Tools of the Trade Conference
Transit Caucus Notes
Prepared by: Jeff LaMondia
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Issues:
1. Recipients are struggling with 5310 Program funding
   - There are administration challenges
   - Need assistance maintaining transit asset management plans
   - There is concern that completing documentation can lead to potential reduction in service
   - There are different "useful lives" across vehicles, so we need new performance measures
   - Online reporting and documentation is important, especially invoicing and dispatching
   - Need to partner with urban area neighbors for oversight and shared allocation of funds

2. Cost-effective Data Collection is important
   - The focus is on understanding the needs of ridership, rider behavior, and changing routes to better serve riders
   - OD studies are most helpful in identifying stop transfer flows, every stop and every trip provides useful data
   - APC data is hard to use, but detailed data from vendors (e.g. smart cards link individual trips) is costly if not negotiated for
   - Smartphone applications may be one way to collect travel characteristics
   - Some places are using beacons to identify individuals and their full trips
   - Some free outlets are available for assistance (e.g. hackerspaces)

3. Service in Urban Gap Areas can be challenging
   - There are gaps in jurisdictional boundaries that still need service (and this limits funding)
   - Urban boundaries encompass more smaller areas, but these areas don't participate in regional service and cannot support their own service
   - Coordination is critical (e.g. transfers between urban and rural service)
   - There are concerns about counting and sharing credit for urban/rural transfer trips

4. Shared Vehicles (like Uber) offer interesting opportunities
   - It is unclear if (or what) funds can be used to support this, even if it is successful expansion
   - Uber and Lyft might not even be interested since it is low profit margins
   - Some states have good examples of clever funding structures
   - Sometimes funding sources are difficult to understand (the limits/requirements)
   - Some resources: SWATA, Houston, Kansas City