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TRANSPORTATION MODELS

Description:

When striving to create livable communities, the lack of dependable, affordable public transportation is the most prominent need voiced by consumers, various types of providers, businesses, and workers. This need spans the urban, suburban, and rural segments in every state, and New York is no exception. Lack of transit options is often attributed to:

- Planning and land use policies that are tied to dependence on the individual automobile—which, in turn, reflects strong consumer preferences for the flexibility and privacy of personal auto use;
- The economics of service-provision, which often force providers to eliminate costly transportation services from strapped program budgets; and
- Traditional program funding streams, together with a cautious approach to collaboration among organizations, that inhibit the development of cost-saving, shared-transportation models.

Increasingly, however, changes in demographics, as well as shifts in public long-term care and housing policies, are increasing attention on mobility and transportation issues. New York has a growing frail elderly population, a large population of residents with disabilities, and a significant low-income population. The State's long-term care policies support and reinforce the ability of these individuals to live in conventional housing, to be integrated with the wider community, and to live as independently as possible for as long as possible. Housing policies promote homeownership among all population groups, as well as the integration of income groups. All these policies have significantly increased the need, and the demand, for affordable, accessible transportation—to jobs, training sites, medical appointments, adult and child day programs, schools, rehabilitation centers, stores, meal sites, services, social and faith-based events, and more. A look across the country finds that communities are creatively addressing this issue; for example:

Coordinated transportation models:

Historically, transit services have not been consistently available to all residents in a community and have not been coordinated among agencies and organizations. Both communities and individuals experience negative impacts when transportation alternatives are limited or non-existent; when rules and eligibility for multiple, uncoordinated transportation options differ significantly; or when transportation services go in and out of business. In particular, lack of coordination leads to infrequent, unreliable, or interrupted rides; long waits for service at either end of a

trip; and a dismal time for those who are frail or ill. Time spent in transit to and from work is extended. Low-income workers, such as home health aides, have great difficulty reaching patients in rural areas. Too often, school buses run near empty or sit idle in the garage, while older adults who could climb into a school bus are without rides—at the same time, buses and vans designated for older adults or people with disabilities inefficiently transport only a few riders to medical appointments or shopping destinations.

In response to the growing demand for services and increasing transportation costs, many communities are overcoming their aversion to cooperative ventures across jurisdictional and service lines, successfully implementing sustainable collaborative models in areas with vastly varied topography, climate, and population density. Communities find that with these models the outcome is a fully integrated transportation system that maximizes efficiency, avoids isolating specific populations, and eliminates duplication of services. Examples include:

- *Ride Connection* is a "one-call" coordinated human services transportation plan serving three counties in Oregon. This nonprofit organization coordinates access to transportation services for the clients of a coalition of 24 local service-provider agencies, resulting in more efficient, fewer duplicated services; better communication among partners; identification of service gaps; and improved strategic thinking in mobility awareness. This plan provides access to a full range of transportation options for elders and people with disabilities, fostering independent and productive lives, and strengthening community connections.
<http://www.rideconnection.org/aboutUs/index.htm>.
- *Human Services and Public Transit Coordination Plan* is a one-call center in the Lower Savannah region of South Carolina, which serves six counties, including both urban and rural areas. This model program took seven years to develop and has now been adopted statewide, with all ten of South Carolina's Councils of Government charged with transit coordination and planning responsibilities.
<http://www.lscog.org/common/content.asp?PAGE=367>.
www.olmsteadva.com/mfp/downloads/ExpandingAccess.ppt.
- *Rural public/private partnership model*: The Kenai Peninsula, one hour south of Anchorage, Alaska, has a population of 50,000 and an area spanning 25,600 square miles, 15,700 of which are land. The Kenai Peninsula Center for Independent Living (CIL) convened a group of providers that serve CIL clients, including senior centers, developmental disability service providers, mental health service providers, local cab companies, and representatives of healthy communities programs. "Everyone agreed that coordinated transportation would be helpful, but programs that already had vans were concerned that their clientele would not get the services they needed elsewhere . . . and were unwilling to lend their vans to a coordinated transportation effort." After much discussion, they created a successful, affordable, on-demand transportation model that addressed the concerns of individual agencies: CIL purchased a lift-equipped van through grant funds from the Alaska Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, which it then leased to a

cab company at no cost. In return, the cab company gave all CIL clients a cost break on their transportation. CIL sells coupons to consumers to use the van and 13 other vehicles owned by the cab company. The lift-equipped van is used solely for individuals needing that service. Everyone contributes in this model—the cab company charges \$5.00 for a \$7.00 ride; the rider pays \$2.00; CIL, through its DOT grant, covers the remaining \$3.00; CIL administers the coupon program free of charge; and the cab company is in charge of all driving, dispatching, maintenance and repair, and operations.

Contact: Joyanna Geisler, Executive Director, Kenai Peninsula CIL, PO Box 2474, Homer, AK, 99603, (907) 235-7911, email: ilc@xyz.net, <http://www.peninsulailc.org>.

Community-based transportation strategies:

- Supplemental Transportation Programs (STP) are community-based programs that are meant to complement existing transportation alternatives—and are typically developed to address the affordability, accessibility, and flexibility needs of older people and people with disabilities. Successful, and often innovative, STPs exist around the country, often as public/private partnerships. Examples include:
 - *Travel training program:* Travel training programs provide free assessment and instruction either to groups or on an individualized, one-on-one basis to seniors and people with disabilities to enable them to confidently and safely travel independently on conventional or paratransit (transportation service that supplements larger public transit systems by providing individualized rides without fixed routes or timetables) public transportation alternatives. Various organizations across the country offer these programs. One example is the Westchester, New York, *Travel Training Program*, sponsored by the County's Office for the Disabled and Department of Transportation, which provides one-on-one training for people with disabilities to use the Bee Line ParaTransit Service. Contact: (914) 995-2959, or email ammi@westchestergov.com. http://disabled.westchestergov.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2559&Itemid=4435.
 - *On-line reservation system:* In 2009, Metro Mobility, a paratransit program of the St. Paul, Minnesota, Metropolitan Council, is currently customer-testing its new online system powered by TRAFFIX, the same software used by professional transit planners. The system will significantly ease access to its paratransit system by allowing customers to make, change, or cancel their travel arrangements 24 hours a day, using their home computer. <http://www.metrocouncil.org/directions/transit/transit2007/MetroMobility.htm>. And, more information: <http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/MetroMobility/index.htm>.
 - ITNAmerica[®]: The only national nonprofit transportation network of community-based transit programs in the United States, the *Independent Transportation Network*[®] provides door-to-door, arm-through-arm ride service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for seniors. There are no

limitations on the consumer's purpose for the ride, the program uses both volunteer and paid drivers, and consumers use Personal Transportation Accounts from which fares are debited. Contact: 90 Bridge Street, Westbrook, Maine, 04902, (207) 857-9001, email: info@itnamerica.org, www.itnamerica.org.

- *Trip banking:* The principles underlying volunteer-service time banking can be applied to transportation. In time banking, an individual's hours of volunteer service are recorded, and he receives equivalent hours of free services when needed at a later date. In a trip banking program, volunteer drivers use their own vehicles to provide free ride services for others, accumulating owed hours to be redeemed when they, themselves, need transit at a future date. In another version, exchanges can be made in current, rather than future, time—drivers can exchange their volunteer driving services for alternative services that they may currently require. Versions of the trip banking concept are operated by ITNAmerica[®]: (1) the *Transportation Social Security*[™] program, where volunteer drivers earn mileage credits for their own future use, (2) volunteer drivers can give their mileage credits to low-income seniors through the *Road Scholarship Program*,[™] or (3) personal cars can be donated and exchanged for credits toward rides through the *CarTrade*[™] program.
<http://www.itnamerica.org>
- In an attempt to conserve fossil fuels and reduce environmental toxins, communities and agencies are increasingly employing inventive strategies to reduce reliance on personal automobiles, while addressing the mobility and transportation needs of employees and residents. Examples include:
 - *Guaranteed ride home:* Many people would give up the flexibility of driving their own cars to work in order to save money by sharing rides; but they do not do so because they fear they will be stranded with no way to get home if there is a family emergency, if they have to unexpectedly work late, or if their share-pool driver has to leave work early. To encourage car-pooling and use of mass transit, communities have instituted programs that guarantee a ride home, at no cost, in those emergency situations. For, example:
 - Capital District Transportation Authority, covering the counties in New York's Capital District—*Guaranteed Ride Home Program*:
<http://www.capitalmoves.org/guaranteed-ride-home/>.
 - New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)—*Guaranteed Ride Home Program*:
<http://www.mta.info/mnr/html/guaranteed/guaranteed.htm>.
 - Alameda County, California—*Guaranteed Ride Home Program*:
<http://www.grh.accma.ca.gov/>.
 - Arlington County, Virginia—*Guaranteed Ride Home*
<http://www.commuterpage.com/ridehome.htm>.
 - State of Georgia's Regional Transportation Authority—*Guaranteed Ride Home*:

http://www.xpressga.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=29&Itemid=53.

- *Commercial car-sharing:* Car-sharing programs are a very successful option for urban areas, where most residents use public transportation for daily activities, but would like the use of an automobile for occasional longer (distance and time) trips, or for those who need a car for only a one-hour or several-hour use. For easy access by consumers, the car-sharing company's cars are located at numerous locations throughout a service area; and reservation procedures, cost, and usage are much more flexible than traditional car rentals. This concept started in Switzerland in 1987 and has expanded into other foreign countries and the United States. According to Susan Shaheen, University of California (2009), there are 24 car-sharing companies in the United States, with almost 310,000 members sharing 6,093 cars. Flexcar (operating primarily on the west coast) and Zipcar (operating primarily on the east coast) are the two major car-sharing companies in the United States— see news article: Eric Pryne (July 12, 2005), "Car-sharing rival plans to head west," *The Seattle Times*:
http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2002374592_zipcar12m.html.

Benefits:

For older adults and individuals with disabilities:

- Transportation programs that increase accessible, available, and affordable travel options:
 - Allow residents to access needed services and amenities when they have lost the ability to drive independently.
 - Allow them to remain self-managing for longer periods of time.
 - Support their ability to remain living in their current homes and communities.
 - Increase their sense of self-confidence and competence.
 - Increase their ability to visit family and friends.
 - Reduce their vulnerability to isolation and depression.

For family caregivers (who provide the greatest amount of care for their elderly or impaired family members):

- Availability of affordable, safe, and accessible transportation for frail or impaired family members:
 - Significantly reduces the burdens of family caregivers.
 - Reduces caregivers' lost work days.
 - Has a positive impact on caregivers' workplace productivity.

For home care workers and other direct care workers:

- Workers' livelihood is substantially enhanced by available, affordable transportation options.
- More direct care workers will be available to families and individuals when transportation costs do not act as a barrier to workers' remaining in the health care field.

For communities:

- Collaborative models bring community-wide investment in the system's success, continual attention to service improvement, and the creativity and innovative thinking of multiple partners.
- Coordinated transportation systems save public service dollars.
- Alternative, accessible, available, affordable transportation options are a critical component of a "livable community," encouraging residents to remain living in those communities instead of moving elsewhere.
- Strategies that increase the use of public mass transit in place of personal automobiles have a positive impact on the health of community residents, on the environment, and on budgets associated with environmental decline.

Impediments or barriers to development or implementation:

- The most critical barrier to creating a coordinated transportation program is the traditional "silo mentality" of many public and private enterprises, which find it extremely difficult to overcome fears that they will invest more into a program than they will receive, that they will lose control over transportation services for their clientele, and that *their* clients will not receive their fair share of services.
- Regardless of the type of transportation program, costs are high for vehicles, drivers, fuel, insurance, upkeep, and repair, often making transportation services the first to be cut in times of fiscal constraint.
- Cost and availability of liability insurance has an impact on the use of volunteers in a transportation program.
- Service program funding streams often do not allow program dollars to be spent outside of the program's specific framework or will not allow expenditures that involve a for-profit partner, thereby eliminating consideration of a collaborative program or a public/private partnership.
- Various transportation alternatives/programs require on-going attention to marketing and education in order to address the concerns and fears of some elderly people and people with disabilities; for example:
 - Fear of riding with other people who are unknown;
 - Reluctance to ride with an unknown driver;
 - Loss of privacy and the personal control that is inherent in the use of one's own personal car;
 - Too many questions or too much information is required before joining a program or plan;
 - Unsure of how to use a trip calendar— which depresses completion of the sign-up process;
 - Lack of an actual person to walk a person through the registration process or the trip schedules;

- Unfamiliarity with use of the Internet for program sign-up, or do not have a computer;
- On-line programs that are not user-friendly;
- Programs may require “meeting up” at a mutually agreed upon place—but unable to find parking spots;
- Curbside pickup is not sufficient for many frail or impaired individuals.

Resource—examples:

- *Ride Connection*, a one-call coordinated human services transportation plan serving the Tri-County area of Washington, Multnomah and Clackamas Counties in Oregon, providing a full range of options for older people and people with disabilities. Components include centralized information and referral, Travel Training, door-to-door demand response, community shuttles, shared vehicle and retired vehicle program, and taxi vouchers. The key component is the Ride Connection Service Center—the primary information and referral hub, which coordinates the transportation services of multiple programs and providers, including private shuttles and public transit (public bus, light rail, street car, and aerial tram), and provides a reliable and consistent customer service experience through three Travel Navigators and one Scheduler.
<http://www.rideconnection.org>; on the main menu, choose "About Us."
Contact: Cora Lee Potter, Service Center Supervisor, Ride Connection, 3030 SW Moody Avenue, Suite 230, Portland, Oregon, 97201;
email: cpotter@rideconnection.org.
- *Transportation Management Association*, a one-call center in the Lower Savannah Region of South Carolina, comprising six counties— one sliver of one large urban county and the rest is very rural. The Lower Savannah Council of Government has the lead on this coordination effort, and available transit is provided largely by multiple human service agencies. The program took seven years to develop and has been adopted statewide, with all ten of South Carolina's Councils of Government being charged with transit coordination and planning responsibilities. Excellent power point presentation:
www.olmsteadva.com/mfp/downloads/ExpandingAccess.ppt.
For information: Lynnda Bassham, Director, Human Services, Lower Savannah Council of Governments, PO Box 850, Aiken, SC, 29802; e-mail:
lbassham@lscog.org.
- Supplemental Transportation Programs (STP) are community-based programs for older people and people with disabilities that complement existing transportation alternatives. Many exist around the country. A good resource for locating information on successful programs, as well as several reports on STPs and innovative transportation models across America, is the STP Exchange, a Web Site of the Beverly Foundation:
<http://www.stpexchange.org/whoweare.htm>.
<http://www.stpexchange.org/reports.htm>.

- More successful models include:
 - *MetroPool*: Connecticut and New York Departments of Transportation. Provides free commuter services to employers and commuters. Mission is to manage transportation-demand of people, improving workforce effectiveness, economic wellbeing, and quality of life. Contact: 1-800-346-3743; info@metropool.com; www.metropool.com.
 - Merrimack Valley, MA: A transportation program that includes a medical advocate. See Beverly Foundation website: www.beverlyfoundation.org.
 - Austin, TX: Faith in Action Caregivers. According to the Beverly Foundation, this program does more with less money than any other organization we fund—and cross jurisdictional boundaries": Contact: (512) 250-5021; www.faithinactioncaregivers.org.
 - Sanford, ME: York County Community Action Corporation. Paratransit with volunteer drivers who supplement transportation, taking seniors beyond city, county, and state boundaries: www.YCCAC.org.
 - Columbia, MD: *Neighbor Ride, Inc.*—believes volunteers are critical for an acceptable and sustainable transportation program: Contact: Robert Martin, President, 8950 Route 108, Columbia, MD, 21045; (410) 884-7433; www.neighborride.org.
 - *Travel Training Course*: Project Action, Easter Seals: http://projectaction.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ESPA_travel_training&esLocation=tc.

Resource—written and web:

- *Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities*, 49 U.S.C. Section 5310, provides formula funding to States to help private nonprofit groups meet the transportation needs of older people and persons with disabilities in situations where transportation service is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meet the needs of these populations. Funding is based on each State's share of these population groups. United States Department of Transportation: http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_3556.html.
- New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC), chaired by the State Department of Motor Vehicles, was created under the National Highway Safety Program. The New York GTSC includes 12 state agencies whose missions relate to transportation; it awards federal highway safety grant funds to local, state, and not-for-profit agencies for projects to improve highway safety and reduce deaths and serious injuries due to crashes. <http://www.nysgtsc.state.ny.us/overview.htm>.
- Philip LePore (2001), *When You Are Concerned: A Handbook for Families, Friends and Caregivers Worried About the Safety of an Aging Driver*, reprinted 2008. Albany, New York: New York State Office for the Aging. Available on-line at: <http://www.aging.ny.gov/>.
- "Models of Rural Transportation for People with Disabilities" (2007), Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities, The University of

Montana Rural Institute. Brief descriptions of types of public transportation models, agency-focused models, cooperative models, volunteer and voucher models, public/private partnerships, and a list of resources.

<http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/Trn/models.htm>.

- Kelly Greene (January 12, 2006), "Coaxing Seniors Out From Behind the Wheel: As Driving Population Ages, Growing Number of Programs Offer Incentives—and a Lift," *The Wall Street Journal*. Brief descriptions of several transportation programs for older people, including Web links to each.
<http://thetransitcoalition.us/NewsPDF/TTC20060112a.pdf>.
- Beverly Foundation, *Volunteer Driver TurnKey Kit*, three volumes. A free, practical, "how to" technical assistance tool for planning, implementing, and evaluating economical, convenient, and easy-to-use transportation services for older people who are unable to use standard public transit options.
<http://www.stpexchange.org/turnkey.htm>.
- *United We Ride*, a program of the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility, which was established in 2004 and chaired by the Secretary of Transportation. The Council coordinates 62 different Federal transportation programs across nine Federal departments, providing coordination grants to States, and providing States and local agencies with technical assistance, resources, and a transportation-coordination and planning self-assessment tool. http://www.unitedweride.gov/1_72_ENG_HTML.htm.
- The Beverly Foundation, an organization devoted to improving transportation, with multiple links to successful transportation initiatives throughout America—where new ideas and options are fostered to enhance mobility and transportation for today's and tomorrow's older population. Provides useful cost comparisons, promotes the five A's of Senior Friendliness: availability, accessibility, acceptability, adaptability, affordability. Contact: Helen Kirshner, PhD, Executive Director, (505) 322-0620. <http://beverlyfoundation.org/>.
- Steve Brown (2002), "Innovative Rural Transportation: Leasing Vans to Cab Companies" (describes the Kenai Peninsula, Alaska, Center for Independent Living's coordinated transportation program), *Readings in Independent Living*, Institute on Disability Culture, Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawaii: http://www.bcm.edu/ilru/html/publications/readings_in_IL/vans.html.
- The National Center on Senior Transportation: extensive information and resources on transportation programs for older people; offers training and technical assistance, as well as publishes tools, to help transportation providers increase and improve services for older adults.
http://seniortransportation.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=NCST2_transit.
- Good power point presentation providing information, examples, and resources: For easiest access, use an Internet search engine and type in: "Community

Coordination of Transportation Services: Local Solutions: Progress Report from 1988 to 2003." Fran Carlin Rogers (March 27, 2008), presentation, National Council on Aging and American Society on Aging conference.

- American Public Transportation Association (APTA): <http://www.apta.com/>.
- California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalAct), representing 300 small, rural, and specialized transportation providers statewide: www.calact.org.
- AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety: www.aaafoundations.org.