



Florida Department of Transportation Research

Creative Ways to Manage Paratransit Costs

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The increasing expense of providing paratransit service for special needs riders has created a challenge for Florida's public transportation agencies. These agencies are continually in search of methods to control or reduce paratransit costs so they can maintain a high level of service for the special needs riders. Researchers from the University of South Florida conducted a study to evaluate paratransit cost factors and identify best practices in cost containment.



Public transit agencies invest in a variety of paratransit-adapted vehicles.

The researchers first studied the existing literature to ascertain the costs of different types of paratransit services and to identify what strategies agencies use to control and reduce costs. The researchers also searched national databases to identify major expense categories that are specific to Florida paratransit agencies, and the factors that impact these expenses over time. The two primary sources were National Transit Database (NTD) reports and Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Annual Operating Reports.

Based on the information gained through the literature and database searches, the researchers developed a survey on paratransit cost management practices. They distributed the survey to all Florida transit service agencies that provide free paratransit services in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

The researchers determined that containing paratransit costs depends on good management policies and practices, the use of multiple cost-containment strategies, and budget vigilance. They developed their observations into a list of cost-efficient best practices that can serve as a valuable resource document for paratransit managers.

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For more information, visit <http://dot.state.fl.us/research-center>.