Mobility for All and One-Call/One-Click Systems

December 2020

About the National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM)

The National Center for Mobility Management is a national technical assistance center funded through a cooperative agreement with the Federal Transit Administration, and operated via a consortium of three national organizations—the American Public Transportation Association, the Community Transportation Association of America, and Easterseals Inc. The mission of the Center is to promote customer-centered mobility strategies that advance good health, economic vitality, self-sufficiency, and community.

Summary

Regional and state-wide mobility systems currently planning, operating or implementing one-call/one-click (OC/OC) systems convened through a peer exchange to discuss challenges and share best practices related to incorporating trip information, trip booking and trip payment. The discussion focused on topics including, collecting and verifying transportation provider information, using GTFS data sets/GIS platforms, garnering community and provider support, marketing the OC/OC systems, and increasing public and specialized transit ridership via new system platforms. This virtual peer exchange was hosted by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, which recently received a Mobility for All grant focused on developing and implementing an OC/OC platform.

This peer exchange included a discussion of several key questions such as:

- What are the lessons learned when planning, developing and implementing OC/OC systems and platforms?
- What are the best practices for bringing together different stakeholders of an OC/OC platform?
- How can regional- and state-wide systems use mobility innovation and GTFS data sets to build future-ready OC/OC systems, and prepare for a broader Mobility as a Service platform?

Participants in these discussions included mid- and senior-level transit industry leaders who are advancing mobility management and coordination in their service areas.

Welcome and Introductions

- Rich Weaver, APTA Director, National Center for Mobility Management; and Director - Planning, Policy & Sustainability, American Public Transportation Association, Washington, DC

This peer exchange highlighted organizations such as the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation; GoVermont; Ride Connection in Portland, OR; the Denver Regional Council of Governments; and several others that are promoting mobility management through OC/OC systems and mobility innovation.

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) updated attendees about their work accomplished in support of the Mobility for All grant. Virginia has performed

outreach for their Coordinated Human Services Mobility (CHSM) plan, reaching over 400 people. This outreach informed final plan recommendations which include: developing a state-wide map/list of resources, exploring additional federal opportunities for funding, developing regional OC/OC systems, providing education about human service transportation eligibility, directing ineligible riders to public or alternative transportation providers, and expanding to parts of Virginia that do not currently have transit options.

DRPT's existing "Virginia Navigator" platform provides transportation services for seniors, veterans, and others. The goal is to expand this platform by including an online listing of all transportation services available in Virginia, branded as "Transportation Navigator." DRPT also aims to develop widgets for use on other state agency/partner sites, and develop GTFS feeds for existing fixed-route transportation providers, which lack their own feeds. These GTFS feeds will be hosted on a new website, with future plans to connect Google Maps to Transportation Navigator. Virginia Navigator's model includes hundreds of community-based sites available for people without computer access or who need assistance navigating the available resources. DRPT plans to develop the new Transportation Navigator, widgets, and GTFS components in 18 months.

Vermont, via the GoVermont platform, aims to connect more people to more transit modes in order to reach destinations throughout the state. GoVermont also features a website, call center, trip planner, and bus locations through Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) services. This has been made possible through a partnership with AgileMile. This data platform was created using open-source data, GTFS flex, state-wide AVL, and an open trip planner designed with support from an FTA Mobility for All grant. The open trip planner provides extensive trip options including carpools and walking. Vermont further expanded its services by contracting with Transit App to offer state-wide transit service access. GoVermont works closely with a vendor partner to develop and maintain its GTFS specifications which are provided by Trillium through a module.

Ride Connection in Portland, OR highlighted the importance of partnerships and regional coordination. Ride Connection is a non-profit transit agency that offers travel training, door-to-door transportation, deviated fixed route shuttles, driver training, information and referrals. In July 2017, in coordination with local and regional partners, Ride Connection commissioned a detailed planning process to identify issues for an OC/OC system in the Portland Tri-County Region. Ride Connection also emphasized the importance of coordination with all relevant organizations to achieve agreed-upon goals.

Ride Connection outlined three Levels of Mobility, which include the following elements: Information and Referral – broad access, Evaluation – data gathering and analysis, and Mobility as a Service (MaaS) – seamless integration. Currently, Ride Connection is close to meeting the requirements of a Level 1 mobility system. Moving forward, Ride Connection plans to select a lead agency to host and manage development and deployment of OC/OC, create an oversight committee, determine the starting level of intensity, and identify funding mechanisms. Key cost considerations include: the technology capacity of the lead agency, the relationship between OC/OC and other technology projects in the region, the business case for multiple agency and

provider participation, the agreed-upon level of mobility, and if an off-the-shelf or a customized product better meets system requirements.

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) shared their experience implementing an OC/OC system. A central challenge is that transportation providers do not use the same technology to schedule trips. A solution is a trip exchange, a proof of concept developed by Via Mobility in Boulder, Colorado with funding from a Mobility Services for All Americans (MSAA) grant. DRCOG emphasized that a "no wrong door approach" is important when working with several partners. Additionally, DRCOG and partners combine three government programs to fund transportation for vulnerable populations, while invoicing and reimbursing simultaneously. These three funding sources are the Older Americans Act & Older Coloradans Act, Federal Transit Administration Section 5310, and Human Service Transportation Set Aside from Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

DRCOG uses routing software from Routematch by Uber as a core technology. Additionally, DemandTrans Solutions developed the trip exchange platform and data connection adaptor, among other components. Consulting services from Transit Plus, Inc. established business rules, stakeholder facilitation, and pilot implementation. Stakeholders of this service include transportation providers, veterans' organizations, human services organizations, and municipal partners within DRCOG's jurisdiction. The pilot has identified several lessons learned: Trip Exchange is the solution to tackling one-call/one-click systems in this jurisdiction, and the COVID-19 pandemic has brought enormous disruption. Additionally, coordination is difficult when trying to meet scheduling, staffing, and legal needs. DRCOG aims to exchange trip data as automatically as possible to limit the burdens placed on all partners.

Key Themes and Discussion

Payments and processing are critical when creating or modernizing an OC/OC system, with automated financial reconciliation to bill grant funds and reimburse transportation providers. It is important to encourage agencies to modernize and integrate payments. When building OC/OC systems, it is advantageous to have a partner that can address this complex invoicing process.

Funding is another critical component of OC/OC systems. Funding might be available from federal sources like the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Funding is key when leveraging public-private partnerships and ensuring a program best serves customers.

OC/OC systems are centered on coordination. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is expanding its support of coordination among agencies and reviewing how trips are defined and reported. Additional considerations include moving towards standardized data and consolidated reporting. Marketing and understanding of technology are key components to coordination and the success of OC/OC systems. It is important to pilot and market the technology before full implementation. Partners should determine how they will get the message out, and how they will educate customers. GoVermont contracted with Transit App to produce manuals, videos, and trainers that contributed to a successful launch. A critical component of developing and modernizing OC/OC is expanding accessibility. Partners should prioritize issues for customers

with disabilities, such as texting for people with hearing impairments. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) or other legal agreements should include accessibility requirements.

This virtual peer exchange allows transit agencies, planning organizations, and transit providers that are leading in OC/OC systems to be featured, to connect with others, and to share their best practices. NCMM provides an opportunity for transit agencies and their partners to build on mobility for all and OC/OC systems by leveraging existing best practices. This allows transit agencies and providers to quickly innovate and provide better and more cost-effective services to transit riders.

Attendees

 Pam McGregor (ARC of Greater Williamsburg), Katherine L Newman (Bay Aging), Janae Futrell (Civic Sphere), Amy Conrick (Community Transportation Association of America/National Center for Mobility Management), Lisa Rivers (Connecticut Department of Transportation), Judy Shanley (Easterseals/National Center for Mobility Management), Destiny Buchanan (FTA), Danielle Nelson (FTA, Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility, Office of Program Management, Rural and Targeted Programs), Dan Curriere (Go Vermont), Ross MacDonald (Go Vermont), Bryan McCoy (Headwaters Regional Development Commission), Bill Baumann (Human Services Council), Kelly Schneider (Johnson County Social Services), Cassidy Giampetro (King County Mobility Coalition), Matthew Helfant, AICP (Denver Regional Council of Governments), Heather Kamper, LSW (Denver Regional Council of Governments), Lynn Winchell-Mendy (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments/Department of Transportation Planning), Daniel Sheehan (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments/Department of Transportation Planning), Serena Anderson (Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission), Chris Blankenship (Mobility & Med Ride) Steve Yaffee (National Aging and Disability Transportation Center / Yaffe Mobility Consulting LLC), Lynnell Simonson Popowski (Northwest Regional Development Commission), Deborah Hill (Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association), Gerald Patesel (Peninsula Agency on Aging), Virginia Lennon (Peninsula Agency on Aging), Ian Detamore (PA Department of Transportation Bureau of Public Transportation), Kristin Lam Peraza (Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission), Julie Wilcke (Ride Connection), Alex Page (Ride Connection), Becky Voorhies (Thrive Allen County), Christy Allen (Utah Transit Authority), Clint Wilkinson (Utah Transit Authority), Neil Sherman (VA Department of Rail and Public Transit), Grant Sparks, AICP (VA Department of Rail and Public Transit), Wood Hudson (VA Department of Rail and Public Transit), Brittany Voll, MPA, CTPA (VA Department of Rail and Public Transit), Jennifer B. DeBruhl, AICP, PMP (Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation), Adrienne Johnson (Virginia Navigator), Heather Molesworth, CCAP (West Central Minnesota Communities Action), Marcy Petersen (West Central Minnesota Communities Action), Alissa Smith (West Central Minnesota Communities Action), Zach Trogdon (Williamsburg Area Transit Authority), Karen Davis (Williamsburg Area Transit Authority), Vince Ferrara (Williamsburg Faith in Action), Kyra Cook (Williamsburg Health Foundation), Marianna Hanefeld (Snohomish County Transportation Coalition), Don Chartock (Washington State Department of Transportation), Ian Wesley (Washington State Department of Transportation)