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First Quarter 2024 Edition

eNEWSLETTER

NEED TRAINING?

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The Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) was initiated in 1986 by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to provide resources, training and technical assistance to rural transit providers. The Missouri RTAP Center is located at Missouri University of Science and Technology (Missouri S&T) in Rolla. Since April 2012, Missouri S&T has been contracted by MoDOT to manage the RTAP program.



National RTAP is a program of the Federal Transit Administration dedicated to creating rural transit solutions through technical assistance, partner collaboration and FREE training.

LETTER FROM THE MANAGER



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DEAR TRANSIT FRIENDS,

2024 is certainly flying by! I can't believe it's already spring. Back in January, I met with some of the Southeast Missouri transit agencies at a meeting hosted by SMTS. The gathering allowed MoDOT staff and me the opportunity to share updates on ongoing projects and hear from the agencies on their training and reporting needs. A few of the training requests included dealing with difficult passengers (conflict resolution) and dispatcher preparation. In addition, several of the agencies are interested in developing a database for dispatchers to assist with scheduling and reporting. National RTAP has a list of several vendors that offer General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) services (see the list below). As stated on www.gtfs.org, the GTFS is an [Open Standard](#) used to distribute relevant information about transit systems to riders where public transit agencies publish their transit data in a format easily consumed by a wide variety of software applications. GTFS consists of two main parts: GTFS Schedule and GTFS Realtime. GTFS Schedule is presented in simple text files and contains information about routes, schedules, fares, and geographic transit details.

In related news, the development of the RTAP data repository is ongoing. It will be part of our new Missouri Local Training & Resource Center learning management system (LMS) with an integrated database. This new system will house data for Missouri transit agencies in a variety of categories, including vehicles, passengers, funding, finance, and other agency information. Reporting on vehicles will track years in service, condition, mileage, and other state of good repair (SCR) analysis data while passenger statistics will focus on yearly volumes, the origin and destination of trips, pick up and drop off times, the purpose, and even payment methods. The reporting will follow NTTD categories.

If you have any upcoming events you would like RTAP to participate, please let me know. Please feel free to contact me at pickerillh@mst.edu or by phone at 573-341-7637 with any questions, comments, or suggestion. The entire Missouri RTAP staff wish you a wonderful spring and look forward to seeing you all soon.

Kind regards,

Heath Pickerill,
Missouri RTAP Manager

List of vendors offering GTFS services below and on this public [online spreadsheet](#).

- [AddTransit](#)
- [Arcadis/IBI Group](#)
- [GMV Syncromatics](#)
- [Giro](#)
- [Integrated Transport Planning Ltd](#)
- [Mecatran](#)
- [Mobilibus](#)
- [Moovit](#)
- [Optibus/Trillium Solutions](#)

- [Passio Technologies](#)
- [Radiola](#)
- [Transnovation Inc](#)
- [TransLoc](#)
- [Trapeze Group](#)
- [TripSpark](#)

CLEAN BUS PLANNING AWARDS

The Clean Bus Planning Awards (CBPA) program reduces barriers to zero-emission bus deployment by providing school and transit bus fleets with free technical assistance to develop comprehensive and customized fleet electrification transition plans.

CBPA is managed by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and funded by the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation (Joint Office). CBPA connects transit and school bus fleets with technical experts to support planning for bus electrification. Fleets also have the option to receive free deployment assistance from NREL at the completion of their plan.

How To Apply

[Complete and submit NREL's CBPA application form.](#)

Applications may be submitted on a rolling basis. NREL will provide all applicants with a confirmation of application receipt.

Contact

To receive email updates about the Clean Bus Planning Awards, submit the sign-up form. For any questions, reach out to CBPA@nrel.gov to learn more about the CBPA program.

FAQS

What are the benefits of participating in the Clean Bus Planning Awards?

Establishing a zero-emission transition plan is the first step in creating an economically and environmentally sound fleet for school districts and transit agencies.

The planning process helps to:

- Create a vision for deployment and rally unified support from decision makers, stakeholders, and constituents.
- Coordinate internal and external project teams while reducing burden on overloaded fleet managers.
- Establish realistic short-term and long-term targets that are supported by sound technical analysis.
- Serve as a foundation and reference point for day-to-day operations and zero-emission bus deployment.

One of the objectives of the program is to prepare fleets for electrification. The program may also help set them up for success to pursue federal funding for bus electrification, including the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Clean School Bus Program and the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) Low or No Emission (Low-No) Grant Program.

Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible applicants are designated under the EPA CSB and FTA Low-No programs, with some exceptions. Eligible applicants include:

- State and local governmental entities providing bus service, including public school districts and charter schools.
- Private school bus fleets with an active contractual agreement to serve a public school district.
- Nonprofit school transportation associations.
- Tribes, tribal organizations, or tribally controlled schools responsible for the purchase of school buses or providing school bus service for a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)-funded school.
- Direct or designated recipients of FTA grants, including state and local governmental authorities, and tribes.

NREL strongly encourages applications from fleets that meet one or more of the following prioritization criteria:

- (School bus) fleets domiciled or operated in a prioritized school district as recognized under EPA's Clean School Bus Program.
- Fleets domiciled or operates in a rural (non-urbanized) area as defined by FTA's Low-No Grant Program.
- Fleets operated by tribal entities recognized by and eligible for funding and services from the BIA.
- Fleets domiciled or operated in a disadvantaged community, as designated in the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST).

NREL reserves the right to redirect fleet applicants seeking more targeted technical assistance to the Joint Office's existing technical assistance service. More information can be found on the Contact Us page.

What is included in the fleet electrification transition plan?

Transition plans may vary based on unique circumstances and considerations for each fleet. The goal of the transition plan is to demonstrate a clear, attainable path to electrification.

The plan may include:

- Existing fleet baseline analysis.
- Vehicle electrification (battery electric and/or hydrogen fuel cell) feasibility analysis.
- Infrastructure assessment and optimization strategy.
- Procurement and project staging.
- Financial analysis.
- Emissions modeling.
- Stakeholder analysis.
- Workforce considerations.
- Recommendation for next steps

Is there opportunity for deployment assistance after the fleet transition plan is completed?

Fleets receiving a transition plan also have the option to request deployment assistance. Suitability for deployment assistance will be determined by NREL following the completion of the transition plan.

Supported activities as part of this assistance may include:

- Monthly calls to monitor procurement progress and advise on barriers encountered.
- Annual plan updates to include changes in vehicle inventory/deployment, incentive availability, and financial modeling.
- Development of standard operating procedures for drivers and mechanics.
- Request for proposal development for vehicle and infrastructure procurement.

- Telematics and/or data logger deployment and analysis.

What is the application and award timeline?

The CBPA opened on Feb. 20, 2024. NREL will review applications on a rolling basis. Fleet selection and commencement of projects will occur on a rolling basis beginning in February 2024. NREL anticipates that final electrification transition plans and presentation of those plans will occur within 6 months from the selection date. Approved deployment assistance will begin after the final plan and presentation. The deployment assistance will be available for a period not to exceed 3 years.

What are the expectations from participating fleets?

Active program participants are generally expected to include (but are not limited to) fleet managers; representatives responsible for fleet budget decisions, procurement of vehicles, and/or sustainability; facilities managers at potential charging locations; and other key leadership/subject matter experts and decision makers. The responsibilities and expectations for participating fleets are summarized below and may not be exhaustive.

Participants are expected to:

- Attend and participate in a kickoff call and monthly meetings with NREL and its partners, along with any other relevant stakeholders.
- Provide baseline fleet assessment data that includes (but is not limited to) fleet size and makeup, route data and schedules, fuel types, costs, and any additional information needed to complete the analysis as requested.
- Collaborate with NREL and its partners to identify any data gaps and agree on assumptions.
- Lead efforts to identify and engage with all relevant stakeholders.
- Review and provide feedback on draft plan to inform the final plan. Collaborate with NREL and its partners to identify any sensitive information to be redacted from plan document to be shared publicly.
- Recruit relevant decision makers and stakeholders to participate in a post-plan presentation meeting to review plan results with NREL and its partners.
- Participate in deployment assistance activities (as applicable).

CBPA is not an incentive program, and fleets do not receive direct funding—rather, selected applicants will be allocated technical assistance resources by NREL.

driveelectric.gov/clean-bus-planning-awards

Technical Assistance and Resources for Transit Agencies

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Transit Administration Low or No Emission (Low-No) Vehicle Program provides \$5.6 billion over 5 years (2022–2026) to help modernize bus fleets and bus facilities across the country, focused on helping transit agencies purchase or lease low- or no-emission vehicles and necessary charging or fueling infrastructure.

Entities currently receiving Low-No funds, planning to apply for Low-No funds, or using other DOT Federal Transit Administration program funds for clean buses can contact the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation for technical assistance to plan for and deploy clean transit buses.

RESOURCES FOR CLEAN TRANSIT BUSES

These resources can help transit fleets plan for and deploy clean transit buses:

Clean Bus Planning Awards: Learn how the Clean Bus Planning Awards (CBPA) reduces barriers to zero-emission bus deployment by providing school and transit bus fleets with free, comprehensive, and customized fleet electrification transition plans.

Low or No Emission Vehicle Program: Funding for state and local governmental authorities to purchase or lease zero-emission and low-emission transit buses, as well as acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities

DOT Navigator: Tool that helps communities understand the best ways to apply for grants and to plan for and

deliver transformative infrastructure projects and services

Transit Bus Electrification Tool: Tool that estimates the partial lifecycle greenhouse gas emission savings associated with replacing standard bus fleets with low-emission or zero-emission transit buses

Transit Greenhouse Gas Emissions Estimator: Tool that estimates the partial lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions and energy use from the construction, operation, and maintenance phases of a project across select transit modes

Guidebook for Deploying Zero-Emission Transit Buses: Report that provides transit agencies with information on current best practices for zero-emission bus deployments and lessons learned from previous deployments, industry experts, and available industry resources

Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Transit Projects—Programmatic Assessment: Report on whether certain types of proposed transit projects merit detailed analysis of their greenhouse gas emissions that provides a source of data and analysis for future projects

Vehicle and Infrastructure Cash-Flow Evaluation Model: Tool that helps fleet managers assess the financial soundness of converting vehicles to battery electric buses

SunLine Transit Demonstrates Excellence in Zero Emission Transit: Case study about a California transit agency that operates four battery electric buses and 16 hydrogen fuel cell electric buses

driveelectric.gov/transit-agencies



RURAL TRANSPORTATION INCUBATOR - AGE FRIENDLY ARIZONA

BACKGROUND

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) was created in 1967 as a voluntary association of local and tribal governments for the Greater Phoenix area and serves as the regional Council of Governments and a Metropolitan Planning Organization.

In 2010, MAG worked with many partners statewide to create Age Friendly Arizona, a network dedicated to connecting older adults with people of all ages in their communities. The project initially began as a Municipal Aging Services Project with the goal of meeting the needs of older adults in the Greater Phoenix area. Over time, the purpose, name, and geographic area transitioned into a statewide effort and continued to focus on connecting older adults with people of all ages in their communities, benefiting from their talents. This strength-based approach results in better access to transportation and community engagement opportunities.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The work of Age Friendly Arizona (AFA) includes a thorough assessment of community needs and strengths

to determine ways to increase livability for older adults in their community, with transportation consistently rising to the top as an unmet need across the state, particularly in rural areas. In response, AFA obtained a 2-year, \$300,000 grant from The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation (HJWF) to launch the Rural Transportation Incubator (RTI) in 2019. This grant funding was distributed in two portions; \$150,000 for the first year, with the remaining balance distributed in 2021, after a successful report of the work accomplished in year one. In addition to the HJWF funds, AFA partnered with AARP Arizona, the Federal Highway Administration, Grantmakers in Aging, as well as in-kind and matching funds from several local and regional organizations, bringing a total of \$1.7 million to the project.

Goals of the Rural Transit Incubator are;

- providing rides to older adults with low incomes in rural areas,
- using technology to streamline and support these transportation services,
- encouraging national replication through toolkits, training, and presentations.

The RTI launched new and expanded transportation services in 12 rural communities in remote areas of Arizona. These communities received stipends to provide transportation services and assistance to older adults with low incomes in rural communities. Some communities are receiving access to transportation for the first time while others are trying innovative approaches to transportation, including using technology to make transportation services more efficient. In all cases, the type of support is individualized to meet the specific needs of the community.

In August 2019, Full Path was selected through a competitive solicitation to serve as the technology assessment consultant. After a thorough assessment including stakeholder interviews, a literature review and a SWOT analysis, a list of strategies were recommended to enhance transportation services through technology solutions. These strategies still need to be implemented.

Another technology objective was to pilot the Assisted Rides app during year one of the grant. Verde Valley Caregivers tested the app, and it was decided to explore other options that would better fit the diverse needs of small rural providers. Remaining funds were transferred to support additional communities in participating in the incubator.

A successful technology innovation was the creation of the state's first centralized, interactive database of human services transportation providers which is now accessible online as a result of this project. The website AZRide Info was created to streamline the way people access information, reduces the amount of time it takes to connect to vital services, and improves people's access to services needed for a good quality of life. A centralized phone number and marketing campaign was also completed in conjunction with the website.

Nationally, Age Friendly Arizona is encouraging replication of their program by giving presentations on webinars or at conferences in the state and beyond.

Grantmakers in Aging (GIA) played an integral role in the development of a statewide conference in Arizona. The event garnered more than 300 attendees, including key leaders from the state's legislature and nonprofit and healthcare community. GIA also provided a three-hour intensive session at their national conferences in 2019, where members of Dementia Friendly Arizona presented on the Rural Transportation Incubator. Using input from the workshops and presentations, the toolkit Rides that Save Lives and report entitled, Blind Spot: Mobility and Aging

in Rural America were developed and are being shared nationally. Presentations continue to be delivered AFA members on the Incubator project, toolkit and report.

COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Maricopa Association of Governments initiated Age Friendly Arizona in response to concern expressed by local elected officials regarding the negative impact of funding reductions made to programs serving older adults during the Great Recession. Extensive outreach and research determined that traditional responses to aging, like senior centers, were no longer as relevant to some older adults. In addition, a strength-based approach was found to better reflect and leverage the significant talents of older adults.

Partners were invited by considering who impacted the lives of older adults and what was important to older adults.

This includes, but is not limited to; transportation, healthcare, the arts, and education. Elected officials have been engaged from the very beginning, not by participating in regular meetings but by being the face of Age Friendly Arizona by speaking at conferences, being featured in press releases, and presenting to groups. This arrangement has proven to be a mutually beneficial for Age Friendly Arizona, but also the surrounding community being supported.

Age Friendly Arizona is staffed by an Encore Fellow from Experience Matters, and when AFA received the incubator grant, they joined an engaged and dedicated leadership team to guide the project with skill, vision, and creativity. This joint Rural Transportation Incubator and Age Friendly Arizona leadership team consists of over 50 members and includes representatives from local governments, nonprofit agencies, AARP Arizona, academic institutions, local foundations, and other stakeholders.

PROJECT STATUS

Age Friendly Arizona continues in full force and is making a real difference in the lives of older adults with low incomes in rural Arizona by implementing the principles of the Rural Transportation Incubator. RTI is in the final phase of this initial two-year grant and will be expended by December 31, 2021; the majority of funds are being provided to the communities participating in the incubator in the form of transportation and technology stipends. Funding is also allocated to support additional technical assistance requests and attendance at local conferences.

Throughout the entire project, perspectives of older adults with low incomes have been engaged through outreach by partnering agencies.

Leadership team meetings continue to be held on a quarterly basis with additional meetings scheduled as needed throughout the year. To date, 24 communities have participated in Age Friendly Arizona with a variety of representatives and stakeholders specific to each community.

The leadership team continues to provide guidance and explore additional funding opportunities. There is also discussion around considering additional areas of focus for the network.

OUTCOMES

The RTI has served 1,081 adults with low incomes by providing more than 60,000 rides since the start of the project nearly two years ago.

Data collected indicates that 71% of the riders are age 65 or older and 29% are aged 55 to 64 years or companions of older adult riders. 100% of the riders are considered to have low income.

In addition to the numbers, all projects within Age Friendly Arizona, including RTI, are measured by achievement in three main indicators: (1) decreasing social isolation, (2) increasing access to services, and (3) increasing social connections. Wellbeing survey results indicated that 20% of riders experienced a decrease in social isolation, 38% had increased access to services and 23% experienced an increase in the number of social interactions.

One challenge is ensuring the ongoing sustainability of community interventions. This is addressed by helping communities to develop business plans in order to ensure long-term financial stability. Other challenges include making sure these efforts complement and do not compete with traditional services providers, Age Friendly Arizona offers new approaches and extensive relationship building to help mitigate this concern.

LESSONS LEARNED

We learned after a number of years that we had identified the wrong target audience, or that perhaps this had shifted over time. When Age Friendly Arizona first began, we understood our target audience to be older adults, but after several years of operation and conducting activities, we determined our actual target audience is the whole community. This better aligns with our structure and main areas of influence and have adapted our messaging and activities to be more focused and the results has been very positive.

There have been lessons learned with the Rural

Transportation Incubator as well. The initial plan was to explore, test, and assess various technology solutions that could be offered to all communities in the incubator. It was realized through research and key informant interviews that there is not a single solution that would serve all communities equally.

Each community and agency are at different levels of development, need, and capacity. As a result, each community and agency required customized solutions that would best align with their individual resources and priorities.

In response, technology stipends were offered through a competitive process that invited applicants to indicate what technology solutions would work best for them.

In addition, RTI was able to address systems level responses through a partnership with Arizona State University and Amazon Web Services through the Cloud Innovation Center, to develop TRIPS (Transportation Reporting Information Portal System) as a tool for funders and grantees to share data and develop reports more seamlessly. Funding for TRIPS is being sought after for the development and building of the system.

NEXT STEPS

Sustainability of AFA and RTI has been very successful, which include working closely with community foundations to provide seed funding to demonstrate proof of concept through pilot projects. Continued investment from the public sector proves these pilot projects are successful and ongoing operational support of the programs for each community. The joint AFA and RTI leadership team consists of over 50 members, including representatives from local governments, nonprofit agencies, AARP Arizona, academic institutions, local foundations, and other stakeholders. The leadership team is an ongoing activity and continues to be a useful forum for vetting ideas and assessing progress of each program.

The immediate next step is to secure funding, and fully develop and launch TRIPS. Funding proposals are currently being developed for the creation of this technology and for the continuation of Rural Transportation Incubator.

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Virginia Rural Microtransit Project

BACKGROUND

Ken Pollock is the Director of Bay Transit, which is the public transportation division of Bay Aging, the area agency on aging for the 12 counties in eastern Virginia. Bay Transit provides public transportation including fixed route, demand-response, and a New Freedom program in this region. The New Freedom program provides contracted transportation outside of the Bay Transit service area for seniors and people with disabilities using local non-emergency medical transportation providers. Bay Transit primarily uses Section 5311 funding for their public fixed route and demand-response transportation services. They also have an agreement with Bay Aging to provide transportation to their eight senior centers and for meal delivery with Older Americans Act funding. Prior to the pandemic, Bay Transit was providing over 150,000 rides per year. During the pandemic, their ridership dropped to around 110,000 rides. One reason they did not see as drastic a drop in ridership as many systems was that they have always and continue to provide employment transportation for workers deemed essential during the pandemic.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PILOT PROGRAM

In 2021, Bay Transit began a project to operate a Rural Microtransit Program in Gloucester County along the Chesapeake Bay. The pilot is designed to determine if this type of demand-response service can be successful, cost-effective, and replicable in other rural parts of the state. The project was initiated by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) who applied for and received an Integrated Mobility Innovations (IMI) grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). IMI grants focus on creating new transportation solutions that are integrated with existing public transit services, then examining the impact on the agency and the rider's experience. DRPT's project proposal was to provide microtransit in rural communities in the Tidewater region. The project was to augment existing transit resources by leveraging mobile technology for real-time trip booking and vehicle routing, providing realtime, demand-response microtransit service. DRPT reached out to Bay Transit and another rural transit agency, Mountain Empire Older Citizens (MEOC), located in the mountainous region in the southwest corner of Virginia, to implement these pilot

projects. These agencies were chosen prior to writing the grant and each were picked because of their unique challenges and the relationships DRPT already had with these programs. The area Bay Transit serves includes a river crossed by only two bridges while MEOC's challenge is the mountainous roads in their area, both impacting time of travel. Via Transportation was chosen to be the software provider for the project. Via helped both systems develop an app addressing their specific needs.

The microtransit project is to utilize a smart phone ride-hailing app to give the riders a more convenient experience. This case study will focus on the Bay Transit project which had a different focus than MEOC's project with the university.

Bay Transit worked with DRPT and Via to develop a 10-square mile service area for this microtransit project that includes a Walmart, hospital, grocery store, and shops as well as a senior apartment complex in Gloucester County, VA. The microtransit service operates within this area which is geo-fenced so a ride can only be scheduled from within the border. The fare for the ride is \$2. There is also a fixed-route service in the area that runs every 45 minutes as well as the demand response service which requires a 24-hour advance call. If the microtransit service is successful, it is anticipated these other services will be discontinued in the areas served by microtransit.

Funding for the project came from an Integrated Mobility Innovations grant that DRPT applied for totaling \$160,930. With additional state funding beyond the match requirement, Bay Transit received \$107,450 for this project. The funding is being used to cover the capital purchase of the app development and the operating expenses of the project. Bay Transit is using an existing vehicle and staff at this point but anticipate purchasing a new vehicle that will be used for this service.

This project started in January of 2021 and the first step was procuring a software provider. February through June 2021 was spent developing the app and receiving training on how to use it. Transit services began on June 28, 2021, and will continue through September 2022.

While the project is centered around public transportation in general, there is an effort to encourage older adults and individuals with disabilities to use the service by including a senior apartment complex, work center and adult group home for people with disabilities within the designated border. Marketing of the new program was targeted to these populations as well. For people who do not have the ability or desire to access technology, there is a call-in option to schedule rides. At this point, approximately 40%

of users are calling in rather than using the app. COVID restrictions prevented a more thorough training and outreach effort for transit users about the app, but plans are in place to increase training for older adults to raise their comfort level in downloading and using the app.

COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

This rural microtransit project was initiated by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation in an effort to improve transportation in rural areas in the state. When this FTA funding opportunity became available, DRPT knew that Bay Transit and Mountain Empire Older Citizens would both be interested in partnering with them and reached out to collaborate prior to writing the grant. Both transit agencies wrote letters of support for DRPT's grant application. The relationship these agencies had established with DRPT prior to the grant application is a critical reason they were invited to participate in this project.

At the beginning, DRPT, Bay Transit, and MEOC worked together to select a software provider. Once that procurement was completed and Via was chosen, MEOC no longer collaborates as closely with Bay Transit because they each have different issues to address and each developed their own app., They continue to meet quarterly to exchange updates and discuss similar issues and solutions.

Coordination meetings continue to occur weekly on Zoom with Bay Transit, Via, DRPT, and a representative from Gloucester County. Early in the project, Bay Transit invited someone from the county to get involved in the project so they could be kept up to date on how things are going and be part of the collaboration. Bay Transit approached a county representative who was known to have an interest in and supportive of transit programs. The coordination meetings focus on problems that are occurring, ways to get more people to download and use the app and reviewing ridership numbers and data. The involvement of the county representative is very important as the county may become a key part of the sustainability plan after grant funding runs out.

While there is no advisory committee assigned specifically to the microtransit pilot project, Bay Aging has an advisory council for all aging programs including transit and has been informed about the project and is kept up to date in their quarterly meetings.

PROJECT STATUS

As of Nov. 2021, this pilot project is in its fifth month of providing services and the data is just starting to be analyzed. Microtransit services will continue to be provided



through September of 2022. The last three months of 2022 will be spent analyzing data and writing the final grant report; outlining the successes and failures of the project. Meetings with DRPT, Via and the county representative will continue weekly as they troubleshoot problems and make changes to address issues that arise. A priority for the project is coming up with ways to increase the number of people who download and use the app rather than calling in to schedule rides.

OUTCOMES

People who are using the service have a wait time of about eight minutes. Incentives are in place to encourage people to use the app such as giving free rides when downloading the app, referring people to get the app, or posting pictures on Facebook while using the service. As of the end of November 2021, 1,339 one-way rides have been completed and 256 accounts have been created in the app.

While the project is not solely for older adults and people with disabilities, there has been an effort to directly market the project to these groups partly because the community has a rapidly growing population of older adults. With the app data, Bay Transit will be able to track the number of rides to and from particularly destinations including the senior apartment complex or work center to determine who is using the service.

Once the data is gathered and analyzed, Bay Transit will start to establish the specific costs of this program to determine if it is more or less cost effective than other transit services they currently offer in that area.

LESSONS LEARNED

Mr. Pollock pointed out that one thing they would have done differently is to get more citizen feedback regarding the project in order to gain more support and adoption early on. There are challenges to getting this input, but it would have been valuable, and he anticipates working this into the process in the future. A positive lesson learned is the importance of involving local government officials in the project from the very beginning. When the service started, they had a ribbon cutting with news coverage and gave the first rides to county representatives. The goal is for the county to recognize the value of this microtransit service and become a partner when the grant funds are gone.

NEXT STEPS

Looking ahead, Bay Transit is planning to apply for a demonstration project grant from the state for an additional 12-15 months of operating funds to continue this microtransit service. This funding will give them more time to collect and analyze data to show the success of the project for future funding requests.

Bay Transit's rural microtransit project is a great example of how maintaining partnerships can lead to an opportunity to develop new programs. Through ongoing meetings with these partners, challenges are addressed, and adjustments are made to continue to improve and grow the program. The viability and reliability of the new microtransit system will be demonstrated as data is collected and analyzed over the upcoming months and reported in the final IMI grant report.

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Upcoming EVENTS



National RTAP Rural and Tribal Transit Training - Capital Projects

April 22 | 7:30am - April 24 | 12:30pm PDT

The Davenport Grand, Autograph Collection
333 West Spokane Falls Boulevard
Spokane, WA 99201

Register today!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/national-rtap-rural-and-tribal-transit-training-capital-projects-tickets-745625043577?aff=oddtcreator>

AVAILABLE TRAINING PROGRAMS

The following is a list of the training programs and course length of each that are currently available to rural transit providers through Missouri RTAP. Requests for training can be made by contacting Pat Diaku, MO-RTAP Program Specialist, at diakup@mst.edu or 573-341-6155.

1. ACTIVE SHOOTER PREVENTION AND RESPONSE – 2 HOURS.
2. AGGRESSIVE DRIVING – 1 HOUR.
3. ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION FOR TRANSIT OPERATORS – 1.5 HOURS
4. BACKING SAFETY – 1 HOUR.
5. BASIC FIRST AID – 1 HOUR.
6. BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS – 1 HOUR.
7. CPR & BASIC FIRST AID – 4 HOURS.
8. DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PASSENGERS – 2 HOURS.
9. DEFENSIVE DRIVING – 3 HOURS.
10. DISTRACTIVE DRIVING – 1 HOUR.
11. DIVERSITY & AWARENESS TRAINING - PROVIDING QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE FOR TRANSPORTATION PASSENGERS WHO HAVE DISABILITIES – 2 HOURS.
12. DRIVEN TO EXTREMES – 1 HOUR.
13. DRUG & ALCOHOL AWARENESS – 1 HOUR.
14. EMERGENCY & EVACUATION PROCEDURES – 1 1/2 TO 2 HOURS.
15. FATIGUE AWARENESS FOR DRIVERS – 2 HOURS.
16. HIPAA – 1 HOUR.
17. NIGHT DRIVING – 1 HOUR.
18. OPERATION LIFESAVER – HIGHWAY-RAIL CROSSING SAFETY – 1 HOUR.
19. PASSENGER ASSISTANCE/MOBILITY AID SECUREMENT – 2 HOURS.
20. REASONABLE SUSPICION TRAINING FOR SUPERVISORS – 2 HOURS.
21. SAFE & SECURE PROPER INFANT AND CHILD SEAT INSTALLATION – 2 HOURS.
22. SENSITIVITY AWARENESS – 1 HOUR.
23. SEXUAL HARRASSMENT – 1 HOUR.
24. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS – 1 HOUR.
25. VIOLENCE IN THE TRANSIT WORKFORCE – PREVENTION, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY – 1.5 HOURS
26. WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT – 2 TO 3 HOURS DEPENDING ON NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.
27. WINTER DRIVING SAFETY – 1 HOUR.

For more information on classes and to register please visit: mltrc.mst.edu/mortaphome/mortaptraining/

RESOURCES

National RTAP – Rural Transit Assistance Program

www.nationalrtap.org/

Transportation Safety Institute – Transit Safety & Security Training Division

www.tsi.dot.gov/Transit.aspx

Federal Transit Administration – Rural Transit Assistance Program Page

www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_3554.html

Missouri Public Transit

www.mopublictransit.org/

National Transit Institute

www.ntionline.com/

Kansas RTAP – Kansas University Transportation Center

www.kutc.ku.edu/cgiwrap/kutc/rtap/index.php/index.html

Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)

www.tcrponline.org/

