

Using Google Maps for transit information in a rural 511 system (San Bernardino and Riverside Counties)

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When San Bernardino and Riverside counties searched for an affordable way to implement an automated online inter-agency transit trip planning system, they found that Google Transit offered the most affordable and standards-based approach for their needs. This presentation covers California's Inland Empire 511 project, IE511.org.

The IE511.org project website provides information for 11 transit agencies in the Inland Empire Southern California region. These transit agencies range in scale from regional rail to 1-5 route agencies serving a single town or dispersed rural area.

Schedule and geographic data for the trip planner is maintained using web-based tools by agency staff. This presentation will describe this tool and the data maintenance process.

This presentation will describe the benefits and limitations of Google Transit for regional projects and rural services. Google Transit was originally designed for metropolitan markets but is increasingly used for rural and intercity services. Demand response services, loop routes, and longer intercity routes can pose challenges for implementing Google Transit. This presentation will describe how these issues are being resolved.

This presentation also covers the uses of open General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) data. Applications besides Google Transit that present GTFS data include Walkscore.com, Estatly.com, Microsoft's Bing Maps, various mobile applications, and Sendero talking GPS units for people who are sight impaired. Many agencies have questions about how to safely release their data, and how they can expect to see it used. We will address these questions.