



# RURAL TRANSIT



**WHO**

CITY/STATE/  
TRANSIT AGENCY

**HURDLES**

FUNDING AND  
PUBLIC SUPPORT

**More Information:** [tti.tamu.edu/policy/how-to-fix-congestion](http://tti.tamu.edu/policy/how-to-fix-congestion)

## Description

Rural transit describes public transportation services in areas with populations of 50,000 or fewer. Rural transit providers operate common transit modes such as local bus, commuter bus, demand-response, Americans with Disabilities Act paratransit, and vanpool/rideshare programs.

Rural transit services provide access to education, employment, and vital services for transit-dependent populations. Rural transit services also provide an alternative commute mode for non-transit-dependent riders.

## Target Market

Rural transit works best in areas with long-haul suburban or rural commuters traveling into congested corridors. Long-haul commuter-oriented services (commuter buses and vanpool/rideshare services) have the most potential for congestion reduction. Such services can easily allow commuters to transfer to other modes at park-and-ride facilities or stations in urban areas.

## How Will This Help?

- **Decreases personal vehicles on the road** by providing alternative commute options such as commuter bus, vanpool, and rideshare services on overcrowded corridors.
- **Increases municipal cost savings over the long term** through fewer vehicles on the roadway, delaying significant roadway improvements and more frequent maintenance.
- **Increases personal cost savings** by reducing a commuter's daily vehicle-related costs through the shared expense.
- **Reduces emissions and fuel use** through fewer vehicles on the roadways, improving environmental quality.

## Implementation Issues

### Jurisdictional Boundaries

Transit providers of all sizes are limited by jurisdictional boundaries.

### Lack of Community Buy-In

Without a supportive community (riders and funding), transit service struggles.

## SUCCESS STORIES



**The Ben Franklin Transit Vanpool program** in Benton and Franklin

Counties, Washington, **removed at least 3,232 vehicles from local roadways in 2008.** Substantial local demand led to the program's consistent growth.



**Treasure Valley Transit in Idaho: provided**

**145,000 trips on 15 unique commuter-specific routes in 2010.**

### Distances

The longer distances in rural transit result in increased costs (fuel, maintenance, and staff) and longer wait times for riders. Often rural areas are many miles from desirable destinations.

