

Appendices

Appendix A

Key Informant Interview Questionnaire

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

(Note: This is a sample interview questionnaire.

Each questionnaire was customized for the targeted entity interviewed.)

INTRODUCTION

The Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey is conducting a study for the NJ Division of Disability Services to examine funding and other possible strategies to improve and enhance transportation services for people with disabilities in the state, particularly in recognition of the current economic climate.

General Question

- Introductions: Name, Title, Role
- Explain the relationship you have with NJ's county paratransit community?
- From your experience and knowledge, how has the economic downturn of recent years impacted these providers?
- For funding sources that require matching operating funds, to what degree do you feel lack of available matching funds is limiting counties in their applying for federal grants?
- How are they attempting to cope with funding reductions?
 - What strategies do you see as successful and which are not?
- Are you aware of any innovative funding strategies being pursued by certain providers within NJ or beyond so they can maintain and or expand their level of service? If yes, please elaborate.
- Any thoughts on these funding strategies?
 - Bus advertising
 - Purchase of NJT or private carrier bus/rail tickets/passes
 - Donation policies
 - Fare policies
 - Partnering with other agencies/entities to share services, vehicles, etc.
 - Using volunteer drivers
 - Foundation support
 - Other?
- Any thoughts on these operation strategies?
 - Feeder service to transit
 - Creation of modified fixed/fixed route services
 - Development of central transfer points/locations for long distance trips
 - Coordinating of trips between counties and Access Link

- Has the United We Ride effort had any particular impact on the paratransit provider community in terms of offering potential strategies for coping within the current funding environment? (e.g. promotion of coordination)
 - Any findings particularly relevant from the 2007 UWR provider survey effort in terms of coping strategies for maintaining or enhancing services?
- What existing funding programs do you think the majority of paratransit providers depend on in the state? Please elaborate.
 - State Casino
 - Federal funding (5307, 5310, 5311, 5316, 5317,CMAQ)
 - OAA Title III
 - OAA Title XX
 - Title XIX (Medicaid)
 - NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
 - TANF
 - Other?
- Do you think reliance on specific programs varies by county or region? How?
- With specific regard to the Casino Revenue fund and SCDRTP, how do you think the recent passage by the NJ legislature of the bill that increases the funding formula allotted to transportation via SCDRTP from a 7.5% share to 8.5% will impact the program?
 - What about concerns related to out of state gambling? State takeover of casinos? Other?
- Are you aware of any new or untapped funding sources county paratransit providers may be eligible for? (county, state, federal)
 - What about any funding opportunities specifically related to transportation for PWD seeking employment?
- Do you anticipate the elimination or significant reduction in any existing funding sources county paratransit providers may be relying on in the near future? (county, state, federal)
- What are some regional issues you would consider unique that may be impacting county paratransit agencies in one county or region, as compared to those faced by agencies located in other counties or regions?
- How do you think paratransit providers outside of NJ are handling the current reduced funding environment?
- Can you identify any best practices that contribute to more effective and efficient operation of paratransit either in NJ or other parts of the nation?
- How can NJ better meet the work-related transportation needs of residents with disabilities?

Appendix B

Interview Reports

MEETING REPORT

Meeting Description: DDS/MIG Study Interview Session: NJ Transit

Date: November 15, 2010

Location:

NJ Transit Headquarters
Newark, New Jersey

Prepared by: Voorhees Transportation Center
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
Stephanie DiPetrillo	Voorhees Transportation Center
Steve Fittante	Voorhees Transportation Center
Jim Flynn	NJ Transit
Mary Hadley	NJ Transit
Robert Koska	NJ Transit
Andrea Lubin	Voorhees Transportation Center
Anna Magri	NJ Transit
Janelle Rivera	NJ Transit
Ronnie Siriani	NJ Transit
Tim Sharpe	NJ Transit
Marianne Stock	NJ Transit

Introduction

Andrea Lubin and Stephanie DePetrillo welcomed participants and explained that the Voorhees Transportation Center is conducting a study for the NJ Division of Disability Services to research strategies for expanding the resources available to improve and enhance New Jersey's county paratransit services, particularly for people with disabilities in NJ seeking employment.

NJ Transit (NJT) staff who participated included: Marianne Stock, Senior Director, Community Mobility; Ronnie Siriani, Director, ADA Services; Robert Koska, Director, Local Programs & Minibus Support; Anna Magri, Manager, Local Programs & Minibus Support; Mary Hadley, Regional Programs Administrator (southern), Local Programs & Minibus Support; Janelle Rivera, Regional Programs Administrator (central), Local Programs & Minibus Support; Tim Sharpe, Regional Programs Administrator (northern), Local Programs & Minibus Support; and Jim Flynn, Program Administrator.

Mr. Koska explained that the three regional program administrators in his department work closely with county transportation providers, serving as a conduit of best practices to the latter. They also provide oversight and technical assistance support to the counties.

General Discussion on Funding

It was reported that the current funding dilemma is being experienced by all counties, as well as other transportation agencies including NJT. The problem is escalating to a point where some counties are discussing the potential for considering customer income as a determinant for service eligibility, which has not previously been done. Other counties are denying rides but the extent to which this practice is occurring is unknown, since in some cases county freeholders will not permit the sharing of this data.

It was suggested that many county agencies will not experience the full impact of the funding dilemma until 2013 and if funding continues to decrease, issues that have not previously been addressed will need to be managed, such as how to better integrate services. Funding from sources including FTA Section 5311 and 5307 are expected to decrease due to Census 2010 figures.

Other related comments shared included:

- The topic of matching funds was discussed and it was reported that counties appear to not be applying for grants due to match requirements.

For example, it was reported that some JARC program recipients have lost their match source, which poses a significant concern as a 50/50 match is required for operating expenses and 80/20 for capital expenses. TANF funds used to be eligible for match funds but are no longer available. Also, the New Jersey Transportation Innovation Fund (TIF) has been used to support JARC, but that support will not be available post 2012.

It was noted that some entities, such as the Meadowlink Transportation Management Association, have sought private funding to meet their match needs.

- While in some cases counties are not pursuing new funding sources because they are unaware of them or they cannot meet the match requirement, in other cases it is because they are concerned with being able to sustain programs created and/or supported by funding streams that have limits, such as CMAQ's three year funding limit. In other cases, providers are weary of complying with funding regulations associated with a given program, such as non-allowance for trip prioritization.
- Hudson County recently eliminated two routes and NJT has temporarily picked up coverage of those routes.

Coping Strategies

It was noted that most coping strategies being pursued seem to be defensive, rather than offensive. For example, existing funds once used for capital expenses are now being directed to support operations. It was noted such strategies will only offer short term solutions to the general funding dilemma. It was also stressed that no one strategy is going to resolve the current finding crisis.

Several specific strategies were mentioned, including the following:

Funding Strategies

- Bus advertising
 - This approach is “not a silver bullet” although it is often mentioned by politicians.
- Purchase of bus/rail tickets/passes
 - This approach is rarely used as many county providers operate within a human services mindset so the potential benefits of integrating their services with traditional transit are not often considered.
 - It was emphasized that promoting this approach is feasible because the NJT system is very accessible – all buses are accessible, most light rail stations are accessible and over 70 rail stations are accessible.
 - The importance of supporting travel training as a means to encourage usage of traditional transit was emphasized.
 - The Brokered Employment Transportation Service (BETS) in Monmouth County for people with disabilities traveling to competitive employment makes use of NJT bus/rail tickets.
- Fare and donations
 - It was stressed that the politics surrounding this issue cannot be ignored. In many cases county freeholders are reluctant to permit fares for fear such action will anger older residents who utilize the service. In fact, surveys conducted in the southern region of the state demonstrate that respondents are willing to pay for services; however, freeholders remain reluctant to permit institution of fares. However, counties including Ocean and Union now charge a fare.
 - When Camden County increased their suggested service donation to two dollars, they experienced an increase in revenue.
 - It was suggested that if a fare policy is to be pursued, it should be kept simple, with the same fare applying to all. Several counties, including Sussex, Hunterdon, and Somerset have more complicated fare structures.
- New funding sources
 - It was reported that some counties are pursuing funding sources they have not previously used, such as CMAQ. In some instances counties are targeting these new funding sources as a means to support vehicle replacement and using their remaining casino funds to support operations.
 - Counties who are not connected to their local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) are often not aware of how to pursue federal funding opportunities such as the CMAQ program. United We Ride efforts have helped to improve working relations in this regard.

- Volunteer drivers
 - The benefit of volunteer drivers for ride matching programs was mentioned, as was the possibility that volunteer drivers could reduce costs.

Operation Strategies

- Transit feeder service
 - If two agencies are seeking to create a feeder service arrangement they must determine how to address any issues related to their respective fare policies first, as well as other components of their service such as service type (e.g. curb to curb, door to door, etc.).
 - Access Link is conducting a limited pilot that involves giving passengers a free ride on Access Link if they link up with traditional transit on their journey.
- Modified fixed routes/shuttles
 - This approach is being used and/or considered by a variety of providers.
- Improve efficiencies
 - The benefit of utilizing routing and scheduling software as a means to improve efficiencies and overall productivity was mentioned.
 - One participant remarked, “You can’t manage what you don’t measure.”
 - It was remarked that many counties are considering implementing or enforcing their current no show policies. Fares help to reduce no shows.

Other Suggestions

- The economic impacts of community transportation should be determined. The costs and benefits of these services need to be quantified and the results shared through an educational outreach effort at both the grassroots and political level.
- Communication and coordination among stakeholders that was initiated through the United We Ride process must continue. For example, counties should strive to be engaged with their local MPO and county planning department as one means to become aware of potential funding opportunities and to potentially receive some grant writing assistance. It was reported that Cape May received a TIGER grant that was prepared by their county engineering department. Counties should also maintain the stakeholder groups they convened for the United We Ride process as one means to improve coordination. It was added that those counties who have continued to focus on United We Ride partnerships and their county coordinated plans are making the most progress with regard to coordination efforts.
- A new designated funding source needs to be created. One option is to designate a portion of a particular tax to community transit such as the gas or sales tax. It was noted that Arkansas has addressed this issue by imposing a surcharge on airport car rental transactions.

- Many county providers are not maximizing capacity. Regionalizing services could help in this regard and would also assist with the county border crossing dilemma.
- County transportation agencies could consider becoming non-profit entities which would make them eligible for private donations; however, such action would make them ineligible for some other types of funding support so the benefit of this approach is uncertain.
- Some states like Virginia use JARC funds to purchase vehicles for individuals with low interest loans. Such action might be warranted and successful in more rural counties including Sussex and Warren.
- For county paratransit to be a viable transit mode for persons with disabilities seeking work, service hours need to be longer.
- County providers should be exploring the feasibility of working with the state's designated medicated transportation provider, LogistiCare, as a means to help support county transportation services.
- The SCDRTP legislation was created in 1984 and needs to be updated to reflect the changes paratransit has experienced in the 25 plus years since passage.
- Counties should consider the benefits of purchasing consortiums for expenses including fuel, vehicles and insurance. For example, counties can buy tax exempt fuel and if they are using private or non-profit contractors, there is a price advantage to providing the fuel to the contractor at cost.

MEETING REPORT

Meeting Description: DDS/MIG Study Interview Session: NJCOST

Date: December 7, 2010

Location:
Conference Call

Prepared by: Voorhees Transportation Center
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
John Adair	NJ COST
Stephanie DiPetrillo	Voorhees Transportation Center
Andrea Lubin	Voorhees Transportation Center
Michael Viera	NJ COST

Introduction

Andrea Lubin and Stephanie DePetrillo welcomed participants and explained that the Voorhees Transportation Center is conducting a study for the NJ Division of Disability Services to research strategies for expanding the resources available to improve and enhance New Jersey's county paratransit services, particularly for people with disabilities in NJ seeking employment.

John Adair is the current NJ COST President and Michael Viera is the past NJ COST president and remains an active leader in the organization. Mr. Adair is also a transportation coordinator for Somerset County and Mr. Viera is the Essex County JARC program coordinator. NJ COST is a state association comprised of counties, private agencies and a variety of both non-profit and for-profit organizations. NJ COST focuses on supporting New Jersey's community transportation providers and serves as an education arm to the state legislature. They also connect consumers to transportation resources.

General Discussion on Funding

Both explained that the current economic climate has had a negative impact on community paratransit providers throughout the state in many ways, including forcing reductions in personnel via layoffs and/or attrition and loss of capital, which has impacted provider capability to replace aging vehicles. It was noted that some providers have had to refuse new vehicles purchased by others because they cannot afford the maintenance costs.

A variety of providers are reducing and/or eliminating services as a means to cope with the current economic situation, while others are beginning to prioritize services, with employment trips rarely a main consideration. In total, financial issues are now a concern for all county transportation providers.

Other related comments shared included:

- The recent increase in the funding formula allotted to transportation through the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program (SCDRTP) from a 7.5% share to 8.5% has done little to improve the economic stability of community providers, especially because overall casino revenue continues to plummet.
- A variety of factors determine how well a given county paratransit entity is handling the economic downturn. For example, the personality of the director of an operation often determines willingness to implement innovative coping strategies, such as bus advertising and travel training.
- Many of the matching fund options for grants have been eliminated, which poses significant obstacles to county providers as a match is often a requirement of a given grant, including the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program. It was remarked that a match in excess of ten percent is now very difficult for any county provider agency to cover and agencies like NJ Transit and NJTPA do not have funds to help meet the match.

Mr. Adair mentioned that Somerset County recently received a New Freedom grant but the county funds once available to meet the required match are no longer available so the funds must be sought elsewhere.

- It was remarked that paratransit interests must be represented when the Transportation Trust fund is reallocated.
- It was remarked that some current Older American Act funding will likely be lost due to Census 2010 figures related to the senior citizen population.
- Mr. Viera reported he was working with state legislators to possibly establish a paratransit task force.

Coping Strategies

It was reported that while some providers might not have been interested in considering a variety of coping strategies during better economic times, many are now open to pursuing them. Several specific strategies were mentioned, including the following:

Funding Strategies

- Bus advertising
 - This is not an option for all counties, as it is more difficult to interest advertisers to pursue advertising opportunities in more rural areas without a dense population base.

- Purchase of bus/rail tickets/passes
 - It was noted that this option really promotes service coordination with NJT and Access Link Services, which can yield cost savings. However, it was acknowledged that this strategy is not feasible for counties with little to no public transit.
- Fare and donations
 - The aggressiveness of the county transportation coordinator is often a critical element for successful fare and/or donation implementation.
 - Suggested fare revenue helps to cover the cost of several Somerset County drivers.
 - Monmouth County has done very well with their fare and donation programs, with one reason being that many of the County's higher income residents use the service. In contrast, in Essex County where a donation policy is being considered, wealthier suburban residents do not use county transport services. Instead, the Essex residents who would most likely make use of the service are predominately from urban municipalities, including Newark, and these riders would not be able to afford a high fare.
 - Method of payment often impacts success of fare and donation programs. For example, Union County spends significant administrative money billing riders via costly mailings. In contrast, using fare boxes on board vehicles poses different issues, such as potential for robbery.
- Partnering with other agencies
 - It was noted that partnering with other agencies/entities to share vehicles/services rarely succeeds. As one interviewee summarized, "liking an idea and having it work are two different things." Opposition to partnering includes concerns such as how to address a failure on the part of one of the partners in providing one leg of the trip (e.g. no show; late or early arrival). The potential for this type of problem often causes much concern and stress among riders. Another related concern involves sharing of vehicles. For example, Mr. Viera explained that his vehicles are insured for his riders and drivers and others are not covered under his policy.
- New funding sources
 - The topic of seeking corporate/private sponsorship from sources such as dialysis centers to support county transportation was discussed, but due to federal anti-kickback laws there is currently no mechanism in place for such action. Mr. Viera discussed his interest in exploring the benefits of creating a statewide foundation to act as a conduit for receiving such sponsorship for community transportation.
- Volunteer drivers
 - This topic was only mentioned briefly and potential obstacles with driver unions were cited as a concern when seeking to use volunteer drivers in

addition to paid drivers. It was noted utilizing volunteer drivers might be more feasible for non-profit agencies.

Operation Strategies

- Transit feeder service
 - Feeder service was cited as a valuable option to pursue in counties with transit service. It was noted that travel training for the customer base is needed however if this approach is to succeed.
- Modified fixed routes/shuttles
 - It was reported that modified fixed routes had been successful in Somerset and other counties and was particularly useful for employment trips. A key factor in creating a successful modified fixed route service relates to the route planning process. Specifically, the target customer base for the service must be the main consideration so that important trip generators are included in the route, such as housing complexes, work sites, medical centers, etc.

Other Suggestions

- New funding sources must be developed. It was suggested the gasoline tax be increased, with a small portion dedicated to paratransit services.
- Many state and local agencies would benefit if the federal government decreased the required match for grant programs.

MEETING REPORT

Meeting Description: DDS/MIG Study Interview Session: Northern county providers

Date: December 9, 2010

Location:

NJ Transit Headquarters
Newark, New Jersey

Prepared by: Voorhees Transportation Center
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
Theresa Davis	Morris County
Stephanie DiPetrillo	Voorhees Transportation Center
Steve Fittante	Voorhees Transportation Center
Hope Hezel	Morris County
Andrea Lubin	Voorhees Transportation Center
JanMarie McDyer	Warren County
John McGill	Passaic County
Barbara Miller	Sussex County
Tom Murphy	Bergen County
Shaneeke Pierce	Essex County
Maria Pignataro	Hudson County
Tim Sharpe	NJ Transit

Introduction

Andrea Lubin and Stephanie DePetrillo welcomed participants and explained that the Voorhees Transportation Center is conducting a study for the NJ Division of Disability Services to research strategies for expanding the resources available to improve and enhance New Jersey's county paratransit services, particularly for people with disabilities in NJ seeking employment.

A total of seven counties representing the northern region of the state participated in this group interview session. The counties were: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, and Warren.

Employment Transportation

The group discussed the services they offer used by persons with disability to access employment. It is important to note the services described below do not necessarily include all transportation services provided by each county. For example, all the providers also offer some level of demand response service.

- Bergen – They provide competitive employment trips to about 40 persons per day with disability. These trips are primarily subscription. They also provide service to about 70 persons with disability to four sheltered workshops in the county.
- Essex – They provide employment trips to persons with disability to about four sheltered workshop sites and competitive employment trips to about 11 persons with disability. Meadowlink TMA also operates several shuttle services for the county that can be used by persons with disability for employment trips including the Essex County WAVE shuttle, the Night Owl, the Fairfield-West Caldwell shuttle and the Route 10 shuttle.
- Hudson – They provide employment trips for about 20-30 persons with disability who are county employees. They also work with some area nonprofits to help provide employment trips.
- Morris – They provide employment trips to about 20 persons with disability, with the majority of such trips to one of two sheltered workshop sites. All employment trips are subscription. They also operate a shuttle route called Morris on the Move but it is not typically used by persons with disability.
- Passaic – They serve sheltered workshops in five locations and provide some individual employment trips for residents with disability. Meadowlink TMA operates a JARC funded shuttle for the county that serves sites along the Route 46 corridor including the Willowbrook mall. Reservations must be made for the shuttle.
- Sussex – Both a deviated fixed route service (known as the Loop) and demand response service provide employment trips to persons with disability. Competitive employment trips are usually subscription. They also provide non-competitive employment trips to sites including Easter Seals and Arthur and Friends.
- Warren – They have a JARC funded two route shuttle along Route 57 that serves employment trips. They also provide contracted service to the sheltered workshop at the nonprofit Abilities, Inc.

No participant reported providing employment services on weekends. Warren operates a limited hour shuttle on certain Saturdays for shopping and/or recreation; Essex and Hudson offer dialysis service only; Morris has one driver available on the weekends who can do some limited demand response service; and Passaic and Sussex offer some limited weekend group trips.

The group discussed key employment destinations in their respective counties. Morris mentioned a variety of private companies including Honeywell, Pfizer, Novartis and AT&T and noted these sites are being served by NJ Transit. Sussex mentioned there are many potential employment sites located outside of the county that could be a market for persons with disability but service to those sites is not currently available.

The group acknowledged that they cannot meet the demand for extended service hours often needed for work trips. For example, they can often provide service in the morning but cannot provide the trip home at the end of the work day. Meeting demand for shift work is similarly very difficult.

General Transportation

- All indicated aides were permitted to accompany passengers if needed but none provide aides as an element of their service. Warren did note that their drivers assist passengers to travel from their door to the vehicle if needed.
- Participants discussed regional and/or local issues they considered unique in comparison to what their peer agencies from other counties experience. Sussex noted that ridership has been poor on their shuttle service that was designed for commuters. They believe the high unemployment rate and area business downsizing that has occurred due to the nationwide economic recession has contributed to the low usage of the service. Warren noted that rural counties typically lack medical facilities and thus need to frequently travel long distances, often out of state, for medical trips. It was added that customers in rural counties do not think of transportation from a mass transit perspective and thus often object to efficiency inducing practices, including feeder service and shared rides.
- The group discussed their largest unmet transportation need. Passaic and Sussex reported their largest unmet demand is related to service hours and not trip purpose. Providing evening and weekend service is a problem and commuters are often without a viable return trip at the conclusion of their work day. Service hours also negatively impact trip purposes in addition to employment, including medical and recreational. Hudson noted their unmet needs focus on lack of east-west travel options. Essex mentioned unmet need related to dialysis and food shopping trips. Morris also mentioned dialysis trips as an unmet need, particularly among customers requesting such trips in off hours. Unmet demand also exists for sheltered workshop trips and among persons seeking to work in the retail sector, the latter of which requires evening and weekend work hours.

General Discussion on Funding

All reported experiencing financial difficulty and all reported the Casino Revenue fund is a main funding source for their services. Many county governments such as Warren and Sussex are not providing funds to make up for the reductions in Casino Revenue funding. The group acknowledged the one percent increase in the funding formula allotted to transportation via SCDRTP has been somewhat helpful, but has failed to provide the necessary support. All acknowledged the need to identify new funding sources and as one participant explained, the historic business model of relying on Casino Revenue funds to support county transportation providers is broken.

Impacts of these funding issues have included service reductions in terms of both destination and hours. Staff reductions have also been experienced.

Funding programs used by some and/or all participants include Sec 5310; Sec 5316 (JARC); Sec 5317 (New Freedom); CMAQ; Older Americans Act Title III; Social

Service Block Grants and NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The problem of flat funding associated with some of these funding sources was mentioned as was the difficulties involved in securing match funds. Warren mentioned they were considering CMAQ funding but they knew they would have difficulties securing the needed match. Others concurred that securing match funding is often the deciding factor in being able to pursue new funding sources.

Several expressed that the United We Ride (UWR) effort has helped them to expand coordination efforts. Sussex mentioned their partnering efforts with Sussex ARC benefitted from the UWR program.

Coping Strategies

Several specific strategies were mentioned, including the following:

Funding Strategies

- Bus advertising
 - The difficulty of pursuing this approach due to market saturation was noted.
- Purchase of bus/rail tickets/passes
 - No one reported their agency purchases the tickets directly but Passaic and Morris mentioned their respective office of temporary assistance does purchase and distribute transit passes.
- Fare and donations
 - Morris, Sussex and Warren have both donation and fare policies. Bergen, Essex and Passaic have a donation policy. Hudson has neither. Some details on their respective programs follow:
 - Bergen – They do a mass mailing to customers requesting a one dollar per ride donation and also distribute donation envelopes onboard. They would like a fare policy.
 - Essex – They reported desiring a fare policy but are experiencing difficulty in achieving this goal.
 - Passaic – They reported earning about 12,000 dollars per year with their one dollar donation policy. They use lock boxes on board their vehicles. They would like a fare policy to be considered.
 - Warren – They request a one dollar per ride donation and use fare boxes onboard vehicles. They also mail letters to customers requesting the donation. Customers using services for employment trips are charged a two dollar one way trip fare.
 - Sussex – The loop service fare is one dollar per one way trip. Demand response service requests \$1.50 each way within county and three dollars per one way trip out of county.

- Modified fixed routes/shuttles
 - As noted above, several participants including Warren and Sussex offer this service. Essex offers the service via their contract with Meadowlink TMA.
- Improve efficiencies
 - Morris discussed the importance of county transportation staff learning to be mobility managers and helping customers determine the best strategies, including mass transit, to reach their desired destinations.
 - Warren discussed enforcing their no show policy as a way to improve efficiencies. The first time a customer is a no show they receive a postcard discussing the implications of future no show behavior. The second such infraction yields a customer suspension and a five dollar fee and the third infraction generates a 25 dollar fee. Warren has educated their customer base on the no show policy and have reduced their no shows significantly. Sussex has also experienced success in enforcing their no show policy, reducing their no shows by 85 percent.
 - Morris noted pursuing grants opportunities that can help them expand their ITS technological capabilities. It was noted these tools may assist the county in coordinating with local dial-a-ride service providers.

Other Suggestions

- The group noted the value of travel training as one means to encourage customers to use public transit and county shuttles as opposed to demand response services.
- Several requested that NJT Access Link should extend their current three-quarter mile local bus service boundary as one means to help meet demand.
- The gas tax should be increased and funding dedicated to county paratransit.
- The reporting requirements of various federal grants are extremely cumbersome and should be revised to reduce the burden on recipients.
- Improved collaboration should be sought with local TMAs as they can be valuable partners in helping to create and maintain services.

MEETING REPORT

Meeting Description: DDS/MIG Study Interview Session:
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Date: December 20, 2010

Location:
Conference Call

Prepared by: Voorhees Transportation Center
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
Stephanie DiPetrillo	Voorhees Transportation Center
Joseph Hacker	DVRPC
Andrea Lubin	Voorhees Transportation Center
Meghan Weir	DVRPC

Introduction

Andrea Lubin and Stephanie DePetrillo welcomed participants and explained that the Voorhees Transportation Center is conducting a study for the NJ Division of Disability Services to research strategies for expanding the resources available to improve and enhance New Jersey's county paratransit services, particularly for people with disabilities in NJ seeking employment.

Joseph Hacker is the manager of the DVRPC office of transit, bicycle, and pedestrian planning. Meghan Weir is a transportation planner with DVRPC and her focus is on coordinated human services and environmental justice issues. DVRPC is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Greater Philadelphia Region, covering nine counties. Four of those counties are located in New Jersey: Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer.

General Discussion on Funding

Both explained that the current economic climate is very difficult for county transportation providers because their revenue is down and a main funding source, SCDRTP, has been reduced. The result of these factors is often reduced services. In addition, there are unspent federal dollars because local match funds cannot be identified and/or are difficult to secure.

The interviewees were not aware of any new potential funding sources for county providers. They noted that NJ Transit has been using state funds to enable federal grant dollars from programs like JARC, go farther.

Other related comments shared included:

- Land use decisions impact transportation significantly and housing for transportation disadvantaged populations, such as the elderly, should not be located in remote areas without existing transportation services. Better, more coherent land use policies must be pursued in this regard.
- It was reported that of the four New Jersey counties under the purview of DVRPC, Mercer County is the most urban. They are also typically self-guided in terms of transportation issues. Mercer County transportation services strive to accommodate atypical shift hours for their working consumers.

Coping Strategies

Several specific strategies were mentioned, including the following:

Funding Strategies

- Purchase of bus/rail tickets/passes
 - This can be a sound approach to pursue but some funding streams do not permit such action.
- Fare and donations
 - Pursuing a donation strategy makes the most sense for small, local operations.
- Partnering with other agencies
 - It was acknowledged that coordination among agencies can be a monumental task to achieve, especially when working with large entities that have complex organizational/administrative infrastructures. In short, the scale of a given operation can be a significant factor in promoting or inhibiting coordination efforts.
 - Gloucester County has focused on coordinating and consolidating redundant services where possible. For example, ARC, Access Link and Gloucester county paratransit all service a shelter workshop location. These three providers are now working together on a pilot effort to identify overlap in their respective services so that customers can be redistributed when feasible.

Potential barriers to this coordination effort have been identified and solutions are being sought. For example, ARC clients typically ride in a van with a driver who is certified in CPR so this issue had to be discussed among all three providers.

Based on this experience, the interviewees reported that pursuing a coordination effort as a pilot study is a smart approach, since pilot efforts are generally less intimidating to providers. In addition, it was emphasized that the concept of coordination is abstract and elusive to

many persons, so when seeking to achieve coordination specific and tangible strategies should be determined.

Other Suggestions

- It was recommended that county providers focus on improving their coordination among neighboring providers and eliminating duplicative services. Identifying potential transfer points is an important part of this approach. Improving services in this regard could positively impact service features including reliability and yield cost savings.

MEETING REPORT

Meeting Description: DDS/MIG Study Interview Session: Meadowlink TMA

Date: January 5, 2011

Location:
Meadowlink Office
Wood-ridge, New Jersey

Prepared by: Voorhees Transportation Center
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
Steve Fittante	Voorhees Transportation Center
Andrea Lubin	Voorhees Transportation Center
Krishna Murthy	Meadowlink

Introduction

Andrea Lubin and Steve Fittante welcomed Mr. Murthy and explained that the Voorhees Transportation Center is conducting a study for the NJ Division of Disability Services to research strategies for expanding the resources available to improve and enhance New Jersey's county paratransit services, particularly for people with disabilities in NJ seeking employment.

Krishna Murthy is the executive director of the Meadowlink Transportation Management Association (TMA). TMAs are non-profit, public/private partnerships that focus on creating relationships with businesses and local government to provide commuter information and services. There are eight TMAs in New Jersey, with each responsible for a specific region. Meadowlink cover six counties: Bergen, Essex, Union and Monmouth County, as well as parts of Hudson and Passaic Counties.

Mr. Murthy explained that unlike most other TMAs, Meadowlink's emphasis area is on providing transportation services and they consider that function a core competency of their business. He explained that where NJ Transit service is strong, there is no need for Meadowlink's services. Instead, they focus on creating new markets and providing service to suburban and rural locales, as well as feeder service to transit.

Meadowlink, also known as EZ Ride, provides 12 shuttle routes and all are focused on employment trips. Originally, Meadowlink tried using a third party vendor to provide their shuttle services but they have since opted to provide the services in-house. Their shuttles focus on connecting to major transit hubs, such as Newark Penn Station, Secaucus Junction, and the Harrison PATH station, and over 1,500 customers use the services daily. Many of the shuttles focus on providing what is known as the "last mile"

of service to/from a given destination. In addition to weekday service, some shuttle services operate on weekends as well. He noted that the largest unmet transportation need in his region is social trips.

It was emphasized that in providing services in the northern part of the state, county boundaries must often be crossed. He added that shuttle services must be carefully planned and choreographed, but that shuttles also offer a great deal of flexibility.

Their JARC shuttle has a daily ridership of 125. He believes ridership has increased due to service reliability and positive word of mouth. Meadowlink also conducted a marketing campaign to draw riders to the service. Also, any service complaints received are investigated fully.

In addition to shuttles, Meadowlink also provides vanpool services (18 in Monmouth County) and facilitates carpools and car share arrangements. They also offer services targeted specifically to senior citizens (Community Cars); the working poor (EZ Link); and persons with disability seeking employment transportation (Flex T).

The history of the Flex T service is described below, but its core focus is on providing door to door employment trips for persons with disability along Routes 9, 35 and 36 in Monmouth County. The program is designed as a volunteer driver initiative with paid drivers on call if needed. The service is demand response with some built-in economies of scale. Most of the jobs customers are seeking to access are part-time and the majority of trips are subscription. Service is available Monday through Friday and a fare is charged. The main cost of the service to Meadowlink is related to the vehicle and the paid drivers. Specifically the cost is about \$80 per day plus driver hours. Daily ridership is about 40 persons per day. Meadowlink is looking to continue the pilot demonstration and to integrate the service with TANF clients. It is anticipated that in the future the service will also be open to members of the general public.

General Discussion on Funding

Although not a county provider, Meadowlink is also being impacted by the negative economy, as they often pursue similar funding sources as the counties. Meadowlink also works with a variety of the county transportation providers in their region. For example, they work with Essex County on JARC services and have worked with Bergen County on a CMAQ shuttle in Montvale. Meadowlink is also open to serving as a contractor for the county systems.

He reported that their organization focuses on seeking both private and public support and strives to not become dependent on any one funding source. Funding sources used include: corporate funds; foundation support; and monies from federal programs including CMAQ, JARC, New Freedom and Sec 5310.

Coping Strategies

Several specific strategies were mentioned, including the following:

Funding Strategies

- Fare and donations
 - Meadowlink does not use donation policies as they feel they are arbitrary. Fares are used successfully. They would support a universal fare card but understand the costs and other issues involved with this fare media.
- New funding sources
 - In this difficult economic environment, Meadowlink has still been able to create new services by seeking funding from non-traditional sources. For example, Meadowlink sought and received funding from the Henry H. Kessler Foundation to design and pilot their Flex T service, targeted on meeting the employment transportation needs of persons with disability. Meadowlink also seeks corporate community support.
- Partnering with other agencies
 - It was intended that the Flex T service described above be piloted in Passaic County, but Meadowlink had difficulty getting the needed support from partner entities like county human services, as the agency did not want to share client origin and desired destination information. However, that information was needed to create the service. Thus, Meadowlink sought new partners, including ARC of Monmouth and other nonprofits in Monmouth County and created the service in that locale instead. This experience demonstrates the potential difficulties in partnering with other agencies. However, although partnering can be difficult, it proved successful with Flex T in Monmouth.
- Volunteer drivers
 - As noted above, volunteer drivers are used by a variety of Meadowlink's programs, including Flex T and the Community Cars program for the elderly. Use of volunteer drivers helps to keep the fares low for customers.

Operation Strategies

- Improve efficiencies
 - Meadowlink has embraced technology as one way to improve efficiencies. They have standardized their vehicle fleet with regard to vehicle manufacturer and model. All vehicles have GPS, mobile data computers and in-vehicle video surveillance. They also sought and received federal Sec 5310 funding to purchase software that will facilitate online scheduling and dispatch.

One of their services, the Essex Night Owl shuttle, uses Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system technology to notify clients of vehicle arrival.

- Transit feeder service
 - As noted previously, Meadowlink is focused on offering transit feeder service and feels this approach offers a valuable means to expand service areas and options for customers, as well as providing cost efficiencies.
- Modified fixed routes/shuttles
 - As previously detailed, shuttle service is a critical aspect of Meadowlink's on the ground services and are designed to meet unmet needs, so as to avoid service duplication.

Other Suggestions

- There is tremendous value in designing new services using a pilot approach.
- Travel training is an excellent approach to teaching transportation disadvantaged persons how to safely use transit, without fear. NJT's Access Link program has done a valuable service in supporting travel training and informing Access Link applicants about travel training opportunities with NJ TIP.
- Seeking match funds can be difficult. Meadowlink typically plans their match before applying for a grant and feels that building partnerships is an important component of being successful in securing match funds.
- A centralized transportation brokerage model should be pursued in New Jersey.
- Being able to quantify the social impacts/benefits of transportation programs/services is an important component of being successful in securing matching funds and being awarded grants.

MEETING REPORT

Meeting Description: DDS/MIG Study Interview Session: Central county providers

Date: February 3, 2011

Location:

Voorhees Transportation Center
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Prepared by: Voorhees Transportation Center
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
Kathy Carmello	Union County Paratransit
Martin DeNero	Mercer T.R.A.D.E.
Stephanie DiPetrillo	Voorhees Transportation Center
Kathy Edmond	Ocean Ride
Steve Fittante	Middlesex County
Lupe Fowler	Hunterdon County
Andrea Lubin	Voorhees Transportation Center
Yvonne Manfra	Somerset County
Jean Meroni	Monmouth County
Janelle Rivera	NJ Transit
Charles Wilkins	Monmouth County

Introduction

Andrea Lubin and Stephanie DePetrillo welcomed participants and explained that the Voorhees Transportation Center is conducting a study for the NJ Division of Disability Services to research strategies for expanding the resources available to improve and enhance New Jersey's county paratransit services, particularly for people with disabilities in NJ seeking employment.

A total of six counties representing the central region of the state participated in this group interview session. The counties were: Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Somerset and Union. In addition, Martin DeNero representing Mercer County responded in writing to the topics discussed and his input, where relevant, is included in this report.

Employment Transportation

The group discussed the services they offer used by persons with disability to access employment. It is important to note the services described below do not necessarily include all transportation services provided by each county. For example, all the providers also offer some level of demand response service.

- Hunterdon – They operate the Shuffle service which provides all day modified fixed route service throughout the Flemington/Raritan area. They also operate a service called Cross County that is a demand response service. It was reported that about half of their riders have a disability. Hunterdon has no NJT service available.
- Mercer – They provide subscription service for employment trips, mixed with some demand response trips. Non-competitive employment trips are offered in the county by ARC Mercer.
- Middlesex – They offer seven modified fixed route shuttles that connect to NJT service when feasible and to a variety of employment centers, including those located at Exit 8A of the New Jersey Turnpike.
- Monmouth – They offer two fixed route shuttles that cover the western portion of the county and a service called Dock and Roll which connects the county’s shore communities with ferry service to Lower Manhattan; offices, stores and restaurants along Route 35 in Middletown and Holmdel Township; and connecting train and bus routes. It was reported that over 13,000 trips are made annually via their Brokered Employment Transportation Service (BETS) for people with disabilities traveling to competitive employment. 47,000 non-competitive employment trips are also made. Several sites served with the latter service include ARC facilities and a vocational rehabilitation center.
- Ocean – They operate 14 fixed routes. Their service that runs along Route 37 is supported with JARC funding. Geocoding was used to determine how to best plan the route so that it included key area business sites. This service is used by many customers seeking to access part-time employment. Currently about ten percent of those customers are persons with disability. They also operate a subscription based service called Disabled Employment Transportation Service (DETS) that provides transportation for about 40 persons to competitive employment.
- Somerset – They have seven public transit routes and 77 peak route vehicles operate per day. It was noted any of those routes could be providing employment trips. They travel to seven different supported employment sites, two of which are located outside the county. They perform 120,000-150,000 sheltered workshop trips per year and 20,000 to 30,000 competitive employment trips on paratransit.
- Union – They operate a 3.5 mile shuttle route that shadows NJT bus service and permits deviations along the Route 22 corridor that covers Springfield, Union and Kenilworth. They also have a shuttle route that covers destinations in Plainfield and Rahway, including NJT rail stations and the county’s one-stop center. Approximately 80 percent of their work trips are for competitive employment and 20 percent for non-competitive employment.

It was asked if any of the providers offer employment services on the weekends. Depending on the route, most reported offering some service on Saturdays, including Ocean, Union, Monmouth, Middlesex and Hunterdon.

The group discussed key employment destinations in their respective counties that need more service. Somerset noted the industrial park in Branchburg near Route 22 that was previously served by NJT and the Bridgewater mall. Union mentioned the segment of the Route 22 corridor between the municipalities of Union and Plainfield. Hunterdon mentioned a housing complex for persons with disability in the town of Tewksbury and the Midland School in Branchburg that has a supported transitional program. Ocean noted that generally services are needed along the east-west corridors of the county. For example, the Toms River Connection route that serves the Route 37 corridor ends at the Toms River business park so it misses a large western section of the county. In terms of specific sites that need more service, Ocean County College and the Jackson shopping outlet was mentioned.

General Transportation

- The topic of feeder service to area bus/rail stations was discussed. All provide feeder services when feasible and recognize the value of providing such service to both the customers and to their own organization.
- All indicated aides were permitted to accompany passengers if needed. Ocean specified that the aide must pay to ride and Somerset noted that the county supplies an aide for some of their sheltered workshop trips.
- It was asked how many miles beyond their respective county border participant organizations are willing to travel. Monmouth reported they do not go beyond the five mile county boundary except for veteran and medical trips. Somerset and Hunterdon noted they also travel beyond the five mile border for medical trips but not for other trip purposes, such as employment. Union county remains within the five mile boundary except for two days a week when they travel beyond that boundary for medical trips. Ocean County also remains within the five mile boundary except for once a week veteran medical clinic trips.
- The group discussed their largest unmet transportation need. Most cited medical trips and Ocean County, which has a high elderly population, conveyed the difficulty in serving the over 90 adult communities located in the county. Some mentioned employment trips as an unmet need, including Somerset.

General Discussion on Funding

All reported experiencing financial difficulty and all except for Somerset reported the Casino Revenue fund is a main funding source for their services. The group acknowledged the one percent increase in the funding formula allotted to transportation via SCDRTP has been somewhat helpful, but has failed to provide the necessary support. Several emphasized that their county freeholders cannot fill the budget gaps their county transportation services are experiencing.

Impacts of these funding issues have included reduced staffing and reduced ability to supply demand response services. Several counties have waiting lists for trips including dialysis and employment. Some counties have also been delaying capital replacement as a means to cope with the difficult economic environment.

Funding programs used by some and/or all participants include Sec 5310; Sec 5316 (JARC); Sec 5317 (New Freedom); and CMAQ. Ryan White funding is used by Monmouth and Middlesex. Participants reported securing the necessary match funds for many of these programs is very difficult and their freeholders can rarely offer match support. The problem of stagnant funding from sources including Older Americans Act Title III, Social Service Block Grants and NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs was also mentioned.

Several expressed that the United We Ride (UWR) effort has not helped to alleviate the existing financial crisis and has offered no funding to address unmet needs. Others noted UWR offered a means to identify unmet needs and has encouraged coordination.

Coping Strategies

Several specific strategies were mentioned, including the following:

Funding Strategies

- Bus advertising
 - Middlesex has been successfully using bus advertising. Union and Mercer have each gone out to bid twice for bus ads.
- Purchase of bus/rail tickets/passes
 - Middlesex and Monmouth counties mentioned this strategy.
- Fare and donations
 - Monmouth suggested that all systems should charge for rides either as a percent of the cost of the ride or a fare comparable to what NJT Access Link would charge for the ride.
 - Hunterdon, Ocean, Somerset, Monmouth and Middlesex have both a donation and fare policy. Union has a fare policy and Mercer has a donation policy. Some details on their respective programs follow:
 - Hunterdon has a mandatory fare for all trips, with people with disabilities and the elderly paying a reduced rate. They collect the fare on board the vehicle and via mail.
 - Somerset has a mandatory fare for competitive employment, and group weekend/night recreation/shopping trips. A suggested donation is applied for other trips. Funds are collected on board the vehicle and via mail. Those not paying their bill receive two phone requests and then lose service if their bill is not paid. A fare waiver is available based on financial need.

- Ocean customers who have Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD) on file receive a 50 percent discount. Those using fixed route service pay via the fare box on board and those using reservation services are billed via mail.
 - Union bills riders via mail monthly. A two dollar roundtrip fare is billed for all. They are experiencing problems collecting fares and Middlesex suggested they consider calling customers in arrears to negotiate a payment plan/strategy. Thus far, Union has not enforced service elimination to those not paying their bill.
 - Middlesex charges a fare for advanced reservation trips and a suggested fare is also requested for their shuttle service.
 - Monmouth collects fares onboard the vehicle. They have raised substantial funds via their fare program. They charge ten dollars per one way medical trips more than five miles beyond the county border. They also charge ten dollars for early morning or late evening dialysis. Other fares range between three and seven dollars typically. It was noted the fares charged are more reasonable than local taxi service.
- Partnering with other agencies
 - Somerset and Hunterdon reported maintaining purchase of service contracts with the NJ Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Mercer and Middlesex have contracts with the NJ Department of Veteran and Military Affairs.
 - Several noted having service contracts with local or non-profit entities. For example, Somerset receives support from the ARC, some local adult day centers and from some municipalities. Monmouth receives funds from the ARC, a center for vocational rehabilitation and from some dialysis centers and municipalities. Hunterdon also receives funds from their local ARC and ARC of Mercer provides the non-competitive employment trips in the county. Ocean receives funding from an organization called 21 Plus, which is similar to ARC and provides support to persons with developmental disability.
 - Middlesex is partnering with LogistiCare to provide Medicaid transportation services. Middlesex emphasized that partnering with LogistiCare offers counties the opportunity to raise funds while providing only those Medicaid trips that make the most sense for their operations. Union indicated they will be partnering with LogistiCare in the immediate future and Hunterdon is considering doing so.
 - Union noted partnering with Morris County and Hunterdon is considering partnering with Warren County to facilitate transfers. Somerset and Middlesex also partner with one another on a limited basis.

- Mercer noted they are attempting to coordinate with a local non-profit to assist with transporting dialysis patients currently on the transportation waitlist.
- Several participants, including Middlesex and Monmouth, discussed the potential benefits of counties partnering more with NJT's Access Link service when feasible.
- New funding sources
 - Middlesex and Union counties both mentioned pursuing funding support from the private, non-profit Henry H. Kessler Foundation.
 - Mercer reported successfully pursuing Section 5311 Non-urban rural grant funds for the first time in 2011.
 - Participants cited a main concern in seeking new funding is that grants most often request the creation of a new service and the counties need to focus on maintaining their existing services.
- Volunteer drivers
 - Hunterdon reported they have a volunteer driver program with 17 drivers that provide many medical trips. The county provides the vehicle.

Operation Strategies

- Transit feeder service
 - As noted above, all provide and support transit feeder service as feasible.
- Modified fixed routes/shuttles
 - As noted above, all provide modified fixed route shuttle service and have experienced success with this type of service.
- Improve efficiencies
 - Mercer reported eliminating all non-essential spending which has helped reduced operating expenses.
 - Mercer reported scaling back driver overtime.

Other Suggestions

- County paratransit funding should be included in any new Transportation Trust fund or gas tax initiative.
- Middlesex emphasized the importance of travel training and indicated the county offers small group travel training via a program called MCTIP to area seniors and persons with disability.
- Middlesex noted that focusing on providing services for the "last mile" is especially important for employment trips.

- Monmouth suggested pursuing a statewide transportation concierge program with a single point of contact to arrange all transportation.
- Monmouth suggested eliminating the county border as an artificial service boundary. Fares should be charged to travel beyond a given county and transfer trips should be pursued with other counties and NJT Access Link service to facilitate border elimination.
- Union, Somerset and Hunterdon charge for no-shows and Monmouth is considering this strategy.
- Transportation funding should not be limited to providing services to any one specific population – instead funding should be directed to the broad umbrella of populations served by community transportation services.
- The group noted that many nonprofit and other agency vehicles are not used regularly and thus the possibility of counties partnering with these entities to share vehicles should be investigated.
 - On a related note it was suggested by Monmouth that the law should be changed pertaining to school vehicles to allow their usage by paratransit providers when they are not transporting students. Evidence of this practice was cited via the Head Start program’s transportation regulation.
- All cited the importance of creating and encouraging jobs at sites accessible to public transportation.

MEETING REPORT

Meeting Description: DDS/MIG Study Interview Session: Southern County providers

Date: January 20, 2011

Location:
Burlington County Human Services
Westhampton, New Jersey

Prepared by: Voorhees Transportation Center
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
Rick DeCosta	Gloucester County Transportation
Stephanie DiPetrillo	Voorhees Transportation Center
Steve Fittante	Voorhees Transportation Center
Mary Hadley	NJ Transit
Sherri Hinchman	Salem County Transportation
Donna Kovalevich	Camden County, Sen-Han Transit
Carl Lindow	Atlantic County Transportation
Andrea Lubin	Voorhees Transportation Center
Colleen McCabe	Cape May County Fare Free Transportation
Theresa VanSant	Cumberland Area Transit
David Wyche	Burlington County Transportation ¹

Introduction

Andrea Lubin and Stephanie DePetrillo welcomed participants and explained that the Voorhees Transportation Center is conducting a study for the NJ Division of Disability Services to research strategies for expanding the resources available to improve and enhance New Jersey's county paratransit services, particularly for people with disabilities in NJ seeking employment.

A total of seven county transportation providers representing the southern region of the state participated in this group interview session. The counties were: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem.

¹As of January 2012, Camden County's Sen-Han Transit became the provider of Burlington County's paratransit services.

Employment Transportation

The group discussed the services they offer used by persons with disability to access employment. It is important to note the services described below do not necessarily include all transportation services provided by each county. For example, all the providers also offer some level of demand response service.

- Atlantic – Offer subscription employment trips to sheltered workshops and to competitive employment. All such service is demand response, with no established routes.
- Burlington – They provide 30 subscription standing order trips daily to competitive employment sites.
- Camden – They provide service to about 40 persons to sheltered workshops via subscription trips. Demand response service is provided to an additional 40 plus persons to private employment. These latter trips are typically for part-time jobs.
- Cape May – They provide service to about 100 persons for non-competitive employment and to 40 persons for competitive jobs. Much of the work opportunity in their region is seasonal. They offer door to door service as well as a modified route. Subscription trips are permitted and rides are shared.
- Cumberland – They provide service to about 20-30 persons daily to competitive employment and to 15 persons for non-competitive employment. Subscription service is used.
- Gloucester – They provide five routes to sheltered workshops that serve about 60 persons and take about 25 persons to competitive employment per week. In coordination with the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA), a deviated fixed route shuttle also provides weekday service to the local Pureland industrial park.
- Salem – They provide subscription service for six persons to competitive employment and for one person to a workshop. They also provide other employment trips as requested.

None of the providers offer employment services on the weekends.

The group discussed key employment destinations in their respective counties and Camden indicated none currently exist, but noted that creating transportation services would be easier if there were a few set employment sites customers were seeking to access. Gloucester reported there are three industrial parks along Route 295 that could benefit from enhanced service.

General Transportation

- The topic of feeder service to area bus/rail stations was discussed. Participants reported they would gladly offer feeder service but customers rarely request it. Camden indicated they do offer feeder service and Cape May provides feeder service to the Williamstown train station. Burlington County's deviated fixed route service, BurLink, connects with NJT buses and with the River Line stations. BurLink has a transfer agreement with NJT so that it costs \$.50 to purchase a transfer to NJT bus or

rail for a free one-zone ride. Also, if a customer is making a valid transfer from a NJT bus or the River Line to BurLink, there is no charge to ride BurLink.

- Burlington County reported they allow aides to ride with persons with disability if needed, but a reservation must be made for the aide.
- It was asked how many miles beyond their respective county border each participant organization was willing to travel. Responses were as follows:
 - Atlantic – Will travel outside the typical five mile county border.
 - Burlington – Typically adhere to the five mile county border but they do go into the neighboring counties of Camden and Mercer.
 - Camden – Typically stay within five miles of the county border but will sometimes exceed that boundary for medical trips.
 - Cape May – Will travel 100 miles from customer residence to out of state destinations including medical facilities in Delaware and Pennsylvania.
 - Cumberland – Travel to Philadelphia on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Travel to Delaware on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
 - Gloucester – Will travel outside the typical five mile county border.
 - Salem – Will travel up to 50 miles beyond customer residence for medical trips.
- Participants discussed regional and/or local issues they considered unique in comparison to what their peer agencies from other counties experience. Atlantic, Cumberland, Cape May and Salem counties reported that their coverage area is very rural compared to many other New Jersey counties and they have limited transit service. Camden County reported that some NJ Transit (NJT) bus service cuts have imposed negative impacts on their County, including the elimination of midday service traveling beyond the county border.
- The group discussed their largest unmet transportation need. Several indicated the unmet need is “across the board”, while others specified medical, employment, and shopping trips. Some also noted hours of service as a significant concern, with Cape May citing their lack of weekend and evening service as a problem. Gloucester noted they currently have wait lists for dialysis service as well as for employment trips.

General Discussion on Funding

All reported experiencing financial difficulty. Participants are struggling to cope with the recession, increased fuel costs and decreased Casino revenue funds, which have historically accounted for a significant portion of their budgets. In addition, participants explained they are struggling with securing match funds that are required by various federal funding programs. It was emphasized that securing a cash match is a serious problem.

Federal programs used by some and/or all participants include Section 5310, 5311, 5316 (JARC), 5317 (New Freedom) and CMAQ. Cumberland County reported receiving

Section 5307 funding support. Some other funding sources mentioned included Social Services Block Grants (SSBG), NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs funding, and Administration on Aging (AOA) Title III.

Gloucester County explained that they have been negatively impacted by the state's decision to utilize a Medicaid transportation broker, LogistiCare. Prior to LogistiCare, Gloucester County provided Medicaid transport services.

Impacts of these funding issues have included staff reductions; service reduction; and the proliferation of service waiting lists.

Coping Strategies

Several specific strategies were mentioned, including the following:

Funding Strategies

- Bus advertising
 - Atlantic County reported wanting to pursue vehicle advertising. Cumberland noted they have tried pursuing bus ads and have put out to bid twice, but have not received a response.
- Purchase of bus/rail tickets/passes
 - No participants are pursuing this strategy. It was noted it is difficult to ask customers to relinquish the door to door service some of them currently enjoy.
- Fare and donations
 - All participants except for Cape May County have a donation program. Atlantic, Camden and Cumberland reported using fare lock boxes onboard vehicles.
 - In terms of fares, Burlington reported using a fare on their fixed route BurLink shuttles and anon-mandatory cost share on their other services. Camden charges a fare based on NJ Transit zone fares for private employment trips. A fare is also charged for dialysis trips if the customer selects a facility that is not the closest one to their residence. A cost share is requested for other trips. Camden explained they have been seeking county approval to charge a fare for other non-emergency medical transportation but thus far those efforts have been unsuccessful. Cape May reported the county is having a fare viability study performed but has been historically committed to remaining fare free.
 - The BurLink fare increased from one dollar to two dollars each way in March 2010. An increase in ridership has since been experienced. Camden also increased their request from one dollar to two dollars and has since experienced increased revenue (About \$20,000 in additional funds).
 - It was reported that when pursuing a donation policy, nomenclature used is an important determinant of compliance. For example, instead of

requesting a “donation”, terms such as “co-pay” or “cost share” should be used.

- It was reported that federal policy does not permit fare revenue to be used as a local match and that this policy needs to change.

▪ Partnering with other agencies

- It was reported that many counties are coordinating services or seeking to coordinate services to varying degrees and it is working on a limited basis.
- Camden County reported they have been coordinating with local municipalities for twenty years to sell transportation services to them for trips such as shopping. It was explained this is a “win-win” strategy as the arrangement provides needed revenue to the county, while helping municipalities meet the transportation needs of their residents without having to purchase and maintain costly vehicles. Camden County has the equipment and capacity to provide these services, as well as the expertise in scheduling and operations. It was noted the county also has similar arrangements with several area nonprofit organizations.

Other participants remarked that this strategy could not work in their county as there are no existing local services that could pay the county to take over providing said service. Gloucester reported that many of their municipalities providing transportation service do not want to relinquish their role.

- Several counties, including Cumberland and Cape May, are considering partnering with LogistiCare to offer Medicaid transportation services. Camden reported no interest in partnering due to the reimbursement rate LogistiCare is offering partners.
- Gloucester is working to coordinate with NJT Access Link service.
- Cumberland County reported they would discuss the potential of partnering with other local counties, such as Camden and Gloucester, as a means to reduce duplicate trips. Issues such as vehicle size and wheelchair capacity need to be considered when seeking to share services.

▪ New funding sources

- Counties should investigate options for seeking reimbursement for trips provided to sheltered workshops from agencies including the NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities.
- A participant mentioned reading about transportation providers on the west coast ceasing shopping trips to centers that do not contribute to transportation service costs. It was suggested that counties interested in pursuing funding support from shopping facilities should direct their request to the community relations/corporate office of such entities.

▪ Volunteer drivers

- Camden reported wanting to implement a volunteer driver program.

Operation Strategies

- Transit feeder service
 - This strategy is used by several including Burlington and Camden.
 - Gloucester reported the development of a transit hub terminal in Woodbury would allow for more feeder service in the region.
- Modified fixed routes/shuttles
 - Several are using modified fixed routes/shuttles, including Burlington County with the six route BurLink service.
- Improve efficiencies
 - Camden is reinforcing their existing no-show policy, which includes warnings as well as service suspension for repeated customer no-shows.

Other Suggestions

- Camden explained that private dialysis centers should be contributing to the transportation costs of their patients.
- A training program needs to be developed to support junior staff as senior level county transportation providers retire. Such action will help preserve institutional knowledge and improve overall operations.
- Camden County noted that due to their status as a non-profit entity, they are subject to federal and state fuel taxes and they would like this issue addressed so they can experience cost savings in this regard.

MEETING REPORT

Meeting Description: DDS/MIG Study Interview Session:
North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA)

Date: February 22, 2011

Location:
Conference Call

Prepared by: Voorhees Transportation Center
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

ATTENDEES

NAME	AFFILIATION
Stephanie DiPetrillo	Voorhees Transportation Center
Andrea Lubin	Voorhees Transportation Center
David Schmetterer	NJTPA

Introduction

Andrea Lubin and Stephanie DePetrillo welcomed Mr. Schmetterer and explained that the Voorhees Transportation Center is conducting a study for the NJ Division of Disability Services to research strategies for expanding the resources available to improve and enhance New Jersey's county paratransit services, particularly for people with disabilities in NJ seeking employment.

David Schmetterer is a senior planner with NJTPA, which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) representing the 13 northern New Jersey counties that encompass over six million residents. MPOs are federally required transportation planning bodies. Mr. Schmetterer works on mobility issues at NJTPA and coordinates with counties through a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

General Discussion on Funding

He explained the existing economic environment is negatively impacting county providers, limiting their ability to operate and/or expand existing programs. In his work overseeing applications for various federal grants, including JARC and New Freedom, there has been a reduction in applications for programs requiring matching funds. He noted that TANF funds used to be eligible as a match for JARC but that is no longer the case.

He added that many of the problems counties are facing in providing transportation services to the transportation disadvantaged community owe to land use and planning factors, in addition to current economic conditions. For example, many age-restricted communities are located in rural or suburban areas with limited to no public transit

options. He added that many large employers are similarly located in remote locales, far from employee residences and offering little to no access to public transit. The scope of this problem of being able to meet transportation demand among the transportation disadvantaged is only expected to escalate, due to factors including the aging baby boomer population and the large autistic population residing in the state.

Coping Strategies

Several specific strategies were mentioned, including the following:

Funding Strategies

- Bus advertising
 - He reported this was a good strategy counties should investigate.
- Fare and donations
 - He noted that fares are not the best strategy to rely upon to support a given program; however, fares can be useful to support program expansion efforts.
 - Using fares as a match source has yielded limited success.
- Partnering with other agencies
 - He noted that many TMAs are very engaged in transportation services and mobility management and that counties should consider partnering with them when feasible.
- New funding sources
 - It was noted that private funding sources, such as nonprofits, should be considered by county providers. He specifically mentioned that Meadowlink TMA and others recently sought funding through the nonprofit Henry H. Kessler foundation.

Other Suggestions

- Grant applications, especially at the federal level, are often difficult to complete and counties need staff support in doing so.
- Increased funding for Access Link services might permit service coverage for more of the region.
- It was noted that potential match funds should be sought from foundations and other entities from the private sector, in addition to the public sector. In-kind matches might be an option but are typically explored on a case by case basis.
- To help facilitate vehicle coordination among service providers, it would be useful to encourage a coordinated mapping effort that would lay out details on vehicle fleets, service hours in use; service territory covered, etc.

Appendix C

Survey Instrument

Community Transit Survey 2011

Created: March 24 2011, 7:57 AM
Last Modified: April 14 2011, 6:14 AM
Design Theme: Basic Blue
Language: English
Button Options: Custom: Start Survey: "Start Survey!" Submit: "Submit"
Disable Browser "Back" Button: False

Community Transit Survey 2011

Page 1 - Question 1 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Welcome to the Resources & Strategies for Enhancing Transportation for People with Disabilities Study

About the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. The Voorhees Transportation Center is seeking to learn more about potential new resources to improve and enhance transportation services for people with disabilities in New Jersey. Your insights will help the research team understand better how a variety of states in our nation are working to maintain and/or expand their transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged in the current economic environment. This survey should take you approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Your participation in the survey is completely voluntary and there are no risks to participation. You may skip any questions you are not comfortable answering and, if at any time during the survey you wish to stop participating, you are free to exit the survey with no penalty to you. This research is confidential. Confidential means that the research records will include some information about you. However, the research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated.

- Yes, I consent and I am ready to begin the survey [Skip to 3]
- No, I do not consent to take this survey [Skip to 2]

Page 2 - Heading

Thank you for your interest in our study. To proceed your consent is required. If you wish to participate, please use your browser to return to the previous page.

Unconditional Screen Out

Page 3 - Heading

Contact

Page 3 - Question 2 - Open Ended - One or More Lines with Prompt

[Mandatory]

Please provide the following information about your organization.

- Company _____
- Address _____
- City _____
- State _____
- Zip _____

Please provide the following contact information

Your Name _____
 Title _____
 Telephone number _____
 Email _____

BACKGROUND

[Mandatory]

Which of the following best describes your organization? (Check one only)

- Municipal government
 - County government
 - State government
 - Private, non-profit human services organization
 - Private, non-profit transportation company
 - Private, for-profit transportation company
 - Other, please specify
-

[Mandatory]

What is your service area?

- Entire state [Skip to 10]
 - Several counties [Skip to 6]
 - One county [Skip to 7]
 - Several towns [Skip to 8]
 - One town [Skip to 9]
 - Other, please specify
-

What counties do you serve?

[Skip Unconditionally to 10]

What county do you serve?

[Skip Unconditionally to 10]

What towns do you serve?

[Skip Unconditionally to 10]

Page 9 - Question 9 - Open Ended - One Line

What town do you serve?

[Skip Unconditionally to 10]

Page 10 - Question 10 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Is your service area mostly... (Check one only)

- Urban?
- Suburban?
- Rural?
- Mixed? Please specify

Page 11 - Heading

FUNDING

Page 11 - Question 11 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

What is the single most significant source of operating funds for your organization? (Check one only)

- Federal [Skip to 13]
- State
- County
- Local
- Farebox
- Rider donation
- Non-profit or private sector

Page 12 - Question 12 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Do you receive federal operating funds?

- No [Skip to 14]
- Yes [Skip to 13]

Page 13 - Question 13 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

Which federal operating funds do you receive?(Check all that apply)

- FTA Section 5311 (Non-Urbanized Area Formula Program)
- FTA Section 5316 (JARC)
- FTA Section 5317 (New Freedom)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)
- Social Service Block Grant
- Title III Older Americans Act
- Other, please specify

Do you receive... (Check all that apply)

- State operating funds?
- County operating funds?
- Local operating funds?

[Mandatory]

Do you receive funds from non-profit or private-sector companies, organizations or foundations?

- No [Skip to 16]
- Yes [Skip to 15]

Please specify what non-profit or private-sector operating funds you receive.
(Be sure to include information on resources specifically dedicated for the transport of disadvantaged populations, e.g., people with disabilities, senior citizens, etc.)

Approximately what percentage of your budget is supported by the following funding sources?

- Federal _____
- State _____
- County _____
- Local _____
- Farebox _____
- Rider donation _____
- Non-profit or private sector _____

[Mandatory]

Have you sought funding from any new sources in the past three years?

- No [Skip to 19]
- Yes [Skip to 18]

Please describe any new sources of revenue that you received in the past three years.

Many funders require applicants to provide matching funds.
How frequently has a lack of available matching funds limited your ability to apply for such grants?

- Always
- Very Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

DONATION & FARE POLICIES

Do you suggest a rider donation (as opposed to a fare)?

- No
- Yes

[Mandatory]

Do you charge a fare for your services?

- No [Skip to 22]
- Yes [Skip to 21]

What do you charge for a regular fare?

Do you charge people with disabilities a reduced fare?

- No
- Yes

Do you charge senior citizens a reduced fare?

- No
- Yes

COPING STRATEGIES

The current economic climate has placed a strain on many agencies throughout the nation. This next section of questions explores strategies considered or taken to counter budget reductions or restrictions encountered in your effort to maintain or enhance transportation services.

In the last three years have you been able to offer any new or enhanced transportation services?

- No [Skip to 24]
- Yes [Skip to 23]

What funding source(s) made that new or enhanced service possible?

Have you had to reduce or eliminate any of your transportation services due to recent funding constraints?

- No
- Yes

This next series of questions concern some innovative ways to raise funds, reduce costs or improve efficiencies.

Have you sold advertising space on your vehicles (e.g., vehicle wrapping) to raise additional funds?

- No [Skip to 27]
- Yes [Skip to 26]

Have you had difficulty selling advertising on your vehicles?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties?

Have you purchased public or private carrier bus/rail tickets/passes to reduce costs or improve efficiencies?

- No [Skip to 29]
- Yes [Skip to 28]

Have you had difficulty in implementing the use of public or private carrier bus or rail tickets/passes?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties? (Check all that apply.)

- Lack of contact at local transit agency
 - Difficulty in distributing to passengers
 - Lack of budgeted funding to purchase ticket/passes
 - Other, please specify
-

Have you partnered or coordinated with other agencies or entities to share transportation services, vehicles, etc. in order to reduce costs or improve efficiencies?

- No [Skip to 31]
- Yes [Skip to 30]

Have you had difficulty partnering with other agencies?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties? (Check all that apply)

- Resistance by other agencies to coordinate
 - Lack of opportunities to share services or equipment
 - Difficulty in establishing a workable agreement for cost sharing
 - Other, please specify
-

Have you used volunteer drivers in order to reduce costs or improve efficiencies?

- No [Skip to 33]
- Yes [Skip to 32]

Have you had difficulty in using volunteer drivers?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties? (Check all that apply)

- Lack of volunteer response
 - Insurance issues
 - Driver union related issues
 - Other, please specify
-

[Mandatory]

Have you sought support from foundations or charitable organizations (e.g., United Way) in order to raise additional funds?

- No [Skip to 35]
- Yes [Skip to 34]

Have you had difficulty in seeking foundation support?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties? (Check all that apply)

- Unable to meet foundation application criteria/requirements
 - Unable to meet funding match requirement
 - Funding maximum not worth application effort
 - Other, please specify
-

[Mandatory]

Have you recently started to provide Medicaid contract services through your local Medicaid designated lead agency or Medicaid broker?

- No [Skip to 37]
- Yes [Skip to 36]

Have you had difficulty providing Medicaid contract services?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties? (Check all that apply)

- Contracting agency/broker requirements unable to be met
 - Reimbursement rate too low
 - Other, please specify
-

In the last three years, have you developed a fare or donation policy in order to raise additional funds?

- No [Skip to 39]
- Yes [Skip to 38]

Have you had difficulty developing or implementing a fare or donation policy?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties? (Check all that apply)

- Board or policy maker resistance
 - Consumer resistance
 - Cost of implementing collection
 - Other, please specify
-

In the last three years, have you started offering feeder service to traditional transit in order to reduce costs or improve efficiencies?

- No [Skip to 41]
- Yes [Skip to 40]

Have you had difficulty implementing feeder service to traditional transit?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties? (Check all that apply)

- Lack of sheltered areas for transfer
 - Cost of wait time needed to facilitate vehicle-to-vehicle transfer
 - Lack of traditional transit serving desired destinations
 - Other, please specify
-

In the last three years, have you recently implemented fixed or modified-fixed service in order to reduce costs or improve efficiencies?

- No [Skip to 43]
- Yes [Skip to 42]

Have you had difficulty implementing fixed or modified-fixed service?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties? (Check all that apply)

- State regulatory requirements for fixed route services
 - Cost of larger vehicles required for service
 - Customer resistance to fixed route services
 - Lack of familiarity with designing these services
 - Other, please specify
-

In the last three years, have you implemented transfers at central locations for long distance trips in order to reduce costs or improve efficiencies?

- No [Skip to 45]
- Yes [Skip to 44]

Have you had difficulty implementing transfers at central locations for long distance trips?

- No
- Yes

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties? (Check all that apply)

- Lack of sheltered area for transfer
 - Difficulty in setting up coordination with other providers
 - Need for larger vehicle to accommodate transfer passengers
 - Other, please specify
-

In the last three years, have you pursued any other new or innovative strategies to reduce costs, raise additional funds, or improve efficiencies?

- No [Skip to 47]
- Yes [Skip to 46]

Page 46 - Question 60 - Open Ended - Comments Box

Please briefly describe the strategies you have adopted

Page 46 - Question 61 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Have you had difficulty in implementing any of these strategies?

- No
- Yes

Page 46 - Question 62 - Open Ended - Comments Box

If you experienced any difficulties, what was the source of those difficulties?

Page 47 - Question 63 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

In the last three years, have you used any of these additional strategies to reduce costs or raise additional funds? (Check all that apply)

- Reducing staff
 - Reducing overtime
 - Hiring freeze
 - Reducing service hours
 - Limiting the number of trips per week overall
 - Reducing the number of special trips
 - Limiting travel distance
 - Limiting trips out of your service area
 - Establishing or revising your eligibility guidelines
 - Increasing your fare
 - Increasing your donation request
 - Other, please specify
-

Page 47 - Question 64 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Has the United We Ride effort presented any potential strategies for coping within the current funding environment (e.g., promotion of coordination)?

- No
- Yes

INNOVATION

Are you aware of any innovative strategies or best practices not already discussed in the survey that are being pursued by either yourself, peers in your state or in any places in the country that have helped to maintain and/or expand service?

- No [Skip to 50]
- Yes [Skip to 49]

Please briefly describe any innovative strategies or best practices being pursued by yourself or your peers.

How do you think your state (or program) can better meet the work related transportation needs of your residents with disabilities?

To get a better understanding of the work performed by your agency, these final questions ask about your services and operations.

SERVICES

What type of services are you able to provide? (Check all that apply)

- Curb-to-curb (pick up and drop off passenger at curb)
 - Door-to-door (driver walks passenger to/from outside of building)
 - Door through door (driver walks passenger in/out of building)
 - Other, please specify
-

Who are your passengers? (Check all that apply)

- Elderly persons
- People with disabilities
- Welfare recipients/low income persons
- Medicaid clients

- School age children
 - Children under age 5
 - Employees traveling to work or job related activities
 - General public; anyone can ride
 - Other, please specify
-

Page 52 - Question 70 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Do passengers ever have to "share their ride" with other riders?

- No
- Yes

Page 52 - Question 71 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

Other than employment destinations, what types of destinations do your passengers travel to? (Check all that apply.)

- Medical (doctor, hosp/clinic, outpatient services, pharmacy; excluding dialysis)
 - Dialysis Center
 - Nutrition Center
 - Shopping/Personal Errands (groceries, mall, shopping center, bank, salon, cleaners)
 - Education (school or college)
 - Recreation
 - Religious
 - Adult Day Care
 - Child Day Care
 - Don't know where passengers go after leaving the vehicle
 - Other, please specify
-

Page 53 - Question 72 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

Do you provide transportation to employment (work site or job training) for people with disabilities?

- No [Skip to 59]
- Yes

Page 54 - Question 73 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Are the majority of employment trips for people with disabilities to...

- Competitive employment?
- Non-competitive employment?
- Equally competitive and non-competitive employment?

Page 54 - Question 74 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

Which of the following mode(s) of service do you use to transport people with disabilities to employment? (Check all that apply)

- Fixed route scheduled
- Deviated or modified fixed route (scheduled route that makes minor route deviations)
- Dedicated employment subscription runs
- Integrated with other advance reservation/demand response trips

Do you provide transportation to employment on weekdays for people with disabilities?

- No [Skip to 57]
- Yes

Please specify the days that you provide employment trips for people with disabilities. (Check all that apply)

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday

Generally, when is the first scheduled pick up of employment trips for people with disabilities on weekdays (M-F)?

- Before 6 am
 - 6-7 am
 - 7-8 am
 - 8-9 am
 - 9-10 am
 - After 10 am
 - Other, please specify
-

Generally, when is the last scheduled pick up of employment trips for people with disabilities on weekdays (M-F)?

- Before 6 pm
 - 6-7 pm
 - 7-8 pm
 - 8-9 pm
 - 9-10 pm
 - After 10 pm
 - Other, please specify
-

Generally, how many one-way passenger trips per day to employment for people with disabilities occur during your weekday service hours?

- 0 to 25
- 26 to 50
- 51 to 100
- 101 to 250
- More than 250

Do you provide transportation to employment for people with disabilities on weekends?

- No [Skip to 59]
- Yes

Please specify the days that you provide employment trips for people with disabilities. (Check all that apply)

- Saturday
- Sunday

Generally, when is the first scheduled pick up of employment trips for people with disabilities on weekends?

- Before 6 am
 - 6-7 am
 - 7-8 am
 - 8-9 am
 - 9-10 am
 - After 10 am
 - Other, please specify
-

Generally, when is the last scheduled pick up of employment trips for people with disabilities on weekends?

- Before 6 pm
 - 6-7 pm
 - 7-8 pm
 - 8-9 pm
 - 9-10 pm
 - After 10 pm
 - Other, please specify
-

Generally, how many one-way passenger trips per day to employment for people with disabilities occur during your weekend service hours?

- 0 to 25
- 26 to 50
- 51 to 100
- 101 to 250
- More than 250

OPERATIONS

About how many individual customers does your organization serve in a year?

- 0 to 50
- 51 to 100
- 101 to 250
- 251 to 500
- 501 to 1000
- 1001 to 5000
- More than 5000

About how many annual one-way passenger trips did your organization provide in 2010?

In total, about how many annual vehicle miles of service did your organization provide in 2010?

About how many vehicles are in your fleet?

- 0 to 10
- 11 to 25
- 26 to 50
- 51 to 100
- 101 to 250
- 251 to 500
- More than 500

What types of RSD software or other technologies do you use? (Check all that apply)

- RSD software (computer assisted)
 - RSD software (fully automated)
 - Interactive Voice Response Telephone System
 - Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL) GPS
 - Mobile Data Computer (MDC)
 - None
 - Other, please specify
-

What kind of trips do you provide? (Check all that apply)

- Deviated or modified fixed route (scheduled route that makes minor route deviations) [Skip to 63]
- Fixed route (no reservations required; passenger waits at stop for scheduled service) [Skip to 64]
- Subscription Trips (reservation not needed if passenger makes same trip on a specific schedule) [Skip to 64]
- Demand responsive (advance reservation) [Skip to 64]
- On demand (less than 2 hour advance reservation) [Skip to 64]

How far from route do you deviate?

- Less than 0.25 miles
- Between 0.25 and 0.5 miles
- Between 0.5 and 1 mile
- More than 1 mile

Please rank the top three trip purposes requested by customers. (Most requested as 1, second most requested as 2, third most requested as 3.)

- Employment (work site or job training) _____
- Medical (doctor, hosp/clinic, outpatient services, pharmacy; excluding dialysis) _____
- Dialysis center _____
- Nutrition center _____
- Shopping/personal errands (groceries, mall, shopping center, bank, salon, cleaners) _____
- Education (school or college) _____
- Recreation _____
- Religious _____
- Adult day care _____
- Child day care _____
- Other, please specify _____

What type of trip is your largest unmet need?

- Employment (work site or job training)
 - Medical (doctor, hosp/clinic, outpatient services, pharmacy; excluding dialysis)
 - Dialysis center
 - Nutrition center
 - Shopping/personal errands (groceries, mall, shopping center, bank, salon, cleaners)
 - Education (school or college)
 - Recreation
 - Religious
 - Adult day care
 - Child day care
 - Other, please specify
-

Do you prioritize trips? For example, medical trips are a first priority followed by employment and then recreation, etc.

- No
- Yes

Appendix D

Focus Group Topic Guide

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Agenda

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Welcome and Introductions | <i>Facilitator with Session Participants</i> |
| 2. | Discussion Overview | <i>Facilitator</i> |
| 3. | Discussions: Questions and Answers | <i>Facilitator with Session Participants</i> |
| 4. | Wrap Up | <i>Facilitator</i> |
-

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

First, let me begin by saying thank you. We really appreciate your volunteering to participate in this discussion. My name is _____ . I work with the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University and I will be your facilitator for this session.

In a few minutes, I will be asking you some questions about your transportation experiences. Before we get started, I will be passing out to you now **an informed consent form** for us to read together and for you to sign and return to us.

Read Consent & All Sign & VTC Collects

Let's start by taking a few minutes right now and introduce ourselves. Please tell us your **first name** and **where you live**.

Now that we all know each other a little better, let's begin our discussion.

DISCUSSION OVERVIEW

In our state of New Jersey, 38% of people with disabilities age 16-64 are employed; with 75% of those age 16-64 without a disability employed. We want to see that first statistic changed, allowing more folks with disabilities who are seeking work to secure and maintain employment.

So what factors impact a person's ability to get and keep a job? Well, as you might know, transportation has been cited as a particularly difficult barrier to work for folks with disabilities. For our study, we are conducting research provided through the Medicaid program to try and determine how we can expand the resources available to NJ's county paratransit providers so that they can improve and expand their transportation services for people with disabilities in NJ, specifically those who are seeking employment.

Today we want to hear from you about your transportation experiences, especially those related to employment trips and we want to know any thoughts or suggestions you may have to improve county paratransit services to get people to work.

QUESTIONS

General Travel Experiences and Expectations

1. **Where have you traveled from home this past week?**
2. **What transportation options are available to you in your area?**
3. **How did you find out about these options?**
4. **How do you usually get around (to school, to doctor's offices, for instance)?**

Let the participants answer. Offer prompts if they haven't offered:

- "Do you get a ride from someone?"
- "Do you use the Access Link?"
- "Do you have your own car or specially equipped vehicle?"
- "Do you use public transportation-buses or trains?"
- "Do you use county advance reservation or fixed route services? (Clarify the difference if needed)"
- "Do you use taxis?"

5. **What do you like most about the transportation options you use? Why?**
6. **What do you like least? Why?**
7. **What are the things you want MOST from transportation? What features of transportation are most important to you? What do you most depend on?**

Let participants answer. Offer prompts if they haven't offered

- On demand - I should be able to get it when I want/need it.
- Timeliness - it should be there when it says it will
- Convenience - it should run at hours convenient to working (or shopping or doctor's appointments)
- Full service - there should be transportation choices (multi-modal)
- Seamless - it should be able to run from your home to work with minimal transfers or wait time
- Sensitive to customer needs - it should be sensitive to people with special needs
- Safe - it should be a safe to use, and operated with safety and security in mind
- Economical - the fare should not present a financial burden to customers

Employment Travel

1. **How many of you are currently employed?**
 - a. **How many full-time? How many part-time?**
2. **If you are not currently employed, how many of you are searching for a job?**
 - a. **If you are searching, what transportation mode have you been mostly using/relying upon as you search?**
 - b. **How far are you willing to travel to a prospective job?**
3. **If you are not currently employed, how many of you have worked in the past?**
4. **Is anyone not working now because they can't find transportation?**
 - a. **In what ways is transportation a barrier to finding and keeping a job?**
5. **For those of you who work now, or have worked in the past, how do/did you get to and from work? (For those who have never worked, think about your friends or family members in NJ with disabilities who work. How do they get to work?)**
 - "Do you get a ride from someone?"
 - "Do you use the Access Link?"
 - "Do you have your own specially equipped vehicle?"
 - "Do you use public transportation-buses or trains?"
 - "Do you use county advance reservation or fixed route services (Clarify the difference if unclear)"
 - "Do you use taxis?"
6. **How LONG does your trip to work take (minutes/hrs.) and how FAR AWAY is your job from your home (approx. mileage)?**
7. **Do you use the same travel method every day? If yes, why? If no, why not?**
8. **Why did you decide on the transportation option you use?**
 - "Who helped you figure out how to get to where to needed to go?"
 - "What was important to your decision-making?"
 - "Did you find the job first, then figure out how to get there, or did you know what your transportation options were, and looked for a job within your parameters?"
9. **Do you always travel from home-to-work/work-to-home (or do you sometimes combine your trips with other travel purposes like shopping or medical appts?)**
10. **We have a few specific questions about county paratransit and work trips we would now like to ask:**
 - a. **For those of you who don't currently use county paratransit, tell us reasons why:**
 - not sure how to understand schedule?
 - not accessible for my disability
 - Safety concerns
 - Ticket price too high
 - Not reliable
 - Not timely
 - Doesn't travel when or where I need to go

- b. For those of you who use county paratransit for work, what type of service are you using – Demand response (reservation)? Shuttle? Other?
- c. Do the hours and days of operation meet your job travel needs?
- d. Do you pay a fare or donation?
 - 1. Do you consider the fare or donation price reasonable? Does it present a financial burden to you?
 - 2. If you don't pay a fare or donation, would you be willing to do so in order to assure the continuation of service?
- e. Do or did you ever use county paratransit to get to/from public transit?
- f. Overall how could county paratransit work better to meet your employment trip needs?
- g. For those of you who do not use county paratransit for WORK, please tell us why.

11. We also have a few questions specifically about public transit we would like to ask.

- a. For those of you who live near public transit but don't take it when you travel, tell us reasons why:
 - not sure how to understand schedule?
 - not accessible for my disability
 - Safety concerns
 - Ticket price too high
 - No accessible route to get to the station/stop
 - Not reliable
 - Not timely
 - Doesn't travel when or where I need to go
 - Why should I as I can use county paratransit instead?
- b. If a class was made available to help you become more familiar and comfortable in taking public transit, would you be interested?
- c. If you are eligible for Access Link and do not live within ¾ mile of an NJ Transit bus route, have you considered taking public transit from a stop that is within ¾ mile of the route?
- d. Also, have you considered using County transportation to take you to a stop that is within ¾ mile of the route?

12. Overall does the way you get to work, work for you?

- "Does it meet your needs - regularly?"
- "Does it meet your employer's needs?"
- "If it is not effective or reliable, why?"
- "If it is effective or reliable to you, what are the elements about it you like?"

13. What is the single most important transportation-related issue facing people with disabilities in New Jersey in terms of finding and keeping a job?

CLOSING REMARKS

Thank you very much for your help today. This focus group is one of two we are doing. Your input, along with what we hear from the other group, will help us greatly in better understanding the transportation needs of folks with disabilities seeking employment.

Again, thanks so much for your participation. We will now distribute your incentive.

Appendix E

**Example of grant proposal to Nonprofit RFP:
Middlesex County 2011**

2011 Signature Employment Grant Program - Concept Proposal

Cover Sheet

Concept Proposal Deadline - February 18, 2011 at 5 p.m. Eastern

Signature Employment Grant Program

Kessler's Signature Employment Grant Program seeks to fund cutting-edge, non-traditional solutions and/or social ventures that increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The program invests in projects that are innovative and lead to the generation of new ideas to solve unemployment. It is necessary that at least 65% of the grant target population be individuals with mobility disabilities or cognitive impairments primarily from neurological disorders.

Our Process

The Signature Employment Grant Program begins with online concept submission. The concept is scored and reviewed by Kessler Foundation for its originality, creativity, feasibility and collaborative stakeholder team. All applicants selected to submit a full grant proposal will be notified no later than March 15, 2011. At that time, a link to our full online application form will be provided. The deadline for full proposal submissions is June 10, 2011. After scoring and staff review, a selected group of candidates may either receive a site visit from Foundation staff or be invited to meet with Kessler's grants committee by teleconference or in-person during Fall 2011. All grants recommended for funding are subsequently approved by our Board of Trustees and will be awarded in December 2011 for the grant period January 1, 2012 - December 31, 2014. Application is open to eligible organizations in any state. Final grant selection is at the discretion of Kessler Foundation.

Grant Amount

Organizations may apply for up to two years of funding. Yearly funding ranges from \$100,000 - \$250,000, with maximum project funding at \$500,000.

Name of Organization

Please list exact legal name

County of Middlesex

Tax ID

22-6002454

Street Address of Organization

County Administration Building
75 Bayard Street

City

New Brunswick

State

NJ

Zip Code

08901

Telephone Number

Please use (###) ###-#### format

732-745-4029

Organization Website Address

<http://co.middlesex.nj.us>

Executive Director/CEO Contact

Last Name

Fittante

First Name

Steven

Title

Director, Middlesex County Department of Transportation

Office Phone

732-745-4069

Extension

Office Fax

732-296-0320

E-mail

steven.fittante@co.middlesex.nj.us

Grant Contact

Person responsible for all correspondence and information regarding grant concept, if different than primary contact

Last Name

fittante

First Name

steven

Title

Director, Middlesex County Department of Transportation

Office Phone

Please use (###) ###-#### format

(732) 745-4029

Extension

Office Fax

Please use (###) ###-#### format

(732) 296-0320

E-mail

steven.fittante@co.middlesex.nj.us

Is this your first grant request to Kessler Foundation?

Yes

If no, date last applied

Amount Awarded

(in dollars (\$xxx,xxx.xx))

Total Organizational Budget for the Current Fiscal Year

If you are a large organization, such as university or government, please only provide your departmental budget (in dollars - \$xxx,xxx.xx)

\$4,600,000

How many staff does your organization have?

Full-Time

90

Part-Time

If none, please enter "0"

2

Staff Members with Disabilities

How many staff members self-identify as having a disability? (If none, please enter "0")

1

Volunteers

If none, please enter "0"

0

Project Title

Name of your grant project

Accessible Transit Collector

Grant Request

(amount requested from Kessler Foundation in dollars - \$xxx,xxx.xx)

\$364,354.00

Year 1

(in dollars - \$xxx,xxx.xx)

\$178,428.00

Year 2

(in dollars \$xxx,xxx.xx)

\$185,926.00

Total Project Budget

(from all sources in dollars - \$xxx,xxx.xx)

\$1,308,000.00

Project Description

50 words or less

A feeder transit service designed to provide accessible, door to transit service enabling individuals living in locations outside of the NJ Access Link service area to connect with accessible NJ Transit and MCDOT local bus and shuttle services with travel training provided by the contracted NJTIP travel training organization.

Proposal Summary

Proposal Summary

Briefly summarize your grant concept (350 word limit). In your answer, be sure to include target population and project summary. Tell us 'What makes this project unique?' and 'Why Kessler Foundation should invest in this idea?'

The Accessible Transit Collector (ATC) would provide people with disabilities going to work and other destinations the last mile link to the services of NJ Transit and the Middlesex County Area Transit (MCAT) Community Shuttle program which provides accessible, deviated fixed route service targeting the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities.

The 12 peak bus shuttle operation represents 20% of the MCAT peak service but now carries over 60% of its annual 525,000 one-way passenger trips. One of the routes, the M3 Brunswick Square Mall-Old Bridge now carries over 200 passengers using mobility devices each month and in February 2011 will begin using new low-floor ramp buses to speed the boarding of passengers in order to retain its on-time performance.

The ATC will provide connector service targeted for persons living in the service area of the six shuttle routes. The service will focus on the mobility needs of people with disabilities who are outside the 3/4 mile band around NJ Transit local bus service which is limited in the south/central suburban region of the county (North Brunswick, South Brunswick, East Brunswick, Old Bridge, Monroe, Plainsboro, Cranbury, Spotswood, Helmetta and Jamesburg).

The service will be provided during the hours of operation of the MCAT shuttles (6:00 AM-7:00 PM, Monday through Saturday) and will provide feeder service to sheltered transfer points on NJ Transit or MCAT bus routes. The ACT program will also include travel training conducted by the New Jersey Travel Instruction Program, Inc. (NJTIP), a contractor that also provides travel instruction for the Access Link program. ACT drivers are MCAT CDL licensed drivers who are certified under the national Passenger Assistance and Safety and Security (PASS) training program. MCAT vehicles are wheelchair lift or ramp equipped with GPS and mobile data computers.

This project will be unique in designing its accessible service to feed into accessible transit and expand mobility to individuals unable to directly access transit or Access Link. The MCAT shuttles are designed to promote mobility independence for people with disabilities and ACT will expand the reach to individuals not living near accessible transit and complementary paratransit services.

Project Support

This section briefly introduces your organization's mission and history, in addition to providing a description of need, population, goals/objectives, collaborators, uniqueness and challenges for your grant concept.

Organization Background and History

Brief introduction of your organization (150 words)

The MCDOT a department of Middlesex County government that operates the MCAT program, an 80 mini-bus operation that provides direct and feeder services to NJ Transit bus and rail services. The MCAT program, originally known as Area Wide Transportation System (AWATS), has been operating advance reservation paratransit services for senior citizens and people with disabilities since 1975. With the creation of the MCDOT in 2004, the program has expanded its mission to provide provide deviated fixed route transit services open to the general public but targeting the needs of transportation disadvantaged persons.

The organization has been recognized for its innovations in human service transportation with the CTAA Urban Transportation System of the Year in 2007 and by USDOT as one of five model systems in the provision of human service transportation in 2008.

Organizational Mission

Statement of agency mission (50 words)

MCDOT mission is to:

1. Provide direct transportation targeting the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities.
2. Promote efficient service delivery by integrating its service with traditional bus and rail transit.
3. Work with regional planning agencies to develop services that address unmet mobility needs.

Purpose

Goals and objectives of concept (250 words)

The ACT program is designed to address the needs of people with disabilities who by virtue of their geographic location are unable to access traditional bus and rail transit, MCAT shuttles or Access Link paratransit services.

The service is designed to promote mobility independence by providing direct access to NJ Transit bus/rail, private bus services and MCAT shuttle routes operating in Middlesex County. Due to the number of accessible bus and shuttle routes, the facilitation of transfers to transit service will provide individuals with disabilities with the access to scheduled services and provide the last mile connections needed from/to the customer residence and/or to/from the customer destination.

This concept has been employed on a pilot basis with the NJ Transit Access Link program, providing feeder service for Access Link eligible customers to employment destinations that lie just outside of the Access Link service area. The principle of vehicle-to-vehicle transfer where the arriving vehicle will wait until the customer is safely on the transfer vehicle will be employed to promote the safety and security of the passenger where required.

Individuals will be responsible for the fares on all transit services but the feeder service will be provided without charge.

Statement of Need

The need or problem your organization works to address in this grant concept (200 word limit)

While the addition of the accessible MCAT shuttle program has enabled individuals with disabilities to access employment destinations, it, like the Access Link program has geographical limitations for persons not living in proximity to the deviated fixed route or who live outside the Access Link service area. Through the disability advocacy organizations in Middlesex County including the JFK Hospital Independent Living Center, the Middlesex County Department of Human Services and the Alliance for the Disabled in Action, we have identified individuals who continue to have difficulty taking jobs due to the lack of available transportation between scattered suburban origins and destinations.

ACT is designed to address this need and provide the practical support through classroom and practical trip practice travel training on being able to use bus and rail transit. This travel training will give individuals with disabilities the confidence to access a broader array of transit services coupled with the "last mile" service that will provide the link between residence, transit service and destination. It will do so in an efficient manner that taps the available subsidized transit resources rather than creating a duplicative purely door to door or curb to curb paratransit service.

Population Served

You must select 1-3 different populations that you plan to serve under this grant

People with Disabilities (Unspecified)
Physically Disabled
Veterans

Age Group

Teens (14-17)
Adults (22 - 64)
Young Adults (18-21)

Geographical Area Served

Select the state where individuals benefiting from this grant reside

New Jersey-Central

Collaborators

Briefly describe collaborative partners for this project and their role (200 words)

The ACT program will work with the NJ Travel Instruction Program (NJTIP) who is under contract with MCDOT to provide travel training to people with disabilities. NJTIP will provide travel training to persons who are interested in being able to access and use accessible transit services.

The Academy Express Bus Company, the contracted provider of local bus services for NJ Transit in Middlesex County will be a partner in providing transit services and ensuring that wheelchair accessibility is working on routes that will be used by ACT passengers.

The Middlesex County Office on Disabilities, the Alliance for the Disabled in Action and the JFK Hospital Rehabilitation Center will be working closely to identify individuals who are seeking employment and have specific transportation needs that have not been able to met through Access Link or traditional bus and rail transit without access services.

Project Description

Briefly describe your project, strategies, unique/innovative aspects of project, and key challenges. If the requested project funds do not cover the complete cost, please provide the strategy to secure full funding for project and/or other source of funds (500 words)

The project funding will be leveraged against the funding sources that support the MCAT shuttle program. These include the FTA Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program, the FTA Section 5317 New Freedom program (that is focused on the needs of people with disabilities who are unable to use other services) and the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Act (SCADRTAP). The FTA funds are matched by a 50% county match for operating funds and the County provides the funding for 90% of the vehicles in the MCAT fleet.

One of the key challenges will be ensuring that the scheduling of ACT service pickup and drop-off ensures a timely connection with the transit services. MCAT has used the vehicle-to-vehicle concept of waiting with a passenger, particularly for wheelchair users to ensure a safe and comfortable transfer. While the driver time involved costs a little more, the extra minutes are considerably less than if the feeder vehicle provided the entire trip from origin to destination. In this way, there is a cost-efficient use of subsidized transit.

Another challenge is ensuring that the customer is confident in using the service. This is where the MCAT customer service representative is a key figure in identifying whether the individual is a candidate for the travel training program. In the beginning, most of this customer identification will be done through the partner agencies who will identify prospective customers.

The proposed method of reimbursement will be based on either an average per trip cost or could be done by identifying the number of vehicle minutes involved on each one-way passenger trip multiplied by an agreed upon cost per hour. It is felt that in this way the funding will be on a pay as you go based on the amount of vehicle time that is actually required to provide the individual trip.

ACT would also enable users to access longer distance regional trips by interstate bus and rail services. This would require backup service for trips up until 6 PM which would be the latest time that feeder service would operate. MCAT dispatch operates between 5:45 AM to 6:00 PM, providing live operator access during these hours.

Attachments

Title	File Name
Detailed line item budget	ATC FY 2012-2013 Budget Proposal 1-17-11.doc

Files attached to this form may be deleted 120 days after submission.

Appendix F

Texas In-Kind Contribution Form

CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATION

In-Kind Contribution Form

Date of Contribution	Detailed description of Items or Service	Purpose of Contribution	Real or Approximate Value (\$) of Contribution	How was Value Determined? (i.e. Actual, appraisal, fair market value, independent cost estimate (ICE).	Name of person and Agency responsible for Value Determination?	Was contribution obtained with or supported by Federal funds?

Notes:

Name of contributing Organization/Agency/Business/Individual:

Address of Above Contractor:

Phone No.:

Printed name of Contributors Authorized Signee:

Title:

Signature of Authorized Signee:

Report Date: