

# HEB

# TRANSIT

## Progress Report: Year 2 Update

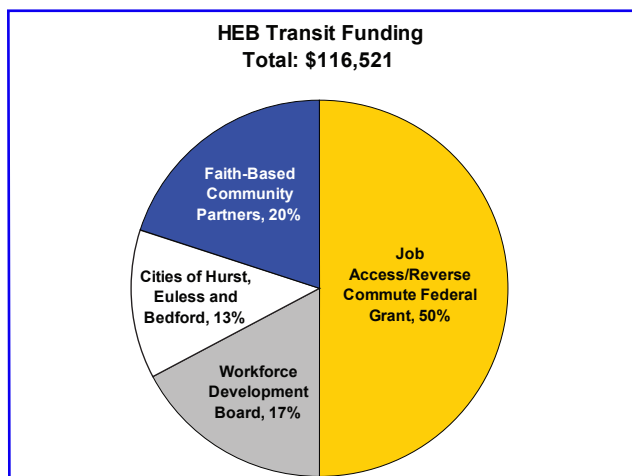
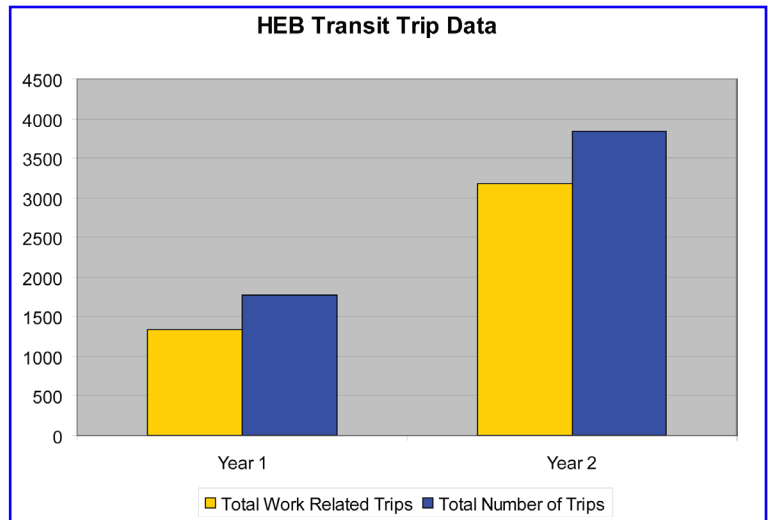


HEB Transit continued to experience strong growth in its second year of operation (August 2007 - July 2008). The service grew in a range of categories, including trips provided, work-related trips, and passengers served. In fact, HEB Transit is one of only six projects in Texas featured on the federal United We Ride Useful Practices Web site. The site recognizes transportation programs nationwide that have increased efficiency, simplified access and reduced duplication to target populations through innovative partnerships.

HEB Transit provides transportation to and from work and work-related appointments to transportation-disadvantaged individuals within

the cities of Hurst, Euless and Bedford. The service operates Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. In operation since August 2006, HEB Transit provided 1,774 rides during its first year. In its second year, ridership more than doubled, increasing to 3,780 and far outpaced projections. The program served 125 people in year two, growing significantly since the first month of operation when six riders climbed aboard.

HEB Transit is made possible through local funding provided by Tarrant County Workforce Development Board, the cities of Hurst, Euless and Bedford, and numerous faith-based agencies working in collaboration with United Way of Tarrant County. Federal Job Access/Reverse Commute funding awarded by the Regional Transportation Council and administered by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) reimburses half of the program's expenses, which totaled approximately \$116,000 in year two.



Many agencies work together to provide HEB Transit, both financially and through other resources. This chart shows where the program received its funding in year two.

### How it started

In 2005, a group of community volunteers assembled by United Way met to develop a transportation program responsive to community assessment data that showed transportation as the primary concern of Tarrant County residents. The Tarrant County Workforce Development Board joined the effort soon after, recognizing that the lack of reliable transportation negatively affected its customers' ability to find and retain employment. NCTCOG offered its transportation expertise and funding to the equation, and HEB Transit was born. American Red Cross-Chisholm Trail Chapter operates HEB Transit under contract and has done so since the service's inception.

To learn more, visit [www.nctcog.org/hebtransit](http://www.nctcog.org/hebtransit).



As an intake specialist, Bea Florez plays an important role in helping people who call to schedule rides on HEB Transit.

## A look inside a crucial transportation link

The phones are ringing inside a room at the back of the American Red Cross-Chisholm Trail office in Fort Worth. Operators are taking calls from people requesting rides from the many transportation programs the Red Cross operates. More than two dozen a day are from individuals wanting a ride on HEB Transit. In two years of operation, HEB Transit has seen explosive growth. Ridership has more than doubled year to year.

Because the HEB area lacks general public transportation, the only options for many without vehicles are to walk or rely on others for rides.

This is why people like Phyllis Ahmed are so important. Ahmed works the early shift as a driver for HEB Transit, beginning her day at 5:30 a.m. She enjoys being the link for many people to their jobs and getting them to work on time.

“A lot of them appreciate you,” Ahmed said.

The personal connections with riders are also important to Ahmed.

For Bedford resident Rena Patterson, who used the service for two years, HEB Transit proved crucial to her self-sufficiency.

“I wouldn’t have been able to hold down a job without HEB Transit,” she said.

Last summer, she received a car from an area nonprofit organization, giving her the ability to drive herself to work. Even though Patterson can travel more freely now, she has not forgotten about HEB Transit. In fact, she still recommends the service to others.

And it provides a safety net should something happen in the future.

“If anything happened to my car, I would definitely ride again,” she said.

From drivers to intake specialists to passengers, everyone involved with HEB Transit appreciates the importance of providing safe and reliable transportation to those in need. With continued financial support from the community and commitment from those integral to the service’s daily operations, HEB Transit will continue to provide a crucial transportation link for many in its service area for years to come.



Rena Patterson depended on HEB Transit to get to work until recently, when she received a car.



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