

REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSIT

A CANDIDATE FOR COORDINATION?

*REAP POLICY TASK FORCE
MARCH 6, 2014*

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TODAY'S AGENDA



- Provide background on regional transit issues
- Regional transit coordination opportunities, issues
- Current activities

Why Take a Regional Approach



- Transportation issues extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries
- A region is more competitive in the economic market
- Regional cooperation can be more cost effective
- Successfully implemented in other states

Benefits of Regional Transit

- ❑ Increase mobility
- ❑ Improve planning and coordination
- ❑ Develop centralized professional staff to create operational and administrative efficiencies.
- ❑ Better able to address regional transportation issues like traffic congestion or air quality.
- ❑ Improved efficiency and effectiveness in grant administration
- ❑ Maximizing funding

Continuum of Regional Actions

- **New Definition of Regionalism**
 - **Communication** – *Sharing Information*: Acting independently, but having a regular forum to address opportunities
 - **Coordination**– *Acting Jointly (on an informal basis)*: Working together on selected functions by non-binding action
 - **Collaboration** – *Acting Jointly (on a formal basis)*: Working together on selected functions by binding actions (interlocal agreements, MOU's, etc.)
 - **Consolidation** – *Total Integration*: Total integration of selected or all functions by mutual consent and legal transfer of authority to a single legal entity

Regionalism Menu



- ❑ Administration/Procurement
- ❑ Operations
- ❑ Maintenance
- ❑ Customer Service
- ❑ Planning
- ❑ Capital/Construction
- ❑ Safety & Security.
- ❑ Training

Current Activities



- Wichita Transit Vision Plan
 - Regional connections
 - Surveys of neighboring communities
 - New Services/ markets
- State Regionalism Study
 - New regional configuration
 - Recognizing opportunities to coordinate

Regional Service Areas

- ▣ Defined geographic areas with common transportation need characteristics
- ▣ Factors to be considered include
 - Travel patterns--for work trips, for medical and human service needs, for shopping, and for social/recreational trips
 - Economic characteristics
 - Geographic factors
 - Jurisdictional and planning organization boundaries
 - Census designations (transit funding categories)
 - Historical ties

Framework for Regional Action

- Determine the Regional Service Area—which systems should be working together, given regional travel patterns and user characteristics/needs
- Inventory current regional cooperation—what is the baseline?
- Identify actions that could benefit users, the community, business and the State through regional efforts

Closing thoughts

Regional cooperation can:

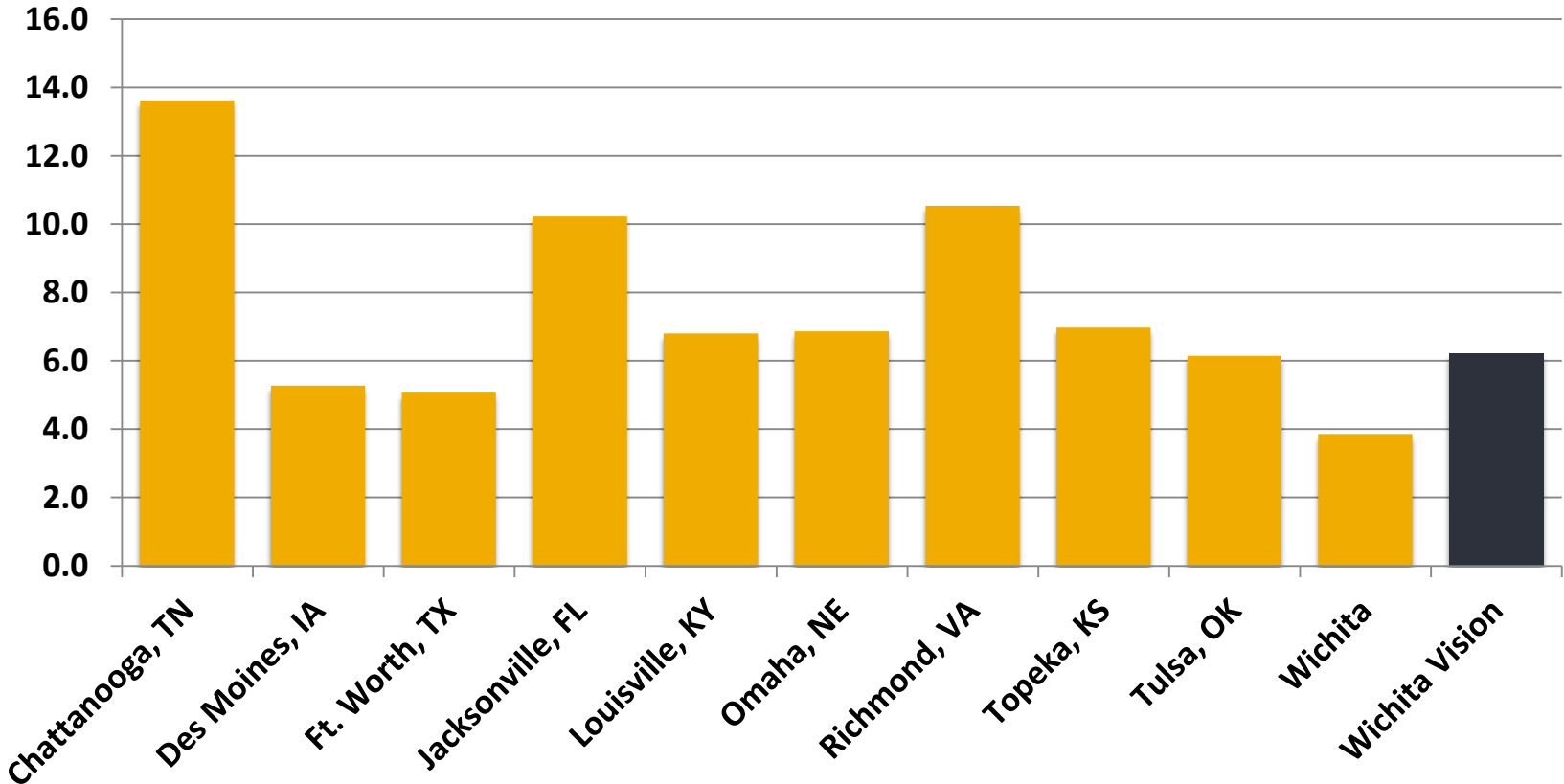
- ▣ Provide better service
- ▣ Support quality of life
- ▣ Contribute to economic development
- ▣ Promote effective use of tax dollars

Questions...



Vision Comparison

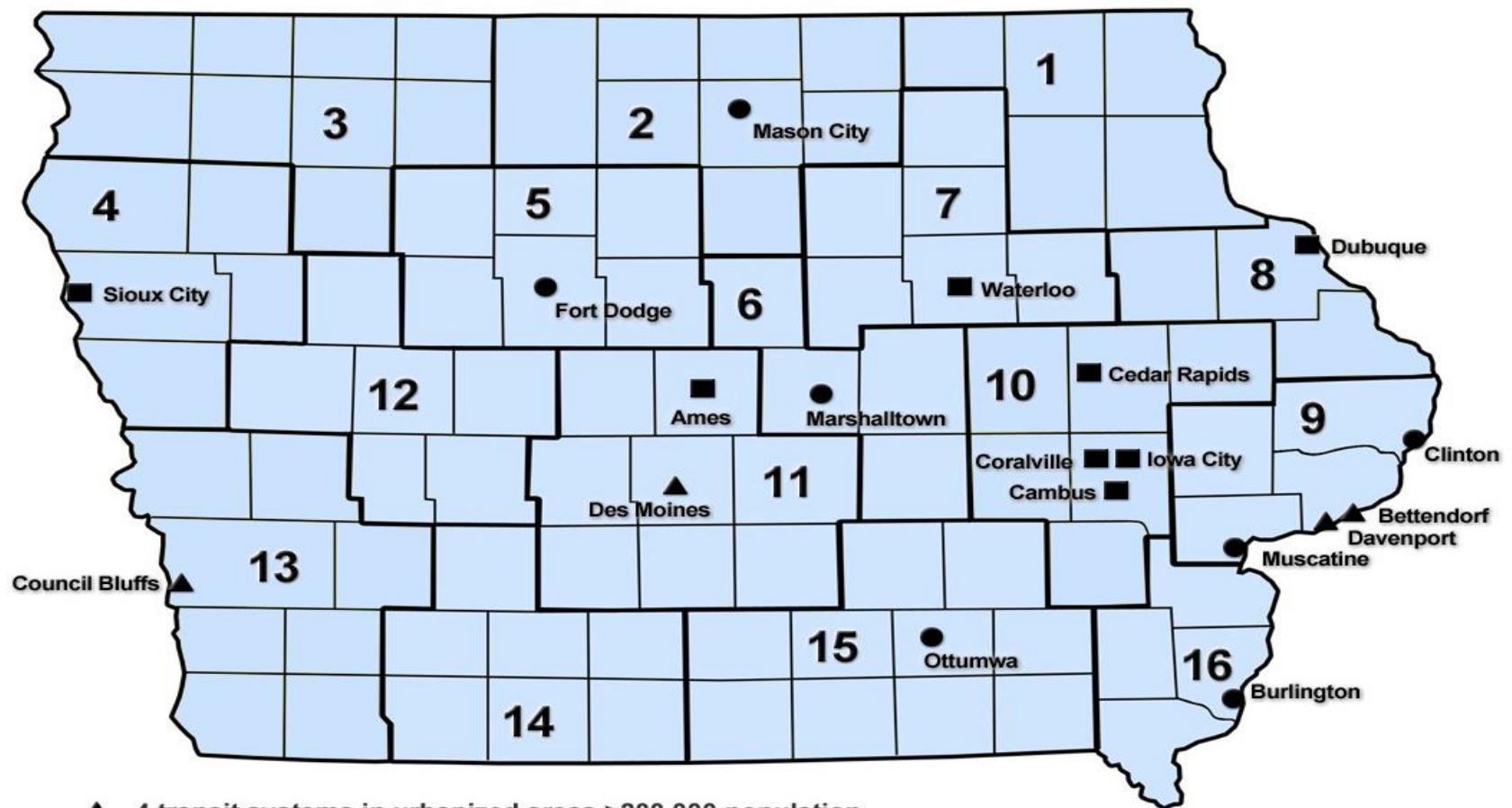
Revenue Miles per Capita



Wichita Transit Vision Plan

- Partnerships are key
 - ▣ Regional communities
 - Service extends beyond jurisdictional boundaries
 - Service coordination
 - ▣ Business
 - Services to meet business needs
 - ▣ Universities
 - ▣ Schools

Regional Transit in Iowa



- ▲ 4 transit systems in urbanized areas >200,000 population
- 8 transit systems in urbanized areas 50,000 to 200,000 population
- 7 transit systems in small urban areas <50,000 population
- 16 regional transit systems

North Carolina Regional Transit Study

- **Several failed attempts**
- **Standard definition of regionalism**
 - The full integration of the administration and operations of a minimum of two contiguous single county public transportation systems,
 - Consolidation of an urban fixed-route system with at least one county transportation system into a single fully integrated system.


Conclusions of the NC Study

Successful efforts at regionalization

- ❑ do not require total consolidation
- ❑ approach varies with local conditions
- ❑ taking different elements from a menu
- ❑ requires technical assistance from the state
- ❑ Regionalization can be mandated through state legislation, but it can also be accomplished with incentives, particularly funding incentives

Observations

- Regionalization can be mandated through state legislation, but it can also be
- accomplished with incentives, particularly funding incentives.
- □ As regionalization is implemented, there is no “one size fits all” for each
- region; regions will vary based on local needs and resources, and individual
- jurisdictions within a region may still provide their own individual transit
- service.
- □ Efforts to regionalize transit systems benefit from a local champion, either
- an individual or an agency that advocates for the new structure and helps
- marshal its implementation.



The process of regionalizing requires technical assistance from the state and there may be ongoing technical assistance needs from the state. With transit systems consolidated within a region, state program management and administrative efforts will be reduced with fewer grantees, but there are often new technical assistance requirements to help implement the new regional entities and support ongoing efforts as they transition to their new structures. The relationships between the state and its regions will be significantly influenced by the structure, policies, and procedures of the funding programs that support transit in the regions.

IOWA

- 99 counties
- 1976...state dot plan advocating regional systems
- 1977...plan defined regions as governor's sub state planning regions

- Now 35 systems
- 19 urban
- 16 rural

Wichita Transit Vision Plan

- Extend regular routes to keep pace with growth
- Improve frequency (15 -20 minute peak service)
- Introduce crosstown routes to create a grid
- Expand hours of operation - late night and Sunday service
- Introduce neighborhood feeders in areas of low ridership
- Introduce regional services
- Expand ADA coverage