# : Transportation

Arrange for transportation for all off-site events; provide maps, driving and parking instructions, etc.

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| ***Coordination Notes***  Be sure to check with:   * *Events Team –* for transportation needs, scheduling, and venue details * *President and Local Arrangements Chair* ***–*** to be sure they make meeting announcements about transportation logistics. * *Bus or Other Transportation company* ***–*** to book service, sign contract, make arrangements. |

***Budgeting***

Many different forms of transportation exist, so the trick is to match transportation with the specifics of the event. Number of attendees, distance from hotel, and schedules (set event time versus open arrival time) are among the factors to consider.

Find out if there is state or local tax on transportation. If taxes are required, a state tax letter will save money. If MAALL does not have a state tax letter for your state, Treasurer should apply early as the process takes time.

Bus companies that charter almost always charge for a minimum number of hours. Find out what that minimum is.

They also base the number of hours charged on either “garage to garage” time or event time. Garage to garage means you are paying from the time the bus leaves its garage until its return. Event time excludes the buses’ travel time and only covers the hours the bus is at your event.

Consider using a cheaper form of transportation such as a school bus if only going a short distance.

See if hotel or university vans can be used for small groups.

For a reception, consider having one bus shuttle between the conference hotel and the reception a couple of times. This saves the cost of an additional bus to get everyone to the reception at the same time and makes arrival and departure more fluid. The reception hosts may prefer that everyone not arrive at the same time and the attendees have more control over their schedules.

For dining groups *(see Dining Groups section of Events chapter)*, do NOT have large buses drop people off in one area with several restaurants so groups can walk to different restaurants. Coordinating departures is very problematic.

Tipping bus drivers is welcomed but not expected.

Include disabled transport in your budget. *(See Disabled Transport section below in this chapter.)*

Be sure that someone (not necessarily Transportation Team) gets information on travel costs MAALL must pay for any speakers.

***Bus Company Selection***

Contact transportation companies as soon as event plans are firm. Companies will ask you where you are going, how many people will need to be transported, and when.

Call several bus companies to seek out the best deal possible. Pricing and services vary a lot, so finding the right combination for your specific needs requires homework. If you do not know of prospective companies, do an Internet search for charter buses in your area. When you call, ask for "chartering." Do not assume that a university’s transportation service will be the cheapest; shop around.

Coordinate your information gathering by using the bus company information form at the end of the chapter. It reminds you of all the questions to ask and provides a place to record the answers.

Consolidate information for the best contenders in table format to help determine which company offers the best deal for the specifics of each event, especially if some factors are uncertain at information gathering time. *(See sample table at end of chapter.)* This chart also proves useful should transportation needs change since you will have a quick reference sheet as to which company offers what at how much.

Cost is not the only factor! Consider asking your top choice bus company for names and numbers of customers so you can find out about reliability, condition of buses, politeness of drivers, etc.

***Bus Driver Instructions***

Work with other Local Arrangements Committee members to coordinate logistics on timing, locations for departure and arrival, bus parking, etc.

Prepare written driving directions, including specifics for getting to and from parking lots, and provide maps for the bus drivers. Be sure to actually drive the routes before finalizing instructions. Send this information to the bus company about 1-2 weeks prior to event. In addition, bring a copy to the event to help guide the driver if needed.

Even though the driver should have the directions you sent, you might consider having someone ride at the front of the bus to help guide the driver.

***Individual Drivers and Parkers***

Some people will want to drive to the event instead of using the bus. Ask Registration to include a space for people to check whether they need transportation.

Arrange for parking as needed, at the destinations. Try to arrange for ticket validation at garages requiring fees.

Prepare maps and driving instructions for individual drives as their parking location may differ from where the bus parks. Be sure to actually drive the routes before finalizing instructions.

Provide transportation schedules as well as driving and parking instructions and maps to the Publications and Publicity Teams so they can prepare flyers and distribute information via web and email.

***Coordinating Passengers or, Do Not Leave Anyone Behind!***

Place a MAALL sign in bus(es) so members know they are getting on the right bus(es). Include sponsor information, if applicable.

Before departing at each leg of trip, do a head count in bus(es) and ask anyone not taking the bus on the next leg of the trip to inform you.

During the event (before getting off bus or on-site of event), an announcement should be made reminding passengers of boarding and departure times and locations.

To help people get from the hotel to the bus and from the bus to their destination (and vice versa on return), have guides stationed at meeting places (such as lobby of hotel or in front of bus) and strategic points along walking routes and on-site of events. Have the guides wear something readily identifiable. Designate someone to round up stragglers.

***Disabled Transport***

Gather information on special needs transportation available in case you need to arrange for it. *(See Special Needs Options table at end of chapter.)*

Include this in your budgeting, just in case. Allow for 2 or so disabled persons.

Registrants should be able to indicate whether they need ADA requirements fulfilled on the registration form, so ask Registration to alert you if anyone with special needs registers.

Some regular buses are equipped to transport 1-2 wheel chairs. A reservation made far in advance may allow you to secure one of these, thereby eliminating a possible separate expense for special needs transportation.

**Transportation Samples**

Bus company information form, 2001 St. Louis

Bus quote, 2012 St. Louis

Bus company comparison chart (includes special needs options), 2001 St. Louis