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Linx/Yellowstone Business Partnership
New Partners for Smart Growth
February 4, 2012
Building Sustainable Rural Communities with Regional Transportation Systems
The Greater Yellowstone Region

- 27 counties in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming
- 35-40 Million acres
- Over 700,000 population
- Only four counties in excess of 50,000 (metro areas)
- One of world’s last intact eco-systems
- World’s first national park - Yellowstone
Greater Yellowstone
Regional Challenges

- Seasonal fluctuations in the economy
- People cross state lines for work, medical care, retail and recreation
- No public entity addressing regional transportation
- Heavily auto-dependent
- Seniors, youth, people with low incomes, people with disabilities, anyone without a private car has trouble
What is Linx?

- Coordination between public and private providers to create regional transportation system
- Business cooperative model
- Centralized trip planning and information at www.linx.coop
- Bridge physical and temporal gaps
- Marketing, new business opportunities and technology development for transportation providers
2009 Feasibility Study Funding

• $535,000 of ARRA funds through ITD
• YBP to conduct feasibility study and pilot regional transportation cooperative
2009 Feasibility Study Process

- 50+ volunteer steering committee from across region
- Volunteers represented diversity of the region
- Volunteers worked in 6 teams to provide input to the feasibility study: private and public providers, government agency coordination, human service providers, multi-modal, marketing, and recreation and tourism
Public meetings
Co-op Formation and Goals

- Incorporated on 1/24/2010
  - File paperwork for business in all three states
  - Adopt bylaws
- Recruit pilot phase board
- YBP to perform staff functions under contract
- Recruit provider-members
  - Build out system and begin gap filling
- Expected to launch trip-planning and ticketing website in 2010

Connecting People and Places
Linx can get you where you need to go in the Greater Yellowstone region

**Book your ticket for bus travel between cities**

Download a PDF of the map.

**Find regional transit and taxi information**

Download a PDF of the map.

**Plan your trip to Yellowstone National Park**

Download a PDF of the map.
Choose Departure and Arrival Points

Welcome to the online ticketing system! Please choose your departure and arrival points, and whether this is one-way or round-trip, below.

Online Ticketing System

(Please type the first few letters of the City you're looking for)

Switch to List View for Departure and Arrival Options/ADA screenreader-optimized

Leaving from: 

Going to:

Departing:

Ticket type: [ ] One Way [ ] Round Trip

Passengers:

Adults: 1
Seniors: 0
Children: 0
Military: 0

Continue

Please note that all tickets sold on linx.coop are non-refundable and non-transferable. Changes to your travel plans are subject to the policies of each carrier; please contact the individual carrier(s) identified on your tickets, or the Linx HelpLine at 877-454-LINX (5469) with any questions or concerns.

Ticket Manager Pro 3.0 - online bus ticketing store provided by Lock Media Services, Inc.
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Ride Linx in Yellowstone

- Invitation by Park Service
- Proved multiple providers could coordinate
- 3,500 park-based employees—bulk passes
- Stories: medical emergencies, parties wishing to split, through hikers and cyclists.
- International tourists
Sustainable Communities Grant

- Four-county region – very diverse, economically interdependent
- Improving commuter options
- Multi-modal planning - pathways etc.
- Planning and work that we can scale up and apply to rest of the region
Lessons Learned

- Start-ups need start-up capital – USDA Rural Development, ARRA, HUD Planning Grant
- Technology development takes time and costs money (more than you think)
- Marketing is key
  - Multiple media markets
  - Less “plugged-in” than in urban areas
What’s next?

- Marketing with a customer focus
- Evolving technology to aid in trip planning
- Time period passes (week, month, etc.)
- Online ticketing for more providers
- Linx Bus in Yellowstone 2012 and 2013
- Hire General Manager
Thank you!

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