CONNECT-ABILITY

**Empowering
the Community
to Use
Available
Transportation
Services**

*with Self-Assessment
and Progress Planning Tools*

CONNECT-ABILITY

DRAFT

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CONNECT-ABILITY:
Empowering the Community to Use Available Transportation Services

with Self-Assessment and Progress Planning Tools

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CONNECT-ABILITY:
Empowering the Community to Use Available Transportation Services

Transportation is the lifeline that connects people to every activity they engage in outside of their home—it's that simple.

American communities have long recognized their role in ensuring that each and every one of their members has access to life-sustaining and life-enriching destinations—whether this means jobs, medical services, education and training, social activities, child care, shopping, or other locations. People's ability to travel within their community not only allows them to maintain their independence and quality of life but also contributes to the prosperity of the entire community.

Mobility for individuals is accomplished through a network of transportation services, anchored in publicly funded transportation complemented by a multitude of nonprofit and private services, including families and friends. Many, but not all, of these services are well known and well used within the community. The key to making full use of all available transportation services, and thus effectively increasing transportation options, is to ensure that community members not only know about all options, but also know how to use them and have the ability to pay for them.

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Connect-Ability: Empowering Communities to Use Available Transportation Services gives communities tools to determine how effectively they are empowering individuals—particularly people with disabilities, older adults, people with limited income, youth, military veterans, and people with limited English—to use the many transportation services offered in the community. These tools include three self-assessment surveys and a framework for analyzing the survey results and applying community resources to improving access to transportation.

Providing information on how to use and pay for transportation is the first step in increasing mobility; the second step, expanding available services, while not the subject of this guide is equally important. The data gathered through this guide can be used to supplement data collected in broader community transportation needs assessments and to support subsequent efforts to increase the breadth of transportation options.

What's Included in the Guide

- A self-assessment survey to help community stakeholder groups reflect on how well community members know about, can afford, and are able to use existing transportation services
- A self-assessment survey to allow staff and volunteers in human service agencies and organizations determine their effectiveness in assisting individuals use available transportation services
- A self-assessment survey to allow staff and volunteers in workplace agencies and organizations determine their effectiveness in assisting individuals use available transportation services
- Summary sheets located at the end of each survey section to help communities collate and analyze the results of the surveys
- A planning guide to help communities use the information from the two surveys to begin developing action steps to address access to their community transportation network
- A resources section with potential solutions, tools, and links to aid communities in improving transportation access

This guide . . . leads a community to consider how it can leverage the existing network of staff and volunteers who have direct contact with individuals to improve their access to transportation.

This guide takes a community beyond marketing publicly available transportation services to the general public. It leads a community to consider how it can leverage the existing network of staff and volunteers who have direct contact with individuals—whether as an employer, human resources staff, career counselor, case management, or human services staff or volunteers—to improve those individuals' access to transportation. It also encourages communities to consider how to connect people to the entire network of community transportation services, going beyond the public transportation services with which they may be most familiar.

Implement the Surveys

This self-assessment and progress planning effort will be only as effective as the quality of the partnership that leads it and the strength of community support on which it draws. Thus the first steps described below merit the initiating group's full attention.

Establishing a "Home" for the Initiative

A community's first step in using this package of materials is to establish a "home" for the project. The "home" can be any type of community group that has

- Committed staff or volunteers who can serve as leaders to undertake this initiative (qualified consultants can be an option, if funds are available)
- Financial support to implement the project activities
- Capacity to effectively create visibility and community awareness of the project
- Sufficient credibility with the community to enhance information gathering and reporting as well as initiate and/or support the action planning process
- The necessary logistical resources, including physical space, telephones, a working address and at least basic information processing and handling technology

The initial implementation of this survey initiative, which may take place over a 6- to 12 month period, entails three phases:

1. Implement the surveys
2. Identify priorities for subsequent action
3. Determine action steps

The length of time required for these three phases will vary based on the size of the community and the complexity of existing transportation resources. Once begun, the surveys and analysis of the results should be conducted in a timely fashion to ensure continued commitment to and interest in the project. The follow-up phase, in which action is taken on the identified priorities, could be an additional 6–12 months.

Forming a Project Partnership

Because people may learn about and access transportation through many different avenues—from community action groups to human service agencies to employment-related organizations to the public transportation provider—the partnership should represent a broad cross-section of community organizations that serve or are otherwise familiar with people who might have transportation challenges. Suggested organizations are given in the lists below based on primary population group served; these groups include publicly funded service agencies and many other nonprofit, for-profit, and volunteer groups.

Cross-section of individuals
- Citizens' transportation advocacy groups
- Community action agencies
- Elected officials and local government offices
- Employment sector agencies and organizations
- Businesses (human resources and front-line managers)
- Transit agencies and other transportation providers

Older adults
- Area Agency on Aging
- Council on Aging
- Local senior independent living complexes
- Meals on Wheels programs
- Medical providers, hospitals, and nonprofit organizations (e.g., American Cancer Society)
- Nursing homes and assisted living centers
- Senior centers
- Senior citizens (older adults) organizations (e.g., retiree groups, AARP groups)
- Senior employment programs (located in workforce development agencies)
- State Departments on Aging

People with disabilities
- Centers for Independent Living
- Local department of disability services
- Nonprofit disability service organizations (e.g., United Cerebral Palsy, Easter Seals)
- Veterans disability service organizations (e.g., Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America)
- Vocational rehabilitation centers
- Workforce development centers

People with limited income
- Chambers of Commerce and other business groups
- Community action agencies
- Community colleges and vocational training sites
- Economic development agencies
- Employers
- Employment (temporary and full-time) agencies
- Employee assistance and human resources professionals
- Faith-based groups
- Food banks and nutrition centers
- Local service organizations (e.g., United Way, Goodwill, Salvation Army, Red Cross)
- Low-income housing groups

- Service organizations (i.e. Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis)
- TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) agencies
- Workforce development agencies

Military veterans
- Local veterans groups (e.g., VFW, American Legion)
- Veterans disability service organizations (e.g., Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America)
- Veterans Employment and Training Service (in workforce development agencies)
- Veterans Employment Coordination Service (in Dept. of Veterans Affairs)
- Veterans Services Organizations

People with limited English proficiency
- Advocacy organizations
- Cultural organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Refugee re-settlement organizations

Youth
- Boys & Girls clubs
- Child care organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Local education agencies boards, administrators, teachers and staff
- Local youth services
- Parent teacher associations
- Scouting organizations
- Secondary and post-secondary school students
- YMCA/YWCA

Implementing the Surveys

The information gathered from the three self-assessment surveys—community, human service, and work-force sector—can be used in tandem to create a fuller picture of areas in which a community is doing a good job connecting people to transportation and where they can improve knowledge of and access to services. With this information, the community will have the basis for determining future actions.

When determining to whom to distribute the surveys, a community will recognize that the more diverse the group of community representatives who complete the surveys, the stronger the likelihood that any resulting action will have greater community support and positive impact. Further, extensive participation will usually improve the quality of the information received.

Survey distribution and community action planning efforts are well-established activities and are widely used for a variety of purposes. Some resources that explore theory related to community surveys and practical implementation steps are listed on **(pages 24 might change).**

The following considerations can guide a community in determining the best distribution strategy that will result in receiving the largest number of responses. Consistent with the goal of wide participation is making certain that potential respondents with visual impairments or other disabilities and those with limited proficiency in English are also able to complete the survey instruments.

Personal Appeal

Whatever method is used to distribute the survey, it should include a personal appeal. People are more likely to respond to a survey request extended by a personal acquaintance, colleague, supervisor, or community leader. They are also more like to respond if the written introduction or cover letter that accompanies the survey indicates a clear purpose for the survey as well as how the collected data will be used. This approach could also be productive if the same people distributing the surveys (presuming a hard copy version is used) arrange to collect them when completed.

Hard copy or electronic format

Electronic surveys offer several advantages over paper surveys: 1) they can be distributed free or at low-cost through several on-line survey sites; 2) some, but not all, offer the opportunity to use an accessible on-line format, which often enables people with visual impairments to participate; 3) a paperless survey resonates with communities who are trying to be environmentally friendly; and 4) responses are often tabulated and even graphed automatically at the survey site, thus minimizing both the time and effort required for data handling.

For communities that choose to distribute paper copies, the survey is available on the Community Transportation Association of America website (**www.ctaa.org**) for easy duplication. Paper copies may work best in communities that do not have widespread Internet access or in which residents may be more comfortable responding on paper.

E-mail or regular mail

In our fast-paced world, many organizations have turned from paper-based distribution methods to e-mail based communications. This method may or may not work best, depending on the characteristics of the community. If the project partners choose to use traditional mail for distribution of the survey, they should consider including a pre-addressed stamped envelope to facilitate responses.

Individual or group responses

The project leaders can decide if they would like people to respond to the survey individually or as a group; the former is recommended. Individual responses to the survey allow each respondent's opinion to carry equal weight, and remove any chance of group bias. It also helps people to become vested in the issue by

taking the time to think through their responses individually, which will ensure a more spirited discussion when the group(s) comes together to discuss the results. This is true whether the respondents are staff/ volunteers from human service agencies or organizations or representatives of stakeholder groups from the community. It may also be simply more expedient for individuals to fill out the survey in their own time, rather than having to find a convenient time for a group to meet and respond together. Groups may find it valuable, however, to review the results of individual surveys from within their organization together and create a consolidated group response to share with the project leaders.

Incorporate survey questions into other surveys
If a community has already decided to embark on a community-level survey (e.g., individuals' ability to access employment), it could consider incorporating questions from the *Connect-Ability* self-assessment surveys in it. The advantage to doing so is the lessening of "survey fatigue," experienced when a signifi-cant cross-section of the same community groups is asked to respond repeatedly to surveys. The disad-vantage is that fewer questions will be asked, and the results will lack the depth of response elicited from the complete self-assessment survey. The decision on which survey strategy is best will factor in costs and available person-hours to distribute and collate responses from the survey and how the self-assess-ment surveys fit into existing community projects.

The Self-Assessment Surveys
When distributing the surveys to community-level and direct-services organizations, it is important to be aware of the considerable diversity and overlap within the individuals they serve. For example, although they may target a specific population group, such as a Council on Aging serving older adults, their clients may also have a disability or limited English-speaking ability. Employment-sector groups will most likely interact with all of different populations noted.

Community Survey
The community survey is intended for community leaders, engaged citizens, and other voices that may have a broad community perspective on transportation matters. All members of the partnership can complete the community survey, drawing on their own knowledge and that gathered from discussions within their organization. The partnership may also choose to ask people representing other service groups to complete the survey; again, it can refer to the list on pages 6-7 for potential groups. These results will provide a representative picture of community members' awareness of and ability to use existing transportation services; a more detailed picture can be developed based on the responses to the human service and workforce sector surveys (see below) provided by staff or volunteers who directly as-sist individuals on a daily basis. Based on the results of the community survey, the project partnership can choose what population groups it would like to focus on and the agencies and organizations it would like to ask to complete the human service or workforce sector surveys.

Human Services Survey

The human services survey is intended for staff and volunteers with public or private human service agencies that typically deliver and/or coordinate direct services and supports for individuals. These might be social workers, counselors, rehabilitation or vocational specialists, health professionals, case managers, transportation service coordinators, mobility managers, and administrators who can provide an informed opinion about the transportation situations of their clients. Because they work one-on-one with individuals each day, they are likely to have a detailed, accurate picture of the transportation needs of those individuals. Their responses to this survey will be invaluable in developing a fuller understanding of community members' ability to use existing transportation services.

Employment Sector Survey

The employment sector survey is intended for those who assist job seekers and employees in negotiating the many decisions leading to finding and retaining employment. These might be business and human resources professionals, shift managers, career counselors, temporary and full-time employment agency staff, workforce development staff, and employee assistance professionals, among others. Similar to human services staff and volunteers, they will have first-hand knowledge about how well connected the individuals they serve are to transportation services.

Collecting the Survey Results

Answers to the questions in all three surveys have been assigned a numeric value, as follows:

> Strongly Agree – 5
> Agree – 4
> Neutral – 3
> Disagree – 2
> Strongly Disagree– 1

The numeric values for each answer are to be averaged, whether this is done automatically (if using an on-line survey service) or manually. Once the results have been tabulated, they can be transferred to the summary sheets provided. The summary sheets also include discussion questions at the end of each section to facilitate the project partners' analysis of the survey results.

Accessibility of Materials and Meeting Facilities

A key factor in ensuring broad participation is ensuring that the meetings, materials, and process are equally accessible to all individuals, including those with a physical or cognitive disability or a language barrier. Below are some considerations.

COMMUNICATIONS

- E-mail is fully accessible to individuals with visual impairments.
- For phone conversations, consider whether the lead or host agency for those calls has a TTY number available.
- Every discipline has its own unique set of acronyms; be sure to clearly, and repeatedly, explain the meaning of the most common acronyms used.
- If English is not the first language for a large number of targeted respondents, consider whether distributing written materials in their native language will improve the number of returned surveys. It may be that the population sharing their language is one about which little is known precisely because of the language barrier, so it is even more important to faciliate these respondents' participation.

MATERIALS

- Written materials should be made available in languages other than English as needed.
- PowerPoints:
    - Use sufficient contrast between text and slide background themes. For example, use black text on a white background
    - Use at least 26 point sans serif font (e.g., Arial) for your slides
    - No more than 6 lines of text and 3–4 bullets per slide
    - If you use graphs, charts or images, be prepared to describe them. Provide alternative text for images, graphs, or charts (this can be done in most word processing packages)
- Although many pdf documents may be accessible, consider providing documents in Word (or similar) formatted documents, as these can be easily accessed by a screen reader (more at http://www.washington.edu/accessit/articles?2).
- If surveys will be distributed electronically, care must be taken to select instruments that are accessible for people with vision limitations. Today, several sources make such tools available, but all are not equally accessible.

MEETINGS

- Hold meetings in places that can be easily reached, ideally by public transportation.
- Avoid holding meetings on upper floors of buildings with no elevator service so that people who use a wheelchair, have an orthopedic disability, or have difficulty claiming stairs can participate.
- Presentations:
    - Always speak facing, and in clear view, of your audience
    - Refrain from speaking too quickly
    - In large meetings especially, consider using microphones to assist anyone with a known (or unknown) hearing impairment
    - Provide verbal descriptions of any slide containing graphs, charts, and images

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Identify Priorities for Subsequent Action

The three components gathered by the project thus far— scores from each of the surveys (community, human service, and workforce sector) plus the subsequent discussion of the results—should provide the partnership with an in-depth look at transportation knowledge and access issues in the community, and provide the basis for action steps to improve in these areas.

The next step is to identify priorities based on the results. Ultimately, the areas to be given priority will require consideration of many factors. For example, it may be that the highest priority area revealed is also the most difficult and least likely to be effectively addressed. Or it may be that project leaders decide to focus on a lower ranked area since it might be the most easily and rapidly accomplished and will have immediate impact.

One caution: As the project partners review the survey data, they should look at the total number of responses from agencies and understand that a larger number of responses from groups serving specific population groups may not necessarily mean that that population group has a larger need. For example, if numerous personnel are involved in providing assistance to people with limited incomes and many respond to the survey, versus the number who respondents who work with clients who have mental health issues, the larger response of the former should not necessarily be assumed to convey a greater need than other populations. The results of the community survey can also be a useful filter for interpreting the gaps and strengths reported by staff and volunteers of human service agencies and workforce organizations.

Below are several focus questions that can be used in reviewing the cumulative scores and subsequent discussion points from the surveys.

- In what areas are we weakest?
- In what areas are we strong?
- In what areas could change have the most impact on our community?
- In which areas would we be most likely to succeed?
- In which areas would we be most likely to experience a lack of success?
- Who might be our most likely allies in the community for pursuit of the objective?
- Which areas would require the highest level of funding? Lowest level?
- Which areas would the community be most likely to support? Least likely to support?

Additional factors to consider in establishing priorities include the following:

- Extent and availability of human resources needed to undertake action
- Financial resources required for action
- Availability of needed community leaders
- Impact on the community of successfully addressing the priority
- Impact on effected group (s) of community residents
- Community awareness of the need
- Significance of the rating in relation to all other priority areas

Without a doubt, all of the factors that come into play in the selection of priorities will be unique for every community. One broad factor frequently considered is whether the time and circumstances in the community are right! However, making that determination is never one that is guaranteed. Further, even if the project team feels the time and circumstances are not optimal for pursuing a course of action, the priority may be of sufficient significance that it could in and of itself create the right time and circumstances.

Determine Action Steps

Once project priorities have been articulated, the third step is to establish a clear objective(s) for action along with building the processes to implement those actions. The steps involved in these implementation steps will be directly related to the complexity of the objectives established. Typically, the larger the objective pursued, the more extensive the implementation process that will be required.

Regardless of the objective, a committed group of individuals, representative of the community, is essential to the success of the project. Often, it is the people that recognize the existence of potential needs who undertake the necessary action to meet them. The action planning process includes the following steps:

- Establishing the policy and administrative system to guide and manage the entire effort (e.g., will it stay within the "home" group, be shared among groups, be assigned to an ad hoc group)
- Establish a timeline of dates and activities for the project kick-off, preparation, implementation, and concluding activities
- Determine the decision-making apparatus so that it is clear who will be making decisions on such matters as who will represent the initiative with the media, overall strategy, spending, etc.
- Secure needed resources (e.g., financial and in-kind support, team contributions)
- Seek community partners to assist with implementation
- Solicit community support
- Identify accountability measures and who will review them
- Determine what will determine success and how to evaluate that success

The steps and processes for use in community planning are the subjects of a vast literature and a rich history of accomplishment **(see pages 24-25)**. The steps mentioned above are intended to indicate the logical progression needed for such planning.

Sample Action Planning

Based on the results of its surveys, Community X realizes that the case workers in local agencies that serve people with limited income are only vaguely aware of publicly funded and other transportation options in the community that could assist in connecting their clients with services. Instead, the community spends a significant amount of money each year providing taxi vouchers to these clients. The community decides to take the following steps.

Months 1-3	Gather background information on 1) the most common destinations for these clients (e.g., TANF office, community college, low-cost grocery and department stores). To do this, the project partners take the lead in gathering input from the direct-service staff in their home agencies and related nonprofit and for-profit groups who work with low-income clients.
Months 4-6	Based on the information gathered, the project partners collect data on all available local transportation services that travel to those destinations. They choose a consultant to create this inventory, or expand upon existing inventories. The consultant is jointly funded by all the partner agencies.
Months 6-9	The consultant creates an electronic or paper guide that summarizes the transportation information, including contact, scheduling, and fare information. The project partners reach out to the directors of their respective organizations and related nonprofit and for-profit groups about implementing an in-service training for staff and volunteers on the transportation options available to their clients.
Month 9	With the assistance of the consultant, the project partners sponsor trainings in the local agencies and organizations on the gathered transportation information. The trainees are also given tools for assisting clients plan their transportation.
Months 10-12	Case managers in the target agencies and organizations collect data on the number of individuals who have been successfully matched to transportation. These data are reported back to the partnership, which evaluates the impact of the project.

Directions for Solutions

A thoughtful approach to the surveys and their discussion will result in the emergence of project objectives that become the heart and soul of the effort and lead to the implementation of certain actions. Although each community's choice of actions will be unique, below are some suggested actions appropriate to each of the categories contained in the surveys.

For Communities

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Identifying transportation needs in the community**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Ask your local transportation planning organizations (metropolitan planning organization in urbanized areas, rural planning organization in many rural areas), Councils on Aging, disability service organizations, refugee organizations, community action agencies, and other community-based groups about any former transportation needs research they have conducted.
- Consider hiring a consultant to conduct a transportation needs assessment in your area. Ask the transportation planning organizations and other groups identified above if they would be willing to help fund this needs assessment.
- Encourage staff and volunteers in human services organizations to collect accounts of the transportation needs of customers and clients and provide those to a centralized agency, such as the project partnership or a transportation planning organization. (See the Unmet Transportation Needs Form at www.ctaa.org/transportation_solutions. For an electronic example, see https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ccunmettrans.)

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Ensuring that potential riders know about all available services**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Create an inventory of all available transportation services. This is not an easy step, but nonetheless it is a crucial first step to many different types of transportation activities, whether creating a Ride Guide, a website, a one-call center, or coordinated transportation. Look at the Provider Profile form (www.ctaa.org/transportation_solutions), which will prompt you for the different types of questions you would want to ask each transportation provider in your community.

- Create a printed or electronically distributed Ride Guide that presents information about all transportation in the community, including a description of the service, any eligibility requirements, times/days it travels, and passenger fares and distribute it to community groups and organizations.
- Create a centralized number or website that people needing transportation information can call or visit for any type of community transportation services (e.g., human service agency transportation, volunteer driver programs, Medicaid transportation). A one-call service could also incorporate questions to determine client eligibility for specific transportation services. Find out more at www.onecalltoolkit.org
- Provide transportation information to particular populations through community-based organizations that serve them (e.g., refugee service organizations, centers for independent living). The Transportation Solutions course (www.ctaa.org/transportation_solutions) was created to help transportation professionals share their knowledge with staff and volunteers in community agencies and organizations.
- Create a residential transportation ambassador program, in which you identify a member within a particular region or neighborhood who would be willing to be the informational contact for residents on transportation to/from common destinations. For example, one community was very successful in recruiting a volunteer from a Somali neighborhood who could provide transportation information in the residents' own language and be sensitive to cultural considerations (contact www.ctaa.org/joblinks for more information).
- Hold a Transportation Solutions Workshop for staff and volunteers in human service agencies and organizations that will give them the transportation information they need to assist individuals in finding transportation. (www.ctaa.org/transportation_solutions)
- Invite transportation providers to exhibit their information at local job, health, senior, youth, or similar community fairs.
- Encourage transportation providers, or a community resources person familiar with all transportation services, to make presentations at schools, youth centers, senior centers, centers for independent living, housing complexes, etc.

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Finding sources that will assist individuals in paying for transportation**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Identify all programs within your community whose funding stream (local, state, and federal) will allow them to help pay for transportation. The regulations for these programs sometimes will pay for "supportive services," including transportation.
- Identify reduced or free fare programs in your community, including the criteria for qualifying for those programs.
- Create a written or electronic resource that summarizes the programs that help individuals afford services and make that available to community-based organizations and agencies that directly assist community members.

- Create a voucher program that assists individuals in reimbursing private providers (e.g., taxis, family members, friends). See the comprehensive guide to doing this at http://sites.google.com/site/voucherprogram/.

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Finding support services that teach people how to use community transportation services**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Identify any travel orientation programs offered by a local transit provider (e.g., how to read schedules, purchase fares, catch a bus) and spread information on those training programs through community-based organizations and agencies that directly assist community members.
- Encourage community-based organizations to create a travel instruction program (with both basic and intensive levels) to help new riders, older adults unaccustomed to using public transportation, people with disabilities, and people with limited English proficiency become more comfortable using existing services (see http://projectaction.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ESPA_travel_training).

For Human Service Agencies/Organizations

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Assisting individuals plan transportation**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Arrange with your and other agencies to provide a Transportation Solutions workshop in your community to create a permanent cadre of people who can assist staff and volunteers in human service agencies and organizations with transportation information (see www.ctaa.org/transportation_solutions).
- Establish a core person(s) within the agency or organization to learn about community transportation options, gather materials to make available to clients and serve as a resource throughout the agency regarding transportation questions and needs of clients and staff working with clients (see www.ctaa.org/transportation_solutions).
- Conduct staff development programs regarding the use of an Individualized Transportation Plan and the Unmet Transportation Needs form (see www.ctaa.org/transportation_solutions for these forms).

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Accessing current transportation information**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Establish a core person(s) within the agency to learn about community transportation, gather materials to make available to clients, and serve as a resource throughout the agency regarding transportation questions and needs of clients and staff working with clients.
- Work with your local transportation provider(s) to establish a channel for feeding your agency/organization updated transportation information. This step is much easier if the providers keep this information updated on a website. However, keep in mind that public transit is only one piece of the community transportation network.
- Invite transportation providers to exhibit their information at local job, health, senior, youth, or similar fairs that your agency or organization hosts.

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Accessing current transportation information for specific individuals**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Reach out to partners (public, private, nonprofit) that serve a similar population as does your agency/organization and compare resources, perhaps resulting in a combined resource for all who serve the same population.

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Connecting individuals with services to help them use available transportation services**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Identify any travel orientation programs offered by a local transit provider (e.g., how to read schedules, purchase fares, catch a bus) and spread information on those training programs through community-based organizations and agencies that directly assist community members.
- Consider having an individual(s) in your agency or organization trained to help the individuals you serve learn how to use available community transportation services.

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Assisting clients/customers in paying for transportation**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Consider using your agency's or organization's resources to purchase transit passes, vouchers, or contracted services for the individuals you serve. The funding source (local, state, and federal) for many agencies/organizations within your community will allow them to help pay for transportation. The

regulations for these programs sometimes will pay for "supportive services," including transportation costs.

- Write a grant to a local foundation interested in supporting the people your agency/organization serves to help with transportation.

For Employment Sector Groups

If you've identified your priority to be . . . **Assisting individuals plan transportation**

Then consider these steps . . .

- Have your agency, work site, or organization partner with others to create a permanent cadre of people on-site or in the community who can assist staff, employees, and volunteers in the workforce sector with in-depth know-how on how to connect with transportation options (see curriculum for doing so at www.ctaa.org/transportation_solutions)
- Ask staff in workforce development agencies/organizations and employee assistance and human resources specialists to begin the "transportation conversation" with job seekers and employees by asking the Transportation 1-2-3s: 1) Do you have a ride? 2) Is it affordable? and 3) Do you have a back-up transportation plan?
- Provide workforce sector agencies/organizations and employers with information on the Commuter Tax Benefit and other employer-supported options that can make employee transportation more affordable (see www.ctaa.org/transportation_to_work).
- Invite transportation providers to job fairs. By letting them know what companies will be at the fair, they can provide information about travel options to those company sites to prospective employees.

Also see the other solutions proposed for human service agencies/organizations on page 20.

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