

# National RTAP

*Federal Transit Administration (FTA)  
National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)*

## What's New:

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January 29, 2003

### **Rural Local Officials Ensured Role in Transportation Planning**

A final rule specifying a role for rural local officials in the statewide transportation planning process has been issued by the US Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Additionally, the rule requires that states create and "document" a process for consultation and this is to be "separate and discrete" from the public involvement process.

Furthermore, it provides definitions for three terms that have been contentious through the nearly three years of activities surrounding the development of a final rule. The definitions follow:

**CONSULTATION;** "Consultation means that one party confers with another identified party in accordance with an established process and, prior to taking action(s) considers that party's views and periodically informs that party about action(s) taken

**NON-METROPOLITAN AREA:** "Non-metropolitan area means the geographic area outside designated metropolitan planning areas," as designated in earlier transportation laws.

**NON-METROPOLITAN LOCAL OFFICIAL:** Non-metropolitan local official means the elected or appointed officials of general purpose local government,

in non-metropolitan areas, with jurisdiction/responsibility for transportation.”

The final rule reflects a compromise proposed by the National Association of Counties (NACo), National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). APWA has worked closely with NACo and NADO to secure a clear role for local officials in transportation planning. Spearheaded by APWA’s Small Cities/Rural Communities Forum, many comments, letters, and personal meetings have been generated to express the rural, local official perspective.

Go to [www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/fhwa0301.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/fhwa0301.htm) for a copy of the US DOT press release on the rule which includes comments by FHWA Administrator Mary Peters and FTA Administrator Jennifer L. Dorn and follow link to the January 23, 2002 “Federal Register” for a copy of the rule as well as a full explanation of the rationale for the final promulgation and a history of the issues involved in its development.

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### **National RTAP Awards Presentations at the 15th National Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation Conference October 29 in Huron, Ohio**



**Delaware Transit Corporation's *Bus Evacuation and Safety Workshop* won Outstanding Achievement for an RTAP State Program. Delaware representative Ken Bock accepted the award from National RTAP Director Beth Denniston.**

**Illinois Department of Transportation's *Region Maintenance Center* won Outstanding Achievement for an RTAP Product or Service. Illinois representative David Spacek accepts the award from National RTAP Director Beth Denniston.**



**Kansas RTAP's *Kansas Trans Reporter* won an Honorable Mention for an RTAP Product or Service. Kansas representative Pat Weaver accepts the award from National RTAP Director Beth Denniston.**

If you would like to receive copies of the award winning materials, just e-mail Nation RTAP Manager [Matt Grizzard](mailto:Matt.Grizzard@dot.gov) or call 202-408-9541 ext. 3015

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## **New AARP Report Helps Agencies Understand Needs of Seniors**

Are you planning a new service for seniors? or expanding an existing one? Doing either requires some insight into the needs and expectations of your passengers. A new report recently released by the AARP could help you gain the insight. [Understanding Senior Transportation](#) may help you better understand how older persons connect with their communities and the types of mobility problems they experience - particularly current or potential riders over age 75.

You can obtain a copy of the report on the AARP web site at: [http://www.research.aarp.org/il/inb50\\_transport.pdf](http://www.research.aarp.org/il/inb50_transport.pdf)

If you have any trouble downloading the .pdf, contact [Matt Grizzard](#) by [e-mail](#) or phone 202-408-9541 ext. 3015 and the form can be sent to you via e-mail, fax, or mail.

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## **Success Stories Sought on Best Practices, Lessons for Small Urban, Rural Transit**

Harvard Design and Mapping (HDM) is seeking small urban and rural transit systems to share their experiences in Transit ITS implementation. This information will be used to develop an interactive Web site, called the Rural ITS Transit Success Electronic Story Booklet, for the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Office of Research, Demonstration and Innovation and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (ITS JPO).

If you would like to participate or would like more information, go to: <http://www.hdm.com/its/>

This site is an extension of a study and report that HDM recently completed for the FTA entitled Technology in Rural Transit: Linking People with Their Community. The report provides rural transit system managers with a synopsis of contemporary knowledge to help plan and implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies. An online version of the report can be found at [www.hdm.com/content.php?content=projects/it\\_rural\\_transit.xml](http://www.hdm.com/content.php?content=projects/it_rural_transit.xml).

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Download FTA's [Implementation Guidelines for Drug and Alcohol Regulations in Mass Transit](#)