Building Better Access with Rural Transit Partners
Site Visit Charleston West Virginia
August 20, 2018
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Agenda

Meeting purpose
- Identify practical strategies to help rural communities assess transportation resources and opportunities to assist access to mental health treatment and personal maintenance and development.

Strategies
- Intercity Bus
- Coordinated Planning
- Rural Vanpool strategies
- Highly Rural Veteran’s Shuttle
- AmeriCorps Mentoring
- Transit Technology

Introductions and Background
Welcome & Introductions

- Overview of USDA efforts to help rural communities address the opioid epidemic
- USDA Rural Development resources to help rural communities
  - Betty-Ann Bryce, Senior Policy Advisor, USDA, Rural Development
  - Kris Warner, USDA State Director, West Virginia

Transportation Resources Overview Federal & State

- Danielle Nelson, Program Manager, USDOT, Rural & Targeted Programs
- Robin Phillips, Executive Director, National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)
- Bill Robinson, Director, West Virginia DOT Division of Public Transit
- Cindy Fish, Program Manager, West Virginia DOT Division of Public Transit

National RTAP

- The NRTAP vision is for
  - safe,
  - secure,
  - compliant,
  - efficient and effective
- rural and tribal transit that
- reflects the needs and values of communities nationally.
- Through the NRTAP Review Board, state RTAP manager and operator forums, rural and tribal operators can share interests and needs, as well as guide development of products and services to achieve our vision.
How can we help you?

Find your community from a different perspective
• Partnerships to plan and build capacity
• coordinated planning process to make your needs visible
• US Transit Map to see where there is transit and people to help you
• INTD, database to see at the state, county or city level what is happening with fixed route or demand response services
• GTFS Analyzer: add census data and population segments at the block level to a GIS layer of local and intercity transit stops
• Federal Transit Administration grant programs can fund coordinated services, planning, sidewalk and stop enhancements, can use your money or in-kind help as match

Use National RTAP Resources to:

If you are in a community under 50K we are available to help you connect with, create or update information and resources around rural transit.
• Answer your questions about rural transit planning, operations, management, or funding
• Incorporate technology into services or transit system
• Learn about the latest developments in rural transit, including funding opportunities and coordination initiatives
• Get expert advice from experienced professionals
• Hear knowledgeable speakers without leaving the office

USDA Workshop: Transportation’s Role in Addressing the Opioid Crisis

SEAN K. OISWALD, SENIOR ASSOCIATE
RLS & ASSOCIATES, INC.
CONSULTANT FOR WVDOT
Treatment Barriers

- Barriers that exist in all geographical areas are often exacerbated in rural areas
  - Limited availability
  - Time conflicts
  - Social Stigma
  - Transportation
    - Not only a barrier to accessing treatment...
    - Continuing impact on treatment retention and completion

Treatment Delivery Paradox

- Positive Treatment Strategies Can Exacerbate Barriers
  - Frequent/daily clinic visits
  - Observed dosing/limited take-home doses

- This paradox significantly increases barriers in rural areas

Good Intentions / Bad Outcomes

- Recognizing the transportation barrier, providers implement mobility solutions ➞ ...
- Treatment providers contract with transportation vendors ➞ ...
- Patients encounter problems with drivers and dispatchers
  - Driver/Dispatchers not understanding issues impacting people with SUD/Mental health conditions
  - Insensitivity related to language, labels, etc.
  - Increased shame and stigma on the patient
Immediate Challenges Faced by Transportation Vendors

- “No Show” policy, consequences, & impact
- Driver’s role in medical issues occurring on board vehicle
  - Driver’s ability to accurately communicate with First Responders
- How to communicate and address agitated passengers who may be impaired by drugs/alcohol

Action Opportunity

- Recognizing the transportation barrier, providers implement mobility solutions
- Treatment providers contract with transportation vendors

- Patients encounter problems with drivers and dispatchers
  - Driver/Dispatchers not understanding issues impacting people with SUD/Mental health conditions
  - Insensitivity related to language, labels, etc.
  - Increased shame and stigma on the patient

Driver/Dispatcher Sensitivity Training

- Similar training already mandated addressing physical/developmental disabilities
- Can we expand the scope to include sensitivity training addressing individuals experiencing substance use and/or mental health issues?
- YES

Longer-Term Solutions

- WV Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plans
  - Beginning in November 2018
  - Get the RIGHT people to the table
  - Identify unmet transportation needs
  - Provide strategies for meeting needs
  - Prioritize funding sources and implementation strategies
 Longer-Term Solutions

- WV Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plans
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  - Identify unmet transportation needs
  - Provide strategies for meeting needs
  - Prioritize funding sources and implementation strategies

 Longer-Term Solutions (cont.)

- WV Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plans (cont.)
  - We can ensure the unmet need of transportation to substance use / mental health treatment facilities is highlighted in these future planning efforts

- Outreach to Alternative funding sources
  - FTA's Access & Mobility Grants, Health Foundations, Local Hospitals

Contact Information

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Issues and Priorities

A National Network of Services

Rural and Urban
What is out there: US Transit Map

Appalachian Access

Finding Transit and Transportation

- There are 2 kinds of transit
  - Fixed Route
  - Demand Response

- Transit Programs are in
  - Triple A’s, CAPS
  - Local Government
  - Stand alone Municipal Corporations

- They serve
  - General Public
  - Programs

- You find them
  - On Google Maps
  - On the internet
  - By calling your State DOT
Access to Jobs

How are people getting around?

West Virginia Census Analysis: Journey to Work, Employment, Poverty

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<tr>
<th>Home Transportation</th>
<th>Boone</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>% WV***</th>
<th>BIV</th>
<th>Boone</th>
<th>% WV***</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive Alone</td>
<td>602,679</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
<td>84.7%</td>
<td>80.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multimodal</td>
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<td>18.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2800*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carpool</td>
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<td>9.5%</td>
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<td>11.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>21,304</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1%</td>
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<td>1.9%</td>
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<td>Poverty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
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<td>Under 18</td>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked at home</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These are not actual responses but extrapolation from % and population
** Commuting to work 16+
*** Percent of Population in the workforce

Where are they going?
How do I find transit: Steps 1 and 2

In a rural area you may not see a bus stop but that is not the first step:

1. Google the name of the location you are working with and the word "transit" in one search
   a) Try it with the county name if nothing comes up
   b) If you still get nothing out the state DOT transit section and ask about services in the area, potentially demand response or social services

2. If there is transit in the area talk to them
   a) Ask whether they have a transit plan, get a copy, it may just be a project list
   b) If they receive FTA 5310 they have a coordinated human service and transportation plan

How do I find transit: Steps 3 and 4

3. Go to Google Transit and put in a trip between your project location and the nearest grocery store
   a) Does anything come up?
   b) If you don’t get anything go to the closest larger community and propose a trip to the next larger city. This will surface any proximate intercity services with rail or bus.

4. Meet with them to talk about the transportation issues your program and clients are facing.
   a) Have you surveyed your clients to identify what their transportation needs are for your program and other areas in their life?
   b) Ask the transit program how you can work with them to identify costs for meeting those needs and strategies for meeting those needs.
How do I find transit: Step 5

5. Define a project that would meet the needs of your clients
   a) Do they want to work with you? They may not have any resources or may be maxing out their existing resources. They may have ideas for strategies that build on existing resources.
   b) What resources can you bring to the table to help develop the services for your clients?

How do I find transit: Step 6

5. What is the project funding process.
   a) Ask them to describe the process. Ask the state the same question. There are other resources for planning and projects at the state level.
   b) State Transit receives an annual appropriation. The state allocates and subgrants the money differently in every state. The state spending plan is a 4-year horizon. A project must be in A PLAN to be funded.
   c) You can amend plans, or sometimes descriptions are so vague you can be added into the detail with a minimum of work.

How do I find transit: Steps 7 and Success

7. Define a project that would meet the needs of your clients
   a) Do they want to work with you? They may not have any resources or may be maxing out their existing resources. What resources can you bring to the table to help develop the services for your clients?

8. What is the project funding process?
   a) Ask them to describe the process. Ask the state the same question. FTA grants support planning and projects at the state level.
   b) State Transit receives an annual appropriation from FTA. The state allocates and subgrants the money differently in every state. The state spending plan is a 4-year horizon. A project must be in A PLAN to be funded.
   c) You can amend plans, or sometimes descriptions are so vague your project may fit into the detail with a minimum of work.
Strategies: Regional Connector

- George Levitsky, General Manager, Fairmont-Marion County Transit
- Paula Smith, Executive Director, TriRiver Transit

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla

Kayak Public Transit
Community Connections of NE Oregon

### Wallowa County
- Demand response transit
- Work shuttle
- 4 days a week connectivity
- Summer circulator to State Park
- Medicaid transportation
- Veterans Shuttle

### Union County
- Fixed Route service
- Intercity and Regional Transit Hub
- Medicaid transportation
- Pilot service and Cost Benefit for medical trips

### Baker County
- Devised Fixed
- Regional commuter connector
- Shopper Shuttle to Halfway 1x per week
- Medicaid transportation
- Veterans transportation
- Shared Strategies
- Coordinated planning
- Shared Tech platform
- Shared Admin through the triple A

### Transportation Strategies and tools to help:
- Rural Van Pool Strategies and Employment Transportation
- Veterans Transportation
- Interactive Mentoring Discussion
- Transit Technology
  - Robin Phillips, Executive Director, National RTAP

### Rural Van Pool Strategies and Employment Transportation
- Eastern Washington Columbia County many workers have to travel 60+ miles each way for work
- Transit Agencies in Washington state manage the Commute Trip Reduction Program
  - Vanpools and Ride Sharing
  - Employer support and development
  - Park and Ride
- State funds are used for expansion vans. FTA §5311 funds are eligible for vehicle purchase or lease
- Enterprise creates pop-up systems for rural construction
Veterans Transportation

- In highly rural areas counties were eligible for $45K grants to move vets to VA medical centers.
- In one county half the county needed to go 170 miles southeast and in the northern half of the county 150 miles north. Both crossed state lines
- Strategy:
  - once a week shuttle service to Northern VA location and a connector to the intercity service 70 miles south
  - Veterans ride free and anyone else pays a transportation co-pay

Interactive Mentoring Discussion

- Mentoring is happening in many contexts and it is effective for connecting community to individuals and assisting transition, engagement and personal habit of success
  - At risk children for academic achievement: reading skills in schools and libraries
  - At risk teenagers to prepare for college: AmeriCorr volunteers work with high schools to prepare for college and first generation college students to navigate the college experience
  - Boone County: Drug court, faith based volunteer mentors to assist transition and engagement with community and drug free life
  - Opportunity to integrate transportation into mentoring issues

Transit Technology

- Smartphones and computers are yellow pages, bus stops, and bulletin boards in the 21st Century
  - Find transportation, transit itineraries, services and stop locations: Google maps
  - See real time information on where your bus is
  - Call for an Uber/Lyft clinic in Plymouth. It needed gap filling transportation so people in treatment could reliably get to treatment. They reached out to Uber and have set up a program to get free clients to treatment
  - Volunteer drivers from Senior programs, faith-based programs can work with the transit operators to fill vehicles. Transit already has the staff and the software to manage trips.
Next Steps

What’s Next?

• Specific assistance with your priority areas
  – Assess transportation access to treatment, jobs, school, food
  – Work with Philanthropic, health, and transportation stakeholders to build a shared and comprehensive vision and strategy

• Bringing transportation to the table
  – Sign up to participate in your state or local transportation needs assessment (§ 3210 and 5311)
  – Work with transit professionals to add services that meet community needs and build on existing resources

• Sharing long and short term goals to understand shared interests more specifically.
  – Share data so you can see spatial relationships
  – See immediate needs and build toward sustainability

National RTAP Technical Assistance Conference

Rural Transit and Intercity Bus Transportation Conference
Beavercreek Resort
Breckenridge September 29- October 2  2018
www.RTTC.org

National RTAP 4th Rural and Tribal Transit Technical Assistance Conference
Portland, Oregon September 16-18 2019

Save The Date!!!
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