



MEETING SUMMARY

TAC Meeting #1 – Mobility in Motion: Update of Delaware’s Coordinated Plan

Tuesday, February 13th, 2019
DART Administration Building, Dover, DE

University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration (IPA) Project Team:

Julia O’Hanlon, Marcia Scott, Danielle Littman, Sarah Franzini

Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC) Project Team: Marcella Brainard, Cathy Smith

List of Attendees:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Alanna Drake	Nemours
Ana Lopez	Delaware Commission on Veterans’ Affairs (DCVA)
Erin Weaver	Division for the Visually Impaired
Jackie Sullivan	Greater Lewes Community Village
Joy Cottogin	Salisbury-Wicomico MPO
Owen Robatino	New Castle County Land Use
Tigist Zegeye	Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)
Todd Webb	Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) Office of Civil Rights, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Tyler Berl	Housing Alliance Delaware
Yvonne Willey	La Esperanza

Summary of Proceedings:

I. Welcome and Introductions

Julia O’Hanlon introduced the IPA team and asked participants to introduce themselves and their respective organizations. Julia explained that the purpose of the meeting is to provide updates from DTC and share IPA’s research to date and gather input on steps forward to update Delaware’s statewide coordinated plan. Needs for the updated coordinated plan include:

- Providing a framework to distribute formula funding under the FTA’s Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program (49 USC, §5310).
- Creating an action framework to solve transportation barriers.
- Informing efforts to coordinate services and/or share resources.
- Promoting customer-centered mobility strategies.
- Supporting innovative projects/programs.

II. Presentations on DART Overview and Goals and Mobility in Motion Research (See PowerPoint presentation for details)

DTC's Cathy Smith - summarized the benefits of public transportation; an overview of DART First State services; ridership metrics, 2018 accomplishments; federal requirements driving the need to update Delaware's Coordinated Public Transit--Human Services Transportation Plan (i.e., coordinated plan); and role of the TAC. This presentation discussed DART's rebranding and refocusing as a customer-driven organization. DART reaches all three counties, it has statewide 64 routes, including a beach bus service and ADA paratransit services. DART has added numerous additional routes and newly launched its free DART Transit App, which features bus stop locations, bus routes, real-time information and updates, and the new mobile fare payment option. DTC's Mobility in Motion initiatives align with DTC's strategic plan objectives to grow ridership, to identify gaps in services, increase community conversations, and leverage resources.

IPA's Julia O'Hanlon - presented an overview of IPA's research to date. During Phase I in 2016, IPA focused on identifying transportation-disadvantaged populations in Delaware, assessing current initiatives and practices, and researching both national and Delaware-specific best practices to identify successful initiatives to enhance coordination of human-services transportation, foster demand-management strategies to respond to needs of transportation-disadvantaged individuals, and reflect changes in federal policies. Stakeholder outreach, via county workshops and a statewide forum in October 2016, helped understand specialized transportation issues in Delaware and strategies to address needs and gaps. Electronic polling of statewide forum participants selected the following top three innovative activities to prioritize within an updated Delaware statewide action plan: 1) feeders services to fixed-route transit, 2) a one-stop call center, and 3) intelligent transportation technology. IPA summarized research and prepared a Phase I report in June 2017. An excerpt of the report was provided to TAC members and the full report can be viewed electronically at <https://goo.gl/qR8v2W>. A top recommendation is to update the statewide coordinated plan, which requires a participatory planning process and the input of TAC members.

IPA's Marcia Scott - discussed the Public Outreach and Engagement Plan that was published by IPA in December 2017 and subsequently approved by DTC. The year-long process actually began in October 2017, with targeted outreach to older adults and persons with disabilities and continued through early October 2018 with high-touch (in-person), high-tech (web-based and electronic), and research-based methods. Strategies were initiated with support from DTC, DelDOT, and RideShare Delaware--including tabling at statewide events, branding, social media engagement, news releases, and electronic outreach via the www.MobilityDE.org website (with home webpage banners that provide links to the website). Three surveys were designed to understand transportation needs, barriers, and gaps from the perspectives of older adults, human-services transportation providers, and the general public. Marcia reported on outcomes of the "snapshot surveys" of senior center members that may not use mobile devices, the electronic survey of 5310 transportation providers, and a statewide needs assessment survey electronically available to all Delawareans (via both an English and Spanish version). Themes from three surveys indicates that transportation barriers include non-emergency medical trips, essential shopping trips (groceries, drug store), and social outings or entertainment. Other themes included

difficulties with first- and last-mile transit connectivity as well as finding information about routes and updates. Marcia discussed the map-based crowdsourcing tools and video tutorials that IPA has developed. These crowdsourcing tools, available at www.MobilityDE.org, are unique to Delaware and allow transit riders to geographically pinpoint eight accessibility issues they may experience walking, biking, or rolling to a DART First State transit hub or stop.

Future TAC logistics were discussed. Meetings will take place every other month for six to eight months and include facilitated activities to address the themes presented. The goal is to use the work produced in TAC meetings to update the statewide coordinated plan to address identified needs of transportation-disadvantaged Delawareans, devise strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritize strategies for funding and implementation.

III. Facilitated Group Discussion

The meeting opened up to questions, comments and discussion among TAC members. Several topics were discussed, as listed below:

1. Not having adequate access to public transportation is an issue that affects Delawareans of all income levels, but what about within certain age groups, or specific locations/counties?
2. Tyler Berl noted the high rate of missed non-emergency medical appointments. Has the research team contacted Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) (including those that contract to deliver Medicaid program health care services), hospitals or long-term care providers to bring them to the table?
 - Yes. IPA has reached out to Nemours, Christiana Care, La Red, Westside Health, and Veterans Administration Medical Center representatives.
 - IPA is also in contact with the Camden Coalition (NJ) of Healthcare Providers that is advocating to improve non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) and address ongoing issues with LogistiCare, the state's sole provider of NEMT under Medicaid.
 - It was suggested that IPA reach out to the Sussex County Health Coalition to gain perspectives on addressing transportation barriers to medical care and NEMT issues under Medicaid.
3. Jackie Sullivan commented on how barriers to social outings are a quality of life issue. Not being able to attend social outings makes it difficult to build any type of social network that could assist older adults in getting to and from medical appointments. Transportation and access to medical care intertwined issues for older adults. In particular, socially isolated older adults that have age-related disabilities or medical issues often call 911 first instead of a friend or family member. There is growing evidence from the public health sector that demonstrates that health and wellness of older adults intersects with both social and transportation needs. Multi-agency solutions are needed that go beyond providing public transportation by transit agencies like DTC. Ideas discussed include:
 - Developing land use regulations that require developers to support transportation solutions such as transit-oriented development and investments to improve transportation infrastructure improvements (e.g., costly transit shelters)

- Forming partnerships with businesses to support commuter transportation instead of DART. Businesses in resort areas often struggle to secure employees, living in low-cost rural areas not well served by transit, because they cannot get them to or from work. Sussex County businesses could be very open to this.
 - Organizations to contact include Sussex Economic Development Action Committee (SEDAC), Department of Labor, state/local chambers, and other business coalitions.
- Encouraging local governments to adopt zoning regulations that allow mixed-use development (residential and commercial) that takes traffic off the road, are walkable, and enable mobility-impaired people to be independent, self sufficient, and less reliant on specialized transportation services.
- 4. Delaware is one of few states where public transportation is a state-level responsibility instead of a local-level service. Discussion focused on: 1) Why is this a good thing? 2) What is the local government's responsibility for ensuring accessibility to a public transit location? 3) There is a need to address disconnects between local land-use planning and state-level transportation planning and investments.
 - DelDOT is responsible the bulk of costs (90 %) of costs of building, improving, and maintaining the state's transportation infrastructure on state-maintained roadways but does not maintain local roadways or sidewalks. While Delaware legislators receive financial allocations for maintenance of local roads/sidewalks (i.e., Community Transportation Funds), the level of support does not meet the growing need for local transportation infrastructure improvements.
- 5. How do we increase knowledge and use of crowdsourcing tools geared for transit riders and the DART Transit App? Are they accessible to low-income individuals who may not have smartphones? Are they available in Spanish and Haitian Creole? Is there free Wi-Fi on busses?
 - It was suggested that bus drivers distribute information on the crowdsourcing tools. Yvonne Willey proposed that a "tour" of how to use the bus system be offered to non-English speaking individuals (in targeted locations like Georgetown) or other transportation-disadvantaged populations (i.e., seniors) to make it less intimidating.
 - While low-income individuals may not own computers, they are actually very likely to have smartphones or mobile devices. Wi-Fi on busses could also help reduce the stigma of riding the bus and possibly increase the appeal for low-income individuals.
 - The crowdsourcing tools are not currently available in Spanish or Haitian Creole. However, the point was made that the Transportation Needs Assessment Survey was offered in Spanish, but there were no respondents to that survey.
- 6. DelDOT currently finances that bulk of transportation network investments in Delaware. A fund under one state commission that addresses specifically these issues (the intersection of health, wellness, economic security, and transportation) of Delawareans instead of DelDOT could be useful in generating and targeting funds to address needs of transportation-disadvantaged populations. It was suggested that eventually a statewide commission to address transit and mobility issues over time might be an important consideration for DTC.
- 7. What is the main focus of the TAC?

- To address the needs of transportation-disadvantaged individuals¹ in the state of Delaware. The focus is on developing strategies and priorities address transportation needs, gaps, and barriers to mobility by transportation-disadvantaged individuals. Coordination of special-needs transportation involves multiple organizations, state agencies, and stakeholders working together to gain economies of scale, eliminate duplication, expand and/or improve the quality of service in order to better address the needs of transportation-disadvantaged populations in Delaware.
 - The June 2017 Phase I report (p. 93) notes that: “[An updated] coordinated plan for Delaware should (1) provide a framework to improve coordination among transportation service providers and human-services agencies to enhance transportation services for all transportation-disadvantaged populations, (2) meet federal requirements for a “locally developed, coordinated human-services transportation plan,” and (3) guide DTC’s grant process, eligibility requirements, and the administration of its Section 5310 program. Based on high-priority projects/programs identified in a coordinated plan[ning process], Section 5310 funding can now be directed to assist with costs for innovative mobility management activities, the purchase of capital equipment, and operations to meet the mobility needs of all transportation-disadvantaged populations.”
 - The TAC will need to develop goals and prioritize strategies that can impact identified transportation needs, gaps, and barriers to mobility by transportation-disadvantaged individuals. There could be different priorities based on geographic location and/or target population.
8. It was suggested that additional outreach be conducted to transit riders, neighborhood groups in transit-rich communities, health care organizations, and business leaders to offer some beneficial voices at future TAC meetings.

IV. Wrap-Up and Path Forward

- Group agreed that bimonthly meetings should proceed on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. at the DART Administration Building in Dover.
- It was requested that participants advise Julia O’Hanlon (jusmith@udel.edu) or Marcia Scott (msscott@udel.edu) if there are any individuals (names/organization represented/email address) that should be invited to serve as members of the TAC.
- The TAC Meeting 1 summary and information for future TAC meetings will be publicly available at www.MobilityDE.org.

¹ While there is not a universal definition, transportation-disadvantaged populations include but are not limited to older adults, persons with disabilities, veterans, non-drivers, households lacking cars, and low-income individuals.