RURAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND OPTIONS ANALYSIS
Learning Objectives / Goals

- Make you aware of transportation challenges of some people in rural areas (Unmet Needs and underlying causes)

- Understand the rural area and identify ways to address those challenges

- How to reach out to the Public in a rural area where the key stakeholders have mobility challenges?
Project Scope

Task 1. Inventory of Existing Transportation Services
Task 2. Demography Analysis
Task 3. Unmet Needs and Underlying Causes
Task 4. Summary of Needs
Task 5. Alternatives
Task 6. Public Outreach

• Conclusion
Task 1 - Inventory of Existing Services

- Assemble list of existing agencies to contact

- Agencies involved with Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (2014)

- Requests for funding from the federal 5310 (Seniors and Persons with Disabilities) program
Task 1 - Inventory of Existing Services

- Develop list of questions to ask the agencies
- Details about transportation services provided/contracted
- Needs among client population
- Inventory and Stakeholder Outreach

List of questions:
- Does agency provide any transportation service?
  - If yes
    - Are vehicles owned and operated or is service contracted out?
      - If directly operated
        - What kind of vehicles?
        - Number of vehicles owned/leased
        - Number of drivers
        - Driver qualifications (i.e., licensure, background checks)
        - Driver training (required? standardized?) This would include
          training in managing riders, handling discipline problems, etc.
      - If contracted
        - Who is the contractor? Please provide contact number so we can
          get more information.
        - Typical monthly amount of service purchased (in hours, trips, or
          dollars)
    - Source(s) of transportation funding if any
    - Funding levels for 3 budget years (prior, current, projected).
    - Ridership statistics for 3 budget years (prior, current, projected).
    - Geographic area served.
    - Route restrictions if any (i.e., geography, road classification).
    - Primary population served (demographics – age group, household income,
      etc.)
    - Primary trip purposes (grocery, social activity, to and from facility,
      medical, etc.)
    - Types of trips operated
      - Demand response (door-to-door or curb-to-curb)
      - Scheduled trips (weekly shopping services)
      - Occasional trips (outings, longer distance trips)
  - If agency does not provide transportation: what transportation service(s) is used
    by the patrons?
- Are there any opportunities or barriers to integrating primary service population
  with other riders? (programmatic restrictions – shared service, perceived risks if
  any, etc.)
Task 1 - Inventory of Existing Services

- Telephone Interviews
- Of the 24 non-profit organizations, obtain information from 15
- Data collection and compilation
- Greater Glens Falls Transit (GGFT) mostly in urban area
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Vehicle Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Number of Drivers</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Annual Funding</th>
<th>Ridership</th>
<th>Geographic area</th>
<th>Population Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CWI</td>
<td>Large buses; F450 cutaways</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23 for day programs</td>
<td>State &amp; Federal</td>
<td>$1M</td>
<td>486/day; 107K annual</td>
<td>AGFTC area</td>
<td>Youth to elder; low income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Hudson Nursing Center, Inc.</td>
<td>Wheelchair accessible vans</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 part-time</td>
<td>50% from 5310; rest self</td>
<td>$150K</td>
<td>20K</td>
<td>within 15 miles</td>
<td>E&amp;D, mostly Medicaid eligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty House Foundation</td>
<td>Vans: 12-passenger and 8-passenger</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Various govt agencies</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>40/day 8,000 last year</td>
<td>Warren/ Washington various villages</td>
<td>18-80 with mental health or dev/learning disability; 80% below poverty level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornell Cooperative Extension Warren County</td>
<td>Minivans</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$30K</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Warren County</td>
<td>Program participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conkling Center</td>
<td>Minivans</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Endowment, donations, grants</td>
<td>$120K</td>
<td>350 in 2015</td>
<td>Within 25 miles of Glens Falls</td>
<td>55 and older, ambulatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwich Interfaith Fellowship, Inc.</td>
<td>10-passenger van; small van</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5-7 PT plus 23 volunteers in own vehicles</td>
<td>United Fund and Interfaith Council of Churches</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>450 per year</td>
<td>Southern Washington County</td>
<td>Seniors for medical appts and occasional shopping trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren-Hamilton Counties Community Action</td>
<td>15-passenger vans</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Staff members</td>
<td>Towns (from Office for Aging)</td>
<td>$50K</td>
<td>700-1,000 per year</td>
<td>Warren County</td>
<td>60 and older; all trip purposes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task 1 - Inventory of Existing Services

- Of the 15 NGO’s
  - 3 agencies with five or more vehicles
  - 9 agencies with smaller fleet
  - 2 agencies do not provide transportation
  - Retired and Senior Volunteer program- average 27 volunteer drives/month

- County Agencies
  - Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.
  - Department of Social Services
  - Department of Public Health
  - Aging and Disability Resource Center
  - Veterans Affairs
  - Office of Aging

- Medicaid Transportation

- Taxi Companies
Task 2 - Demographic Analysis
Task 2 – Demographic Analysis

- Stakeholder outreach regarding needs
- Analysis of demographics
  - Development pattern
  - Distribution of household density
  - Age, Income, Automobile Availability, Trip generators
- Identify the transportation challenges
- Quantify the mobility needs
Task 2 – Demographic Analysis

- Development Pattern
  - City of Glens Falls - core
  - 4 Towns – Queensbury, Kingsbury, Fort Edward, Moreau
  - Warren County: few hamlets like Warrensburg, Chestertown, Lake George
  - Washington County: various small towns and villages in north tied to Glens Falls and those in south tied to Albany-Troy-Saratoga area
Task 2 – Demographic Analysis

- Household per Acre
- Household Income
- Vehicles per household
- Local destinations: large employers, government offices, grocery stores, post office, go on daily basis
- Regional generators: hospitals, employment and retail bases
Task 3 - Unmet Needs and Underlying Causes

- Low Density in Rural Areas
  - Rural living more feasible
  - Living costs of living in/close to city center
  - Rural living- auto dependency
  - Transit - not viable
  - Demand response – limited resources
Task 3 - Unmet Needs and Underlying Causes

- Needs by Demographic group
  - Youth
  - Working Age
  - Older Adults
  - People with disabilities
Task 4 – Summary of Needs

- People without access to a car
- Rural areas where trip ends are spread apart
- Scarce or non-existent public transportation
- Largest group that have less or no access to services – under age 55 who are not eligible for Medicaid and do not have qualifying disabilities
- Inadequate funding for those covered under various programs
- Many agency services restricted within 10-25 mile radius of facility
Task 5 - Alternatives

- Based on information from stakeholders and others involved
- Unmet needs based on demographic analysis
- 9 potential solutions shortlisted
- Rated based on four feasibility measures
  - Scalability
  - Level of Investment needed
  - Barriers – Legal, Institutional or Other
  - Ongoing Personnel Resources Required
- Timeline suggested for each alternative: short (1-2 years), medium (3-5 years) and long (more than 5 years)
## Task 5 - Alternatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service/Need Addressed</th>
<th>Timeline (Short-Medium-Long)</th>
<th>Ability to Scale Program Regionally (1 to 5 – low score is better)</th>
<th>Level of Investment Needed (1 to 5 – low score is better)</th>
<th>Barriers - Legal, Institutional or Other (1 to 5 – low score is better)</th>
<th>Ongoing Personnel Resources Needed (1 to 5 – low score is better)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ITNCountry</strong></td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2 Scalability depends on promotion, driver recruitment and rider sign-ups; a non-profit may need additional resources to promote the program.</td>
<td>2 There is a $15,000 fee to join during Phase 2. Ongoing fees may be as little as $2,500 when national roll-out occurs.</td>
<td>2 ITNCountry is still in development; however, ITNAmerica is a well-established program.</td>
<td>2 An ITNCountry affiliate in the A/GFTC region would receive technical support from ITNAmerica, but may need A/GFTC resources to promote the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors, visually-impaired adults</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rides to Wellness</strong></td>
<td>Short-Medium</td>
<td>2 Low if local program run by healthcare provider or state; Medium if A/GFTC plays an active role.</td>
<td>2 Low if local program run by healthcare provider or state; Medium if A/GFTC plays an active role.</td>
<td>2 The program does not yet exist at a regional level; after development, Vermont will provide an example of a Rides to Wellness program administrative framework.</td>
<td>2 Low if local program run by healthcare provider or state; High if A/GFTC plays an active role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and wellness trips for anyone with transportation challenges</td>
<td>2 Low if local program run by healthcare provider or state; Medium if A/GFTC plays an active role.</td>
<td>2 Low if local program run by healthcare provider or state; Medium if A/GFTC plays an active role.</td>
<td>2 The program does not yet exist at a regional level; after development, Vermont will provide an example of a Rides to Wellness program administrative framework.</td>
<td>2 Low if local program run by healthcare provider or state; High if A/GFTC plays an active role.</td>
<td>2 Low if local program run by healthcare provider or state; High if A/GFTC plays an active role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation Call Center/ Online Transportation Coordination</strong></td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>2 A/GFTC resources to promote new website/2-1-1 service.</td>
<td>2 A/GFTC Coordination with transportation service providers for updated service information; website development.</td>
<td>2 GGFT is already doing this and has indicated willingness to expand this capability</td>
<td>2 Way2Go has five staff members, but that includes employer outreach and education programs. A more limited online/2-1-1 program would require fewer staff. Potential for shared-staffing arrangement funded by more than one agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of available services among all vulnerable populations</td>
<td>2 A/GFTC resources to promote new website/2-1-1 service.</td>
<td>2 A/GFTC Coordination with transportation service providers for updated service information; website development.</td>
<td>2 GGFT is already doing this and has indicated willingness to expand this capability</td>
<td>2 Way2Go has five staff members, but that includes employer outreach and education programs. A more limited online/2-1-1 program would require fewer staff. Potential for shared-staffing arrangement funded by more than one agency.</td>
<td>2 Way2Go has five staff members, but that includes employer outreach and education programs. A more limited online/2-1-1 program would require fewer staff. Potential for shared-staffing arrangement funded by more than one agency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task 5 - Simplified Alternatives

- Call Center that provides over-the-phone help to connect people to existing transportation services
- A service that accepts donated cars, repairs the vehicles, then awards them to families in need.
- A website or smartphone app that connects individual drivers for carpooling trips or occasional rides.
- A rural, non-profit taxi that allows people to request rides as needed or schedule rides in advance
- An expanded volunteer driver service for seniors (like the existing RSVP program).
Task 5 - Alternatives

- Which alternatives will work?
- Which alternatives will be preferred?
- Who will use?
- Other needs?
Task 6 - Public Outreach

- One month for public outreach – May (end first week of June)
- Vast area to cover – mostly rural
- Can’t hold a Public meeting to get public input

  - Stakeholders to reach out to the public
  - Public places like food pantries, libraries, get-togethers
  - Existing agency meetings
  - Pop-up booths at events
Task 6 - Public Outreach Survey

RURAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY

We need your input about the transportation problems you have, and which solutions you think might work — for you, your neighbors, your relatives and friends. If you or members of your household ever have transportation problems, please take a few minutes to fill out the front and back of this survey. Thanks for your help!

When you live in a rural area, getting to work, to college, to the doctor, or even to the grocery store can be difficult unless you can drive yourself. There are services to help people get where they need to go, but sometimes it’s hard to find information, and not everyone qualifies for rides.

Take the Survey!

1. Do you have a driver’s license?  
   - Yes  
   - No  

2. Do you have regular access to a vehicle that you can use?  
   - Yes  
   - No  

3. Are there transportation services in your area?  
   - Yes  
   - No  
   - Not Sure  

4. Do you have (check all that apply)?  
   - Smartphone  
   - Computer with internet  

5. How often do you have transportation problems?  
   - A few times a month  
   - About once a week  
   - More than once a week  
   - Almost every day  

6. If you have trouble with transportation, is there a time when it is harder to find rides?  
   - Weekends  
   - Early mornings  
   - Other:  

7. What kind of trips are the hardest to find rides for?  
   - Medical  
   - School  
   - Shopping  
   - All  
   - Work  

8. Please list places that you have regular problems traveling to/from (ex: Wilton Mall for work, or SUNY Adirondack in Queensbury for school)  

9. Towns where you live:  

10. Of these do you need to travel:  
    - Wheelchair access  
    - Help in/out of car  
    - Car seat  
    - Help scheduling rides  
    - Other:  

11. Please check any services you receive:  
    - Medicaid  
    - HEAP  
    - Temp. Assist. DSS  
    - HUD Housing Assist.  
    - Soc. Sec. Retirement  
    - WIC  
    - QSI/SSDI Disability  
    - VA Services  
    - SNAP  

12. Next Steps

Want to take the survey online? Go to: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AGFTCSurvey

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

- A call center that provides over-the-phone help to connect people to existing transportation services.
  - I would try it  
  - I would use it if it works  
  - I would never use it  

- A service that accepts donated cars, repairs the vehicles, then awards them to families in need.
  - I would try it  
  - I would use it if it works  
  - I would never use it  

- A website or smartphone app that connects individual drivers for curbing trips or occasional rides.
  - I would try it  
  - I would use it if it works  
  - I would never use it  

- A rural, non-profit taxi that allows people to request rides is needed or schedule rides in advance.
  - I would try it  
  - I would use it if it works  
  - I would never use it  

- An expanded volunteer driver service for seniors (like the existing RSVP program).
  - I would try it  
  - I would use it if it works  
  - I would never use it

Once your surveys are collected, AGFTC will work with our partners to come up with priority projects. A draft report will be available on AGFTC’s website, www.agftc.org in the next few weeks.

Let us know the best way to keep you up-to-date on transportation!

- Facebook  
- Twitter  
- Public Agency Staff  
- Website  
- Email  
- Newspaper  
- Other:  

Comments:
Task 6 - Public Outreach Survey

RURAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY

PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY

We need your input about the transportation problems you have, and which solutions you think might work – for you, your neighbors, your relatives and friends. If you, or members of your household, ever have transportation problems, please take a few minutes to fill out this survey. Thanks for your help!

When you live in a rural area getting to work, to college, to the doctor, or even to the grocery store can be difficult unless you can drive yourself. There are services to help people get where they need to go, but sometimes it’s hard to find information, and not everyone qualifies for rides.

The Adirondack/Glens Falls Transportation Council (A/GFTC) is trying to help. We’re working with Greater Glens Falls Transit, non-profits, and government agencies to find ways to get more people where they need to go.

Do you have a driver’s license?  
- Yes  
- No

Do you have regular access to a vehicle that you can use?  
- Yes  
- No
Task 6 - Public Outreach Efforts

- 14 different agencies/organizations reached out
- Sent paper copies
- Interagency Council of Warren, Washington, and Saratoga Counties Meeting on May 11th

Received **240** completed surveys: 193 paper, 47 Survey Monkey
Survey Results - Demographics

- Responses from 37 different municipalities
- 26% of responses from Glens Falls
- 14% of responses from Queensbury
Survey Results - Demographics

- 65% have a drivers license
- 59% have access to a vehicle
- 64% said transportation services are available
Survey Results - Demographics

- 71% have a smartphone
- 17% have neither a smartphone nor a computer with internet access
- 31% have both
Survey Results - Demographics

- 66% of respondents receive Medicaid
- 46% of respondents receive SNAP benefits
- 21% of respondents do not receive any of the listed services
Survey Results - Transportation

How often do you have transportation problems

- A few times a month: 19%
- About once a week: 15%
- More than once a week: 10%
- Almost every day: 56%
Survey Results - Transportation

What kind of trips are the Hardest to find rides for

- Medical: 31%
- Shopping: 29%
- Work: 23%
- School: 13%
- All: 4%
Survey Results - Transportation

Which of these do you need to travel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th># Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help Scheduling Rides</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Seat</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair Access</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help in/out of car</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Results – Potential Solutions

Favorable Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Favorable</th>
<th>Unfavorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call Center</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donated Cars</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website or App</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Taxi</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Driver Program</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Results – Potential Solutions

- Economic impacts of transportation
- Mode specific comments
- Location specific comments

Ways to keep in touch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th># Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Agency Staff</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulletin Boards</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

- Identify potential host for ITNCountry
- Rides to Wellness program
- Mobility manager position
- Ridesharing gateway like iPoolNorth
- Continue communication between transportation providers, human service providers and the MPO
- Monitor progress of ridehailing and consider future options
Name one of the unmet needs addressed by the study.
Assessment of Learning

- Name two of the recommendations to serve the unmet needs.
Assessment of Learning

- What is a good method to get public input for a Rural Transportation study?
Assessment of Learning

- What was the preferred alternative and why – volunteer drivers or professional drivers?
Thank you

Ami Parikh
Creighton Manning
aparikh@cmellp.com