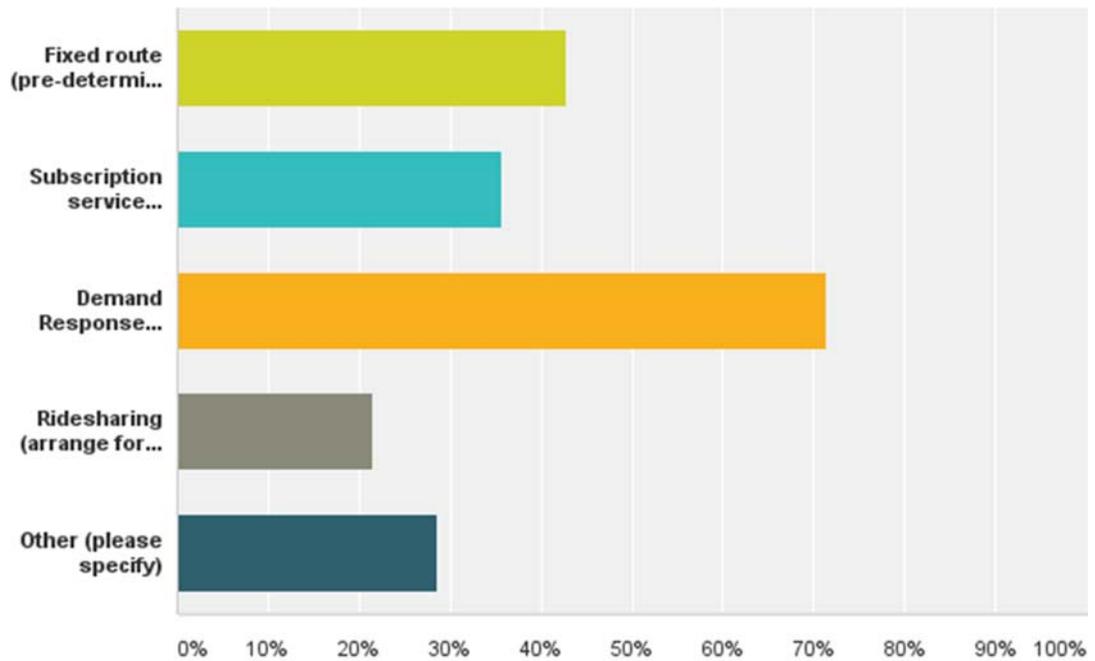
**Figure 3- Percentage of client population agency serves**



## Transportation Service Modes

When asked to describe the transportation services their organizations offer, most organizations (71%) indicated demand response services, 43% provide fixed route service, 35% provide subscription services and 28% indicated they provide ridesharing services and also occasionally drop off clients in the general area. Others arrange for people to travel together (carpooling). The City of Conroe provides ADA paratransit service for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route transportation system; and; the Ways to Work program of Family Services of Greater Houston offers low-interest loans for individuals to purchase used vehicles. Loan recipients are enrolled in the NuRide program where they are encouraged to carpool with friends and family.

**Figure 4- Service modes**



## People Served

Nine out of 16 organizations who responded to a question about eligibility requirements offer service to specific populations only. Table 1 summarizes the list of eligibility requirements.

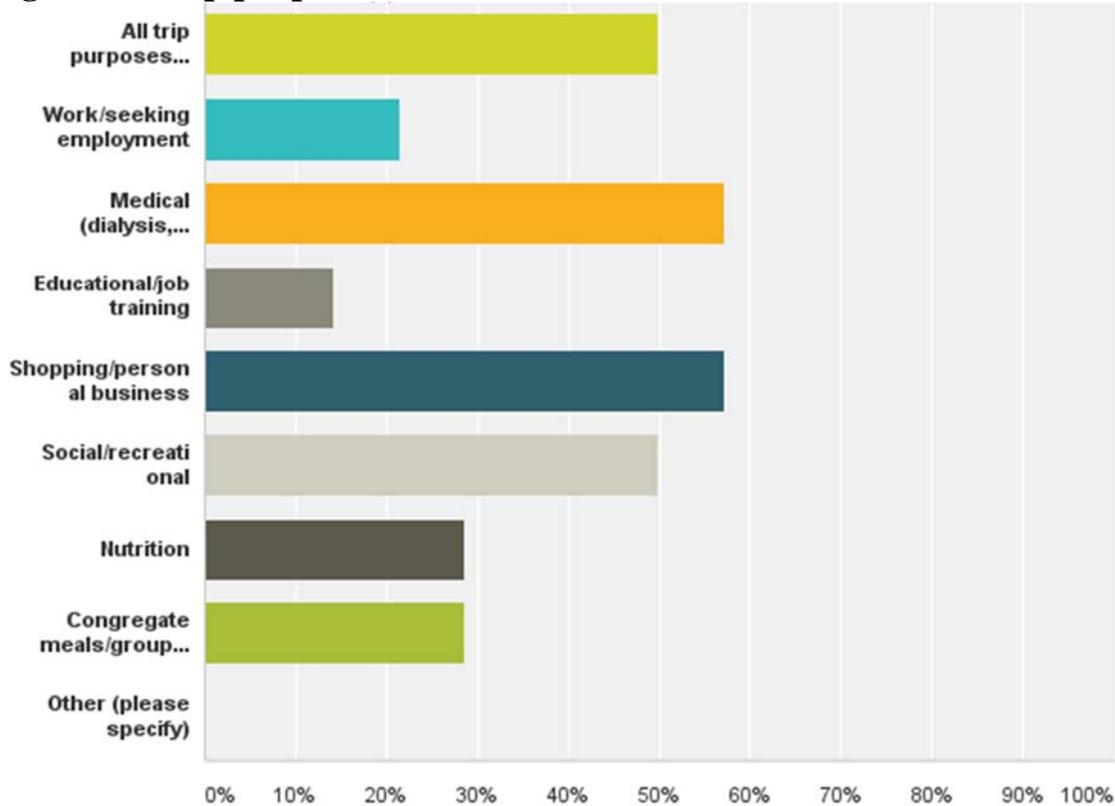
**Table 1 - Eligibility Requirements**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Type of Requirements</b>
Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center of Houston	60+, reside within the following zip codes – 77025, 77035, 77036, 77071, 77096, 77401; be affiliated with a local Jewish organization; reservations must be made 24 hours in advance
Fort Bend Seniors	60+, must live in Fort Bend County
Family Services of Greater Houston	Applicants must be able to fully repay the loan, have been employed for six months with a yearly income less than \$44,000 and have poor credit
Interfaith of the Woodlands	Must be 62+ and be able to independently call Interfaith to schedule his/her transportation and must be able to get in/out of the car independently
Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club	No answer
Lone Silver Transportation	No answer
City of Baytown	Individual with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route service
Houston Transportation Services, dba Lone Star Cab Company	General public
Katy Area Ride Service	Must live within the Katy service area
The City of Conroe	No answer
On the Go Transportation Inc.	No answer
MyMediTransit.com	No answer
Bryant Transportation Services	No answer
Wharton County Junior College Senior Program	60+ and must be approved by AAA & H-GAC
Medical Transportation	Must be ambulatory, get into and out of the vehicle on their own accord and ride in the seat.
Mounting Horizons Inc.	Must be disabled or senior citizen

## Trip Purpose (s)

Respondents were asked what client trip purpose (s) is served. 57% of those responding reported medical (dialysis, chemotherapy, physical rehabilitation, etc.), shopping/personal business at 57%, and 50% of the trip purposes were for all trip by their agencies, as seen in the Figure 5 below:

**Figure 5 - Trip purpose(s)**



## Summary

Stakeholders and agencies were asked to describe their current service area and to list counties or part of counties they serve. Half of the survey respondents serve county-wide. Among the other half, most serve two or more cities, and/or two or more counties. These service areas include: Mainland- Galveston County; Harris County and adjacent towns/cities in the greater Houston Metropolitan area; Wharton County (primarily in El Campo and Wharton); Colorado County (primarily Columbus, Eagle Lake and Weimar); Montgomery County (mainly the City of Conroe); Fort Bend County; and Katy.

The typical or normal span of service for most organizations begins at 5:00 a.m. and ends at 7:00 p.m. Half of the respondents have service on Saturdays. There is very limited service on Sundays.

Respondents were asked if they require any advance reservation for their service. Eleven of the respondents said yes. 46% require a day in advance reservation and others still require a 2-3 days in advance reservation.

Annual passenger trips vary by the agencies reporting, from a high of 300,000 trips for Houston Transportation Services, dba Lone Star Cab Company, to a low of 100 trips for Bryant Transportation and Interfaith of The Woodlands. Most organizations either do not track or do not provide trips to wheelchair users. The average vehicle fleet of those reported is about 15 vehicles, but ranges between two vans up to 250 vehicles.

The most common funding sources among respondents were passenger fare and donations. Many agencies did not report their budget detail but rather gave the percentage of their budget that came from each funding source. The annual cost of the respondents along with passenger trips, service area, information regarding vehicle fleet used, and driver used are all listed in Table 2.

**Table 2 - Transportation Service Characteristics**

<b>Agency Name</b>	<b>Service Type</b>	<b>Annual Total Passenger</b>	<b>% Population Served</b>	<b>Service area</b>	<b>Number of Vehicle Types</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Drivers</b>
Bryant Transportation	Non-emergency medical transportation	100	Low- income – 1% Seniors -30% Physical disabilities-60% Veterans-2% Children/youth – 10% LEP- 5% Low-income –75% General Public – 25%	SW-Houston Meyerland, Sharpstown, Bellaire, and W. University Place areas, TMC	2- Sedans 2- Minivans 15- passenger vans	Annual Cost– \$45,100 Operation – \$3, 600 Maintenance- \$1, 500 Administration - \$40,000	4- Full-time  1- Part-time
On The Go Transportation Inc.	Private bus service specialized in children transportation		Children & Youth- 80% Low-income – 15% General Public – 5%			No answer	
Katy Area Ride Service (KARS)	Nonprofit transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities	3,000	Senior, 65+ - 150 Physical disabilities- 25%	Katy	Volunteer’s own vehicles	No answer	6- Volunteer
Houston Transportation Services, dba Lone Star Cab Company	Demand response and ridesharing (arrange for people to travel together like carpool)	300,000	General Public		150- Sedans 250- Minivans 1MV- Other W/Wheel chair	No answer	

City of Baytown	Community Development Transportation Program – Non-emergency transportation service. Partnered w/Harris County’s Rides for medical appointments.	No answer	Low- income – 100%		Purchase service	No answer	
Lone Silver Transportation	Non-emergency medical transportation	25,000	General public	Harris, Galveston, Fort Bend, Brazoria counties	6- Minivans	Used Percentage	6 – Full-time
Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club	After school and summer program	18,000	General public- 100%	Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club	No answer	No answer	
Interfaith of The Woodlands	Supplemental Transportation (STP) demand response for senior adults 62 & older	100	Seniors- 100%	South Montgomery County, 77380,77386,77389,	No answer	No answer	Supplemental Transportation (STP) demand response for senior adults 62 & older
Family Services of Greater Houston	Low interest car loans program	No answer	Seniors – 11%	Family Services of Greater Houston	Low interest car loans program	\$330,688 42% Federal 58% Local	--
Fort Bend Seniors	Meals on Wheels	520	Low income- 50% Seniors – 100% Physical disabilities – 10% Person using mobility device – 10%	Fort Bend area	No answer	\$140,000 Fed – 50% Local – 50%	30- Full time
Jewish Community Center	Community Meals & Transportation Children/after school	46,347	Low- income – 1% Seniors -10% Physical disabilities- 2% Veterans-2% Children/after school; summer camping – 30%	SW-Houston Meyerland, Sharpstown, Bellaire, and W. University Place areas, TMC	2- Sedans 3- Medium duty 22- passengers	Annual cost – 299,925 Operation - \$144,255 Maintenance - \$35,346 Administration -\$27,829	2- Full-time 5- Part-time

			Low-income – 2% General Public – 100%			Purchased Transportation - \$92,495	
City of Conroe	Conroe-Connection Local fixed route service	No answer	Senior 65+ - 12% LEP - 19%	Fixed routes along SH 75 Frazier Street and North and South Loop 336	2- Minivans 4- Light Duty	No answer	6 – Full time
MyMediTransit.com	Non-emergency medical transportation	60,000	Low income- 100% Seniors – 40% Mental disabilities – 5% Physical disabilities – 25% Person using mobility device – 25%	Serves 32 counties	50 – minivans	Annual Cost – 780K Federal – 880K	50- Full time
Wharton County Junior College Senior Citizen Program	Title III programs (Medical, congregate meals/group meal sites, recreation, shopping and social)	12,146	Seniors _ 100%	Wharton County – (El Campo & Wharton)  Colorado County – (Columbus, Eagle Lake and Weimar)	6-minivans	Annual Cost - \$89,185 Operation – \$89, 185  Fed- 50% Local – 50%	5-Part time
Medical Transportation	Ambulatory non-emergency medical transportation	1,250	Low income -60% Seniors – 75% Physical disabilities-10% Person using mobility device-25%	Greater metropolitan area including the surrounding cities	2-minivans	Annual cost - \$45,100 Operation _ \$3,600 Maintenance - \$1,500 Admin - \$40,000	1- Full time 1-Part time
Mounting Horizons Inc.	501C community based	No answer	Seniors, 65+ - 30% Person w/disabilities – 100% Veterans – 2%	Harris, Galveston and the surrounding counties	2- Converted (15-passenger vans)	No answer	3- Full time 1- Part time

			Children & youth- 40% Limited English Proficiency (LEP) - 5% Low-income – 90%		Light- duty bus		
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## Next Steps

The purpose of the survey was to better understand the challenges and opportunities associated with the delivery of regional public transportation services for older adults, persons with disabilities, persons of low income, veterans and youth. The survey was designed to compile a comprehensive inventory of the services provided and to identify potential service gaps and overlaps.

The process of creating an invitation list and designing the survey instrument was very extensive while the response rate was only 8% (16 organizations). However, H-GAC now has a list with contact information for 184 agencies and organizations that provide some form of transportation services. Since the survey is open, a follow-up with a phone call could enhance the depth of information available.

There may be a need to explore coordination opportunities between several types of agencies through direct face to face consultations. This may involve a collaborative planning process engaging non-profit and private for profit organizations in addition to transit and human service agencies that provide or arrange transportation services, for seniors 65+, persons with disabilities, persons with low-income, veterans, youth and others.