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PARTA Awarded 'United We Ride' Grant for Regional ITS Project

Coordinated system will improve transportation services for older Americans and persons with disabilities in Geauga and Portage Counties.

KENT, OH, FEBRUARY 6, 2007 – Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA) today announced the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) awarded PARTA and its partners a grant to design a Coordinated Regional ITS system to improve transportation service for older Americans and persons with disabilities. For this project, PARTA has partnered with Geauga County Transit in Chardon, OH, Kotting Consultants in Kent, OH and Trapeze Group in Scottsdale, AZ.

With the support of Ohio Congressmen Tim Ryan, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, local human service and emergency management agencies, the project will design a central Travel Management Coordination Center (TMCC) using new transportation management technology designed specifically to coordinate these regional agencies.

"Our proposed TMCC will be a state-of-the-art, centralized call center that serves as a convenient access point for all consumers who require transportation, trip planning, real-time traveler information, and automatic trip reservations," said Bryan Smith, Manager of Business Development for PARTA. "We will use the most up-to-date ITS technology which includes interactive voice response (IVR), trip requests via the internet, online trip planning and more."

Real-time management of coordinated resources using ITS technology allows for significant cost savings to all parties involved. Human service agencies will use ITS technology to have their trips automatically brokered to transportation providers for transporting passengers in the most cost efficient manner. This system will also reduce barriers to employment, training, health care and society in general. All groups, including consumers, will be involved in the system design through individual and group meetings and updates on the project website.

Commented Kristina Fenselon, Director of Geauga County Transit: "To succeed with this project we will take full advantage of the opportunities provided by prior work in Portage and Geauga counties, significant local interest in coordinated service delivery and cutting-edge ITS technologies. Our goal is to



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find a way to curb rising transportation costs by sharing resources but still deliver the best service possible to Ohio residents with special needs.”

This project consists of two phases; system design and model deployment. At the end of Phase 1, the DOT will evaluate the PARTA project and decide if it is eligible for deployment funding in Phase 2. Phase 1 of the project begins with a two day kick-off meeting in Washington, DC on March 19th, 2007. Agencies interested in learning more about the regional ITS project should call Bryan Smith at 330.676.6703.

About PARTA

The Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA) in Kent, Ohio is committed to providing safe, dependable, courteous and affordable transportation services that help Portage County residents meet their travel needs. PARTA is the provider of a multimodal alternative transportation network that sustains the region's economic vitality and air quality, provides mobility and accessibility to all constituencies of the population, and preserves and enhances the region's quality of life. PARTA's Dial-A-Ride service performs 500-700 door-to-door trips per day. Visit www.partaonline.org.

About Geauga County Transit

Gauga County Transit in Chardon, OH strives to provide the highest quality of delivery services to all users of the transit system. Geauga works hard on the development of new ideas, which are responsive to the needs of the community, based on input and feedback from users and non-users of the system. Geauga County Transit provides professional transportation services within Geauga County performing over 225 demand response trips daily. Visit www.geaugatransit.org.

About Kotting Consultants

Since 1985 Kotting Consultants (Kotting) has been providing consulting services for communities and universities in transit policy development, planning and analysis. Recent Kotting projects have included the development of the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority's Transportation Development Plan and the implementation of a countywide elderly paratransit information and scheduling center using



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advanced ITS technologies and multiple transportation service providers in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. For more information on Kotting Consultants, please call 866.216.2462 or e-mail kotting@sbcglobal.net.

About Trapeze Group

Trapeze Group delivers solutions that consider the full 360 degrees of passenger transport. Whether addressing the needs of a single department, an entire organization, or the community, Trapeze provides some of the most advanced software, intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and mobile technologies in the industry. Hundreds of government and commercial organizations across North America, Europe and Asia Pacific have turned to Trapeze to realize efficiencies, enhance the quality and scope of their services, and safely transport more people with less cost. Visit www.trapezegroup.com.

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