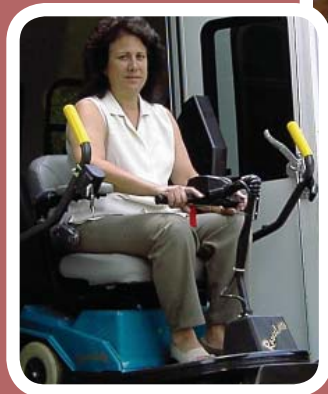




Passaic County Community Transportation Coordination Plan



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Chapter 1. Introduction and Background

Community Transportation

Community Transportation is a term that refers to a broad range of locally based mobility services. It is also known by other terms such as Human Service Transportation, Special Transportation, or Paratransit. Services are typically targeted toward mobility limited populations who lack ready access to a private vehicle due to age, disability, or affordability. Services can be provided by public agencies, non-profit agencies, private firms, and even volunteers. Smaller vehicles are typically used including taxis, vans, sedans, and mini-buses.

Community Transportation services are often flexible and personalized and can include:

- advance reservation based services where a clients requests the time and destination of the trip
- ‘Curb-to-Curb’ service, or even ‘door-to-door’ service using escorts
- Services tailored to the needs of agencies and social service programs, where vehicles transport clients to specific sites, and pick-up drop-off times correspond to program schedules
- Special equipment and assistance provided for those with physical / mental limitations

Community Transportation services can also be further augmented and extended by arranging transfers with the regularly scheduled fixed-route bus and rail services commonly referred to as ‘mass transit’

United We Ride and Coordination Planning

The development of the Passaic County Community Transportation Coordination Plan coincides with recent federal and state coordination initiatives. There has been recognition that an increasing number of federal/state agencies sponsor Community Transportation Programs for different purposes and targeted toward different clientele. Each program typically has its own operating guidelines, client eligibility, and reporting requirements. These requirements have led to a great deal of fragmentation among the local community transportation delivery systems leading to a proliferation of small single purpose operations.

This situation has had a negative impact on the availability and quality of services throughout the nation, in the following ways:

- Transportation service is often not the agency's primary mission, resulting in inadequate staffing or lack of expertise for all facets of operation
- Service providers may possess a limited vehicle fleet, lack specialized equipment, or lack back-up vehicles in case of breakdowns
- Over-dependence on single sources of funding
- Restricted access to services – Eligibility requirements can be confusing/frustrating to clientele
- Duplication of effort – multiple agencies serving similar destinations, wasted travel time, underutilized equipment
- Costly service – lack of economies of scale, inefficient use of funding, labor and equipment
- Service Gaps
 - Temporal - Service doesn't operate when it's needed
 - Geographic – Service doesn't go where it's needed
 - Eligibility – Service denied for whom it's needed

The recent passage of a federal transportation bill known as SAFETEA-LU actually mandates the preparation of coordination plans for entities that will access Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. A specific requirement for a coordination plan is identified for three programs:

- FTA Section 5310 – Transportation for Individuals who are Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities
- FTA Section 5316 – New Freedoms Program
- FTA Section 5317 – Job Access Reverse Commute Program

The Section 5310 and 5317 funding programs have already been used to support specialized transportation services in Passaic County. The Section 5316 – New Freedoms Program is a new funding source intended to support new public transportation services and alternatives targeted toward individuals with disabilities and emphasizing transportation to and from jobs and employment services.

In the future, Passaic County will need to have its coordination plan in place in order to be eligible to receive funding under the above three programs. In addition, New Jersey is also requiring an equivalent coordination commitment for the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program which provides significant funding to the Counties

The Passaic County Community Transportation Coordination Plan will become part of the regional plan to be developed by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA). Although the Federal government is in the process of drafting regulations defining the structure for coordination plans the most recent guidance indicates the plan is one that:

- identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited incomes
- provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and
- prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation.

This Final Report is intended to address each of the above guidelines.

Transportation Coordination

Transportation coordination is a process involving multiple agencies or stakeholders. In this process, these groups actively collaborate in order to accomplish their individual objectives in a mutually advantageous manner for the benefit of the community at large.

The objectives sought from coordination commonly involve:

- More cost-effective service delivery
- Increased capacity to serve unmet needs
- Improved quality of services
- Greater awareness of available services by clientele
- Easier means for clients to access available services

There exist various degrees or levels of coordination. These levels can be characterized as follows:

- **Cooperation** – a loose association of agencies where each retains a separate identity, and continues control of their own staff and vehicles
- **Coordination** – Formal arrangements are established among agencies for joint decision making. Resources are managed on behalf of a distinct ‘transportation system’
- **Consolidation** – Most resources are merged together to create a primary entity responsible for managing and operation services for the community at large. Other agencies may obtain required services through purchase of services agreements or other contractual arrangements

Within the overall management and operation of transportation services, there are a number of functions suitable for coordination as illustrated by the following examples:

Administrative Functions

- Shared staffing for compilation of reports, grant applications, etc.
- Joint programs for staff education and training
- Joint marketing and production of informational products

Operations Functions

- Designated agency or agencies serve trips to/from selected areas or destinations, serve trips on particular days, or times of day
- Vehicles shared by different agencies at different time of day
- Agencies purchase service on behalf of their clients from other service providers
- Agencies share overall funding of system expenses through fair and equitable allocation of costs – can involve joint purchasing of vehicles, equipment, fuel, maintenance, insurance, and staffing

Stakeholder Participation Study Steering Committee

The Passaic County Community Transportation Coordination Study has been guided by a Steering Committee. The membership of the Steering Committee represents the full range of key agencies that have a detailed understanding of transportation services in Passaic County and the transportation needs of the target population. These same agencies will be instrumental in guiding implementation of the recommendations set forth in this study.

The key agencies include:

State Level

- New Jersey Transit
- NJ Department of Human Services
- NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Regional Level

- North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (MPO)
- Meadowlink (a multi-county Transportation Management Association)
- TransOptions (a multi-county Transportation Management Association)

Passaic County

- Department of Senior Services, Disability and Veteran's Affairs (includes County Para-Transit Division)
- Board of Social Services
- Department of Human Services
- Planning Department
- Township of West Milford
- United Way of Passaic County

The Steering Committee also includes a consumer advocate and a representative from St. Paul's Community Development Corp., an organization serving the homeless and disadvantaged in Paterson.

The Steering Committee met seven times during the course of the study. A chronology and summary of each of these meetings is included below:

Meeting 1, September 2006 - The meeting focused on the study process, project goals and the steps that will be taken to identify the coordination alternatives that are feasible for Passaic County. Participants were asked to share their opinions regarding the need for improved transportation services and any concerns they may have about their involvement in a "coordination project." The United We Ride Framework for Action Community Assessment process was introduced. The forms for conducting the Community Assessment were reviewed and provided to the Steering Committee members. Members were asked to complete the forms and return them before the second meeting. This process is summarized in Appendix A, along with a summary of the Committee member's responses.

Meeting 2, November 2006 - The responses from the assessment forms were summarized and presented to the Committee. In general, the responses indicated that the majority of the members were of the opinion that Passaic County either needed to begin many of the recommended coordination activities, or that substantial additional action was still needed in order to achieve the desired level of coordination.

For more than 20 years New Jersey has been funding County transportation programs for older adults and persons with disabilities that emphasize coordination. It is known that other counties have implemented various coordination practices in their transportation programs. Therefore, it was decided that a survey of coordination efforts in other New Jersey counties would provide valuable input to the effort in Passaic County.

Meeting 3, December 2006 - The Committee was provided with quantitative and qualitative information regarding community transportation services in Passaic County. This information was contained in a technical memo – ***Technical Memo # 1: Inventory and Assessment of Key Community Transportation Providers in Passaic County***. Initial findings regarding the coordination efforts in other counties was presented in ***Technical Memo # 2: Survey and Peer Comparison of County Coordinated Transportation Programs in New Jersey***.

Meeting 4, January 2007 - This meeting provided the opportunity to resolve some issues regarding the previous technical memos. In addition, a discussion paper was presented entitled "*Strategies for Coordination*," which focused on three primary alternative approaches to coordination in Passaic County.

Meeting 5, February 2007 - A discussion paper was presented entitled "*Coordination Alternatives – Details and Implementation Issues*." This was prepared in response to member interest in further details of the alternatives discussed at the prior meeting,

including the range of costs that could be expected for each of the coordination alternatives.

The meeting also provided the opportunity to finalize the definitions of the target population groups (older adults, persons with disabilities and low income persons) – a necessary step in preparing maps that can illustrate transportation needs.

A special presentation on the history of coordination in Ocean County NJ was made by the Executive Director of Ocean Ride. Ocean Ride has been judged to be a very successful coordinated transportation operation.

Meeting 6, March 2007 - The meeting was based on the discussion paper, “*Moving on to Implementation – Outline for Strategic Plan*” presented to the Committee. The document addressed some earlier questions and comments, presented key issues to be resolved following the study, and presented some “Lessons Learned” from other coordination efforts around the country to better insure successful implementation.

Meeting 7, June 2007 – The final meeting included a discussion of the *Passaic County Community Transportation Coordination Plan – Draft Final Report* which was sent out to Committee members approximately two weeks prior to the meeting. Comments and corrections from the members have been incorporated into this Final Report.

Public Outreach

In addition to the ongoing involvement of the Steering Committee, opportunities were provided to disseminate information about the study to the public as well as to receive input. These outreach opportunities included the:

- Hosting of Open House Events
- Dissemination of Transportation Needs Questionnaire
- Creation of a dedicated Web Site describing the coordination planning effort, including the above items

Two Open House Events were held at the office of the Passaic County Planning Department. Nearly 400 individuals and groups were invited via a direct mailing. In addition, the events were described in a County press release which was placed on the County’s Web Site. The mailing targeted the senior and disabled community, faith-based agencies, and a number of non-profit social service related agencies serving the senior and disabled community, as well as low-income individuals. The events were held during May 2007, on two subsequent Wednesday evenings from 4 to 8PM. Although the events were not well attended, they did receive media interest, resulting in the staff being interviewed by a radio station and by a monthly publication.

A Community Transportation Needs Questionnaire was developed and disseminated along with the mass mailing for the open house events, as well as being placed on the County’s

Web Site The questionnaire is included in Appendix B. The questionnaire is designed to be completed by a user or potential user of community transportation, as well as family members, friends or, advocates of users. Responses are currently being received both by mail and e-mail and will be continue being compiled following the publication of the Study

The Study Web Site was publicized in the mailing for the Open House Events and in the County's press release. Conversely, the content of the site was used to publicize the events, and post the needs questionnaire. The site is accessible directly from Passaic County's Home Page and includes sections providing:

- An overview of the Study and a discussion of the major findings
- An indication of the next steps and upcoming events
- Items available for download, including the questionnaire
- A means for getting involved or contacting the planning staff
- Additional links for Community Transportation information

The final report will eventually be posted on the site. Following the completion of the Study it is envisioned that the site will continue and be reformatted to post information regarding available transportation services, and future progress regarding the implementation of coordination activities. The site will continue to be used to provide the public with the opportunity to submit comments regarding needs, and to provide feedback regarding issues involving the use or access of existing services.

There are two activities underway that will help Passaic County to move forward on coordination of community transportation services in the near future. First, several members of the Steering Committee are advocating for the consolidation of three existing transportation committees involved in community transportation, or as an alternative, placing those committees under a common "umbrella" structure.

The second activity is the selection and award of a grant from the Community Transportation Association of America to Passaic County for the purpose of allowing a team to attend the 2007 Institute for Transportation Coordination, to be held in Washington, DC in August 2007. Team members include representatives from county agencies that serve older adults, persons with disabilities and low income persons, along with the Transportation Management Association (TMA) for lower Passaic County.

Report Contents

The remaining chapters of this report present the following information:

Chapter 2 - Passaic County Overview presents an overall description of Passaic County and demographic data for the population as a whole and for the target populations

Chapter 3 - Assessment of Existing Transportation Services with a focus on specialized services for older adults, persons with disabilities, and low income persons

Chapter 4 - Assessment of Transportation Needs for older adults, persons with disabilities, and low income persons

Chapter 5 - Assessment of Coordination Strategies includes various strategies for both administrative and operational coordination

Chapter 6 - Peer Review – Coordination in Other New Jersey Counties an assessment of the results of coordination in ten other New Jersey counties compared to Passaic County

Chapter 7 - Recommended Coordination Strategy for Passaic County includes a summary of Steering Committee discussions leading to the recommended strategy

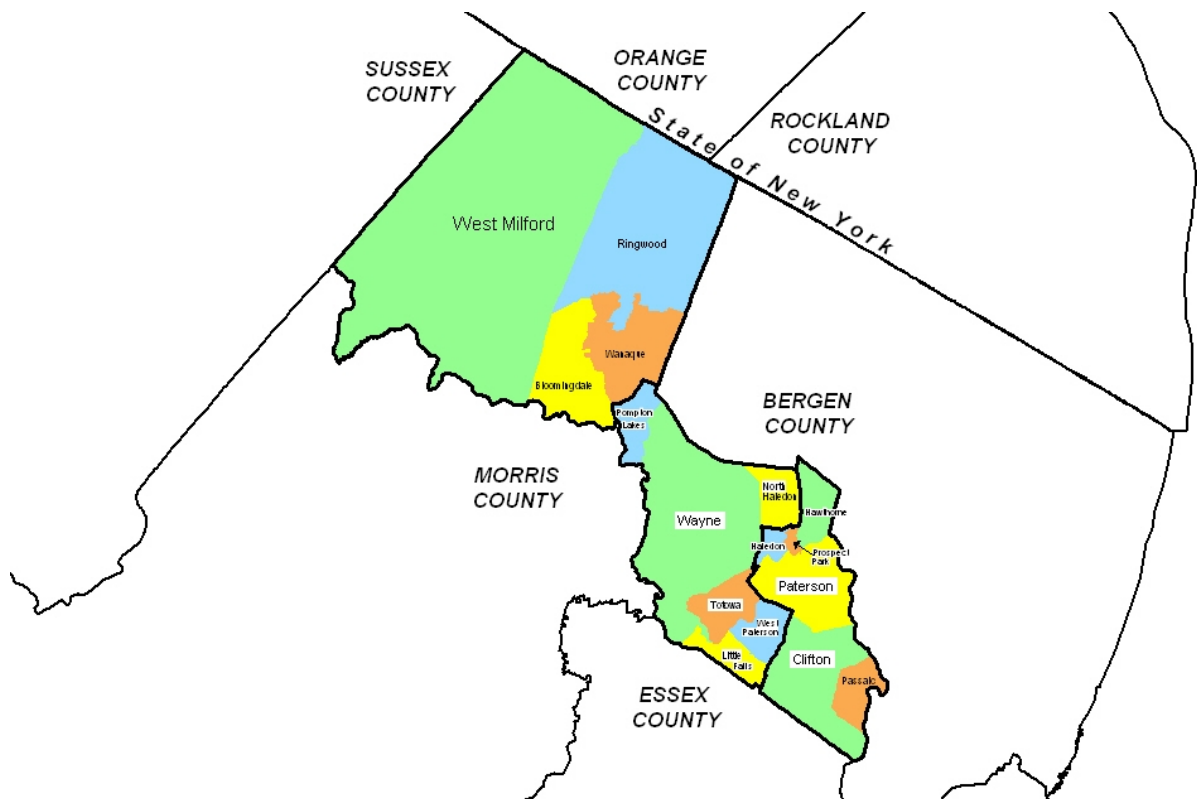
Chapter 2. Passaic County Overview

County Description

Passaic County is located within the northwestern quadrant of the Greater New York Metropolitan Region, a vast area that encompasses portions of three states, twenty-seven counties, approximately 10,000 square miles and a population of 19 million. Life within the County is profoundly shaped by its social and economic interactions and linkages with the rest of this region.

As depicted in Figure 2-1 the County is surrounded by Bergen County to the east, Essex County to the south, Morris County to the west and southwest, and Sussex County to the northwest. To the north and northeast, are the counties of Orange and Rockland, in New York State.

Figure 2-1 Passaic County Municipalities



The County, although only 197 square miles in area, has an elongated shape that is oriented from southeast to northwest, radially outward from the core of the Metropolitan Region. This setting results in a vast amount of diversity within a relatively small area, which is reflected in both the physical and developmental landscape. In essence, the County resembles a microcosm of the Metropolitan Region, containing within its borders both the sparsely settled and picturesque region of the New Jersey 'Highlands', as well as the highly urbanized and aging cities within its southern portions.

As indicated in Figure 2-1 it is useful to characterize the County in terms of three geographic regions; the Lower County, Mid-County, and the Upper County.

The Lower County consists of six municipalities: Clifton, Passaic, Paterson, Haledon, Hawthorne, and Prospect Park. This region consists of relatively flat or rolling terrain. The Passaic River forms a natural boundary to the east while the first ridge of the Watchung Mountains forms a boundary to the west. The area contains a concentration of major highways, transit routes, and railroads. The two Urban Centers of Paterson and Passaic both contain active central business districts with significant amounts of transit and pedestrian activity. The region is extensively developed. Its population density approaches 11,000 per square mile. Within this region, the redevelopment and upgrade of existing developed sites (especially industrial tracts) provides the primary engine for modernization and change.

The Mid-County consists of Little Falls, Totowa, West Paterson, Wayne, and North Haledon, and Pompton Lakes. The region is contains primarily rolling terrain interspersed by the second ridge of the Watchung Mountains. Its natural borders consist of the Passaic and Pompton Rivers. Most of the major highways and railroads within this region are concentrated along its southern and western margins. The area is characterized by its many auto-oriented large-scale commercial developments, which were extensively developed during the post war period. There still exists some limited amount of vacant land throughout this region, and redevelopment of older sites is also occurring to an increasingly significant extent

The Upper County contains Bloomingdale, Wanaque, Ringwood, and West Milford. The region consists largely of steep ridges and valleys, and is interspersed by the Wanaque River and its associated reservoir system. Natural boundaries are formed by the Ramapo Mountains to the east, the Pequannock River to the south and by the Bearfort Mountain ridge to the west. Only one major highway corridor and railroad skirt the southern tier of this region. Significant amounts of land are under public ownership. Though significant growth has occurred during the post war period, development is still largely of a scattered nature. The region is now subject to more rigorous land management and oversight by the recently enacted 'Highlands' legislation passed by the State. This will likely constrain and curtail major future development

Overall Population Demographics

As of the 2000 Census, there were 489,049 people, 163,856 households, and 119,614 families residing in the county. The population density of the county was 2,485 persons per square mile.

There were 163,856 households in the county. The average household size was 2.92 and the average family size was 3.42.

The age groupings of the population was spread out with 26.1% under the age of 18, 9.3% from 18 to 24, 31.3% from 25 to 44, 21.3% from 45 to 64, and 12.1% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 35 years.

The median income for a household (average size = 2.92 persons) in the county was \$49,210, and the median income for a family (average size = 3.42 persons) was \$56,054. The per capita income for the county was \$21,370. About 9.4% of families and 12.3% of the population were below the poverty line, including 17.3% of those under age 18 and 9.2% of those who are age 65 or over.

Figure 2-2 presents the distribution of the population among the municipalities and regions, along with the change in population from the 1990 Census to the 2000 Census. The overall increase in the Passaic County population from 1990 to 2000 was approximately 36,000, amounting to 8%. The latest U.S. Census data from the 2005 American Community Survey estimates that the total population of Passaic County decreased by approximately 1300 (total population of 487,756), amounting to a drop of 0.3%. Therefore, it appears that Passaic County has reached a stage where the total population is relatively stable.

The overall increase in population was concentrated in the Lower County region. The other regions had very little growth with the exception of Wayne Township in the Mid-County region.

The largest percentage changes in population from 1990 to 2000 occurred in the City of Passaic, the boroughs of Haledon and Prospect Park and Wayne Township.

Figure 2-2 Total Population and Population Change 1990 – 2000

Region	Municipality	1990*	2000*	Change	% Change
Lower County	Clifton	71742	78672	6930	10%
Lower County	Haledon	6951	8252	1301	19%
Lower County	Hawthorne	17084	18218	1134	7%
Lower County	Passaic	58041	67861	9820	17%
Lower County	Paterson	140891	149222	8331	6%
Lower County	Prospect Park	5053	5779	726	14%
Mid-County	Little Falls	11294	10855	-439	-4%
Mid-County	North Haledon	7987	7920	-67	-1%
Mid-County	Pompton Lakes	10539	10640	101	1%
Mid-County	Totowa	10177	9892	-285	-3%
Mid-County	Wayne	47025	54069	7044	15%
Mid-County	West Paterson	10982	10987	5	0%
Upper County	Bloomingtondale	7530	7610	80	1%
Upper County	Ringwood	12623	12396	-227	-2%
Upper County	Wanaque	9711	10266	555	6%
Upper County	West Milford	25430	26410	980	4%
	Passaic County	453060	489049	35989	8%

*Total population by municipality

Data by U.S. Census

Figure 2-3 presents the differences in population density among the various municipalities and regions. The areas with the highest population densities are all clustered in the Lower County, including the Cities of Passaic and Paterson and the borough of Prospect Park. The lowest population densities are found in the Upper County, particularly in West Milford Township and Ringwood Borough.

Passaic County is characterized by very large differences in population density among the various municipalities, with the City of Passaic having a population density that is approximately 64 times greater than West Milford Township. Another way of expressing these differences is to note that the two largest municipalities (West Milford and Ringwood) account for 55% of Passaic County's area, but only 7.9% of the population.

Figure 2-3 Population Density by Municipality

Region	Municipality	Area (square miles)	Population*	Population Density**
Lower County	Clifton	11.4	78,672	6,888
Lower County	Haledon	1.2	8,252	6,940
Lower County	Hawthorne	3.4	18,218	5,358
Lower County	Passaic	3.2	67,861	21,082
Lower County	Paterson	8.7	149,222	17,212
Lower County	Prospect Park	0.5	5,779	12,395
Mid-County	Little Falls	2.8	10,855	3,853
Mid-County	North Haledon	3.5	7,920	2,250
Mid-County	Pompton Lakes	3.2	10,640	3,347
Mid-County	Totowa	4.1	9,892	2,408
Mid-County	Wayne	25.1	54,069	2,151
Mid-County	West Paterson	3.1	10,987	3,565
Upper County	Bloomingtondale	9.2	7,610	825
Upper County	Ringwood	28.1	12,396	441
Upper County	Wanaque	9.2	10,266	1,114
Upper County	West Milford	80.0	26,410	330
	Passaic County	196.8	489,049	2,485

2000 U.S. Census

** Persons per square mile

Target Population Definitions

Federal guidelines define a coordination plan as one that - “identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited incomes.” In order to present demographic data about these three target populations it is necessary to provide a definition for each population. Since the Passaic County Coordination Plan must eventually become part of the Regional Coordination Plan that will be developed by NJTPA, it was important to obtain those definitions from NJTPA.

Before discussing the definitions, it is important to note that the choice of a particular definition only affects the part of the planning process dealing with the illustration of transportation gaps. Transportation gap is a term used to identify specific unmet transportation needs for the target populations. A transportation gap can exist for many reasons including ineligibility for service, limited hours of service,

This is particularly relevant for the definition of low income because there are many federal and state programs that use different definitions of low income to determine eligibility. The selection of one particular level of poverty for the maps described above does not mean that the transportation needs of individuals at a somewhat higher level of income will not

be considered. Part of the planning process includes reaching out to the agencies that serve these individuals to identify the specific problems that they have in accessing work, health care, shopping and other essential services.

More importantly, when considering coordinated operations the participating agencies determine the eligibility requirements for their clients because they will be using their existing funding sources to pay for client transportation. The coordinated service will work with any interested agency that is willing to pay a fair and equitable price for their transportation service requirements.

The following guidance on definitions of the target populations has been provided by NJTPA:

- Older Adults – 60 years or older (excluding different age requirements mandated within a federal program regulation)
- Low Income – 150% of Federal Poverty Level (used by FTA and TANF)
 - Annual income of \$14,700 for a family of one
 - Increase annual income by \$5,100 for each additional family member
- Persons with Disabilities – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) definition

The 2000 Census data presents information on persons with a mobility limitation as determined by questions concerning long-lasting conditions such as blindness, deafness, severe vision or hearing impairments; or conditions that substantially limit one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying. Presentation of data regarding the geographic density of persons with mobility limitations throughout Passaic County, as defined from those questions, will provide a good representation for planning purposes.

The ADA defines disability as “a physical or mental impairment that limits substantially one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment” (42 U.S.C 12101). This is relatively consistent with the Census data definition.

Older Adults

The senior (older adult) population, defined as those who are 60 years of age or older, decreased slightly (2%) from 1990 to 2000 based on the U.S. census data presented in Figure 2-4. The latest U.S. Census data from the 2005 American Community Survey estimates that the older adult population of Passaic County was 76,069, continuing the same trend of a slight decrease (a drop of about 1.5% in five years).

Every municipality in the Lower County region had a decrease in the older adult population. The Mid-County region gained in the number of older adults due solely to the increase in Wayne Township. All of the municipalities in the Upper County region had an

increase in the older adult population, but the overall change was relatively modest (approximately 1400 persons).

The largest absolute changes in the older adult population from 1990 to 2000 were in Wayne Township which gained 2277 persons (25.4%), and in the City of Clifton where the older adult population was reduced by 2470 persons (-12.8%)

Figure 2-4 Older Adult Population (60 years or older) by Region/Municipality

Region	Municipality	1990 Older Adult Population*	2000 Older Adult Population*	Change	% Change
Lower County	Clifton	19317	16847	(2470)	-12.8%
Lower County	Haledon	1709	1459	(250)	-14.6%
Lower County	Hawthorne	3938	3531	(407)	-10.3%
Lower County	Passaic	8089	7458	(631)	-7.8%
Lower County	Paterson	18452	17307	(1145)	-6.2%
Lower County	Prospect Park	812	709	(103)	-12.7%
Mid-County	Little Falls	2505	2502	(3)	-0.1%
Mid-County	North Haledon	1946	1956	10	0.5%
Mid-County	Pompton Lakes	2008	1833	(175)	-8.7%
Mid-County	Totowa	2689	2605	(84)	-3.1%
Mid-County	Wayne	8980	11257	2277	25.4%
Mid-County	West Paterson	2129	2196	67	3.1%
Upper County	Bloomingtondale	1035	1299	264	25.5%
Upper County	Ringwood	1163	1500	337	29.0%
Upper County	Wanaque	1560	1660	100	6.4%
Upper County	West Milford	2492	3148	656	26.3%
	Passaic County	78824	77267	(1557)	-2.0%

* U.S. Census data population 60 years and older

Persons with Disabilities

Figure 2-5 presents the number of persons with a disability in each municipality and region based on the 2000 Census. The percentage of the population with disabilities varies from a low of 12.1% in Wanaque to a high of 29.8% in Paterson. The vast majority (77%) of persons with disabilities are located in the Lower County, particularly in the cities of Paterson (over 40,000 persons), Passaic and Clifton, respectively.

Figure 2-5 Persons with Disabilities (5 years and older) by Region/Municipality

Region	Municipality	2000 Population with Disabilities*	% Population with Disabilities
Lower County	Clifton	14,137	19.2%
Lower County	Haledon	1,916	25.1%
Lower County	Hawthorne	2,958	17.3%
Lower County	Passaic	15,199	25.0%
Lower County	Paterson	40,068	29.8%
Lower County	Prospect Park	1,241	23.2%
Mid-County	Little Falls	1,700	16.5%
Mid-County	North Haledon	1,151	15.7%
Mid-County	Pompton Lakes	1,415	14.3%
Mid-County	Totowa	2,084	22.5%
Mid-County	Wayne	6,763	13.6%
Mid-County	West Paterson	2,133	20.8%
Upper County	Bloomingtondale	3,373	13.8%
Upper County	Ringwood	2,133	20.8%
Upper County	Wanaque	1,104	12.1%
Upper County	West Milford	3,373	13.8%
	Passaic County	97,455	21.7%

* U.S. Census data for persons 5 years and older

Low Income Persons

The population of low income persons, defined as those who are at the 150% poverty level or lower, increased substantially (36%) from 1990 to 2000 based on the U.S. census data presented in Figure 2-6. Based on the 2000 Census, the Lower County region contains the vast majority (90%) of the low income persons in the county. The largest numbers of low income persons are located in the Cities of Paterson (over 52,000 persons), Passaic and Clifton, respectively

Figure 2-6 Low Income Persons by Region/Municipality

Region	Municipality	1990 Low Income Population*	2000 Low Income Population*	Change	% Change
Lower County	Clifton	6562	9093	2531	39%
Lower County	Haledon	637	1709	1072	168%
Lower County	Hawthorne	1048	1660	612	58%
Lower County	Passaic	16579	24210	7631	46%
Lower County	Paterson	40104	52385	12281	31%
Lower County	Prospect Park	465	1086	621	134%
Mid-County	Little Falls	589	900	311	53%
Mid-County	North Haledon	553	607	54	10%
Mid-County	Pompton Lakes	402	763	361	90%
Mid-County	Totowa	694	811	117	17%
Mid-County	Wayne	1769	2416	647	37%
Mid-County	West Paterson	719	779	60	8%
Upper County	Bloomingtondale	348	422	74	21%
Upper County	Ringwood	458	604	146	32%
Upper County	Wanaque	573	718	145	25%
Upper County	West Milford	1744	1784	40	2%
Passaic County		73244	99947	26703	36%

*U.S. Census data - persons at 150% poverty level and lower

Chapter 3. Assessment of Existing Transportation Services

Introduction

For purposes of this study, we have classified existing transportation services in Passaic County into the following categories:

- Fixed route bus and rail services
- Specialized transportation services for older adults, persons with disabilities, and low income persons
- Other transportation services operated by public or non-profit agencies

For the most part, our focus is on specialized services for seniors, persons with disabilities, and low income persons because these are the target populations whose needs will be addressed, in large part, through coordination of those existing services. Fixed route bus and rail services are a vital part of transportation services for the entire community, including those members of the target populations who are able to access and afford such services. In those cases where distance prevents the target populations from using existing bus and rail services, coordination between fixed route and specialized services may offer a cost-effective option.

In general, when we refer to community transportation services in this report it will deal specifically with specialized services for older adults, persons with disabilities and low income persons.

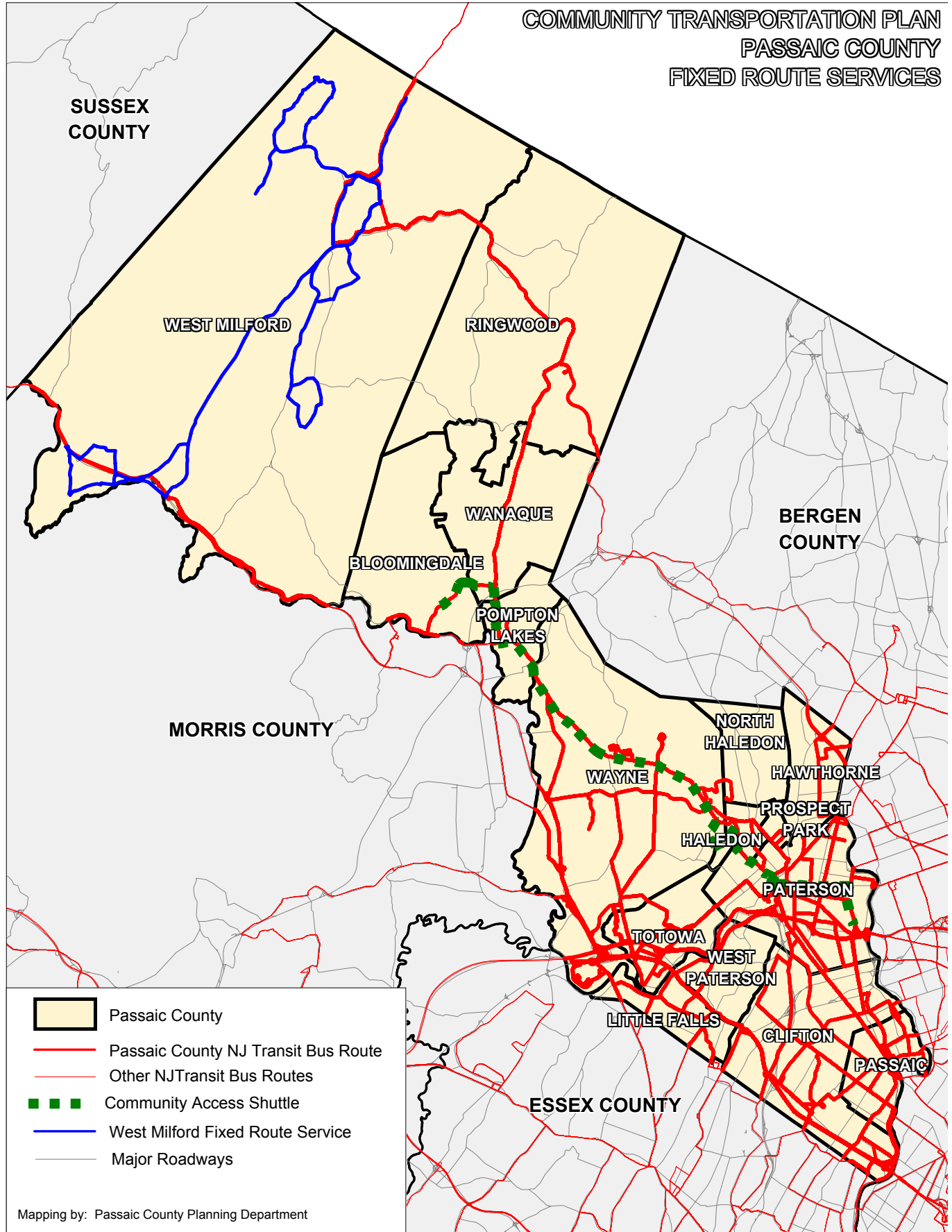
Fixed Route Bus and Rail Services

All of the major bus and rail services for the general public in Passaic County are operated by NJ Transit. There are over 30 NJ Transit bus routes that operate in or through the county. In addition there are 2 passenger rail lines in Passaic County with a total of 8 stations.

Figure 3-1 presents a map showing the existing fixed route bus services in Passaic County. In addition to the NJ Transit bus routes, the map shows the location of the Access Passaic Community Shuttle route and the West Milford modified fixed route service.

The Access Passaic Community Shuttle is a service that was established primarily to serve low income persons from highly urbanized areas traveling to employment centers in suburban areas. Therefore, even though it is open to the general public, we are considering it as a specialized service to be discussed in the next section.

Figure 3-1 Fixed-route Bus Service in Passaic County



The West Milford service is also unusual because it is a service in a rural area that operates as a modified fixed route, allowing for a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile deviation from the route if a passenger provides advanced notice. For this reason, we are also considering this service to be a specialized service.

One of the major observations from Figure 3-1 is the density of fixed routes in the lower part of the county, particularly in the cities of Clifton, Passaic and Paterson. This provides a very high level of mobility to the residents in the lower part of the county, including the target populations, as long as those individuals can access and afford to use those services. This topic will be addressed in more detail as part of Chapter 4 – Assessment of Transportation Needs.

Specialized Transportation Services for Older Adults, Persons with Disabilities, and Low Income Persons

As noted earlier, we are considering specialized transportation services as the primary community transportation services. In the following discussion, the specialized services are divided into the following categories:

- County Para-Transit System
- NJ Transit Access Link
- Board of Social Services Transportation
- Access Passaic Community Shuttle
- West Milford Modified Fixed route Service

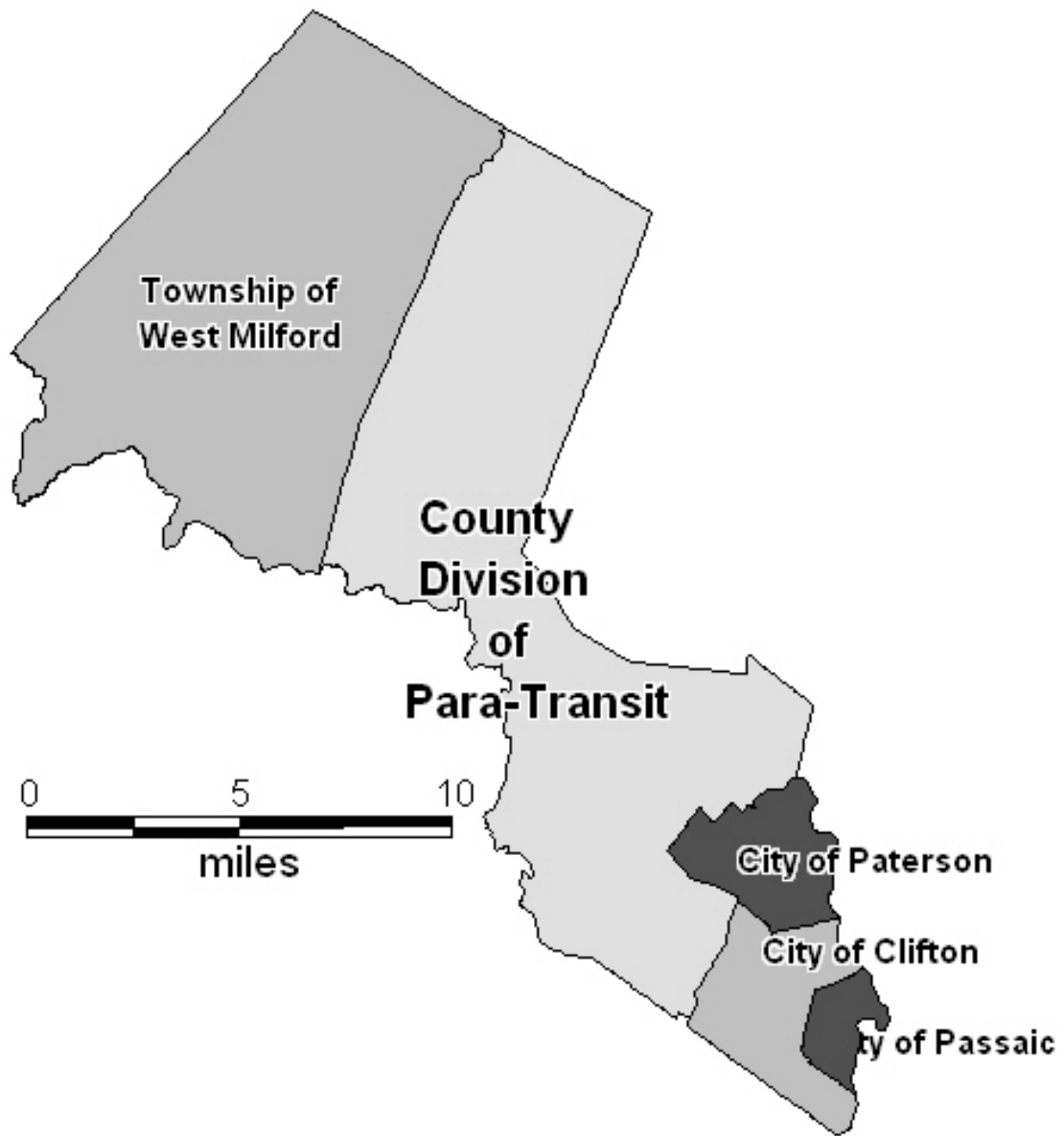
County Para-Transit System

The primary transportation service for seniors (older adults) and persons with disabilities in Passaic County is the Para-Transit System, a curb-to-curb service with approximately 2,000 active clients making about 155,000 annual trips. The Para-Transit System is operated by five different entities; four municipal-based providers (cities of Clifton, Passaic, Paterson, and the Township of West Milford), and the County Para-Transit Division which serves the remaining 12 suburban towns. In general, each provider is responsible for transporting eligible clients residing within their respective service area, regardless of the client's ultimate destination.

Figure 3-2 illustrates the service areas for each of the transportation providers.

A complete description and assessment of the performance of each of the five providers that comprise the County Para-Transit System is provided in the last section of this chapter.

Figure 3-2 County Para-Transit Service Areas



NJ Transit Access Link

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires complementary services in all areas where there are non-commuter fixed route transit service. NJ Transit provides this statewide service, known as Access Link which consists of curb-to-curb service to all persons who are ADA eligible. Passaic County is part of the Access Link Region 6 service area, along with Bergen and Hudson Counties. Access Link service is available to eligible clients who are making trips that fall within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile on either side of the 22 non-commuter NJ Transit bus routes that operate within or through Passaic County.

Figure 3-3 shows the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile ADA service area boundary (shadow area) for the bus routes in Passaic County. Due to the density of bus routes in the lower county area, virtually all of the ADA paratransit eligible persons living in the area can use Access Link as long as the trip destination is somewhere within an ADA service area, even if it is far away in another county.

Figure 3-3 also shows the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile route deviation area for the West Milford modified fixed route.

It should be understood that all persons with disabilities are not automatically eligible to use Access Link service, but must go through an eligibility determination process administered by NJ Transit.

Some of the key service policies and features of the Access Link service include

Reservation Process - NJ Transit accepts trip requests for Access Link service seven days a week from 7:30 AM to 4 PM, including holidays.

The current Access Link policy allows riders to request a trip as early as 14 days ahead.

Fares - NJ Transit sets its fares for Access Link service to be equal to the fare for the equivalent trip provided by fixed route bus and/or light rail. The Access Link fare does take into account NJ Transit fare zones and differences by time of day and day of the week.

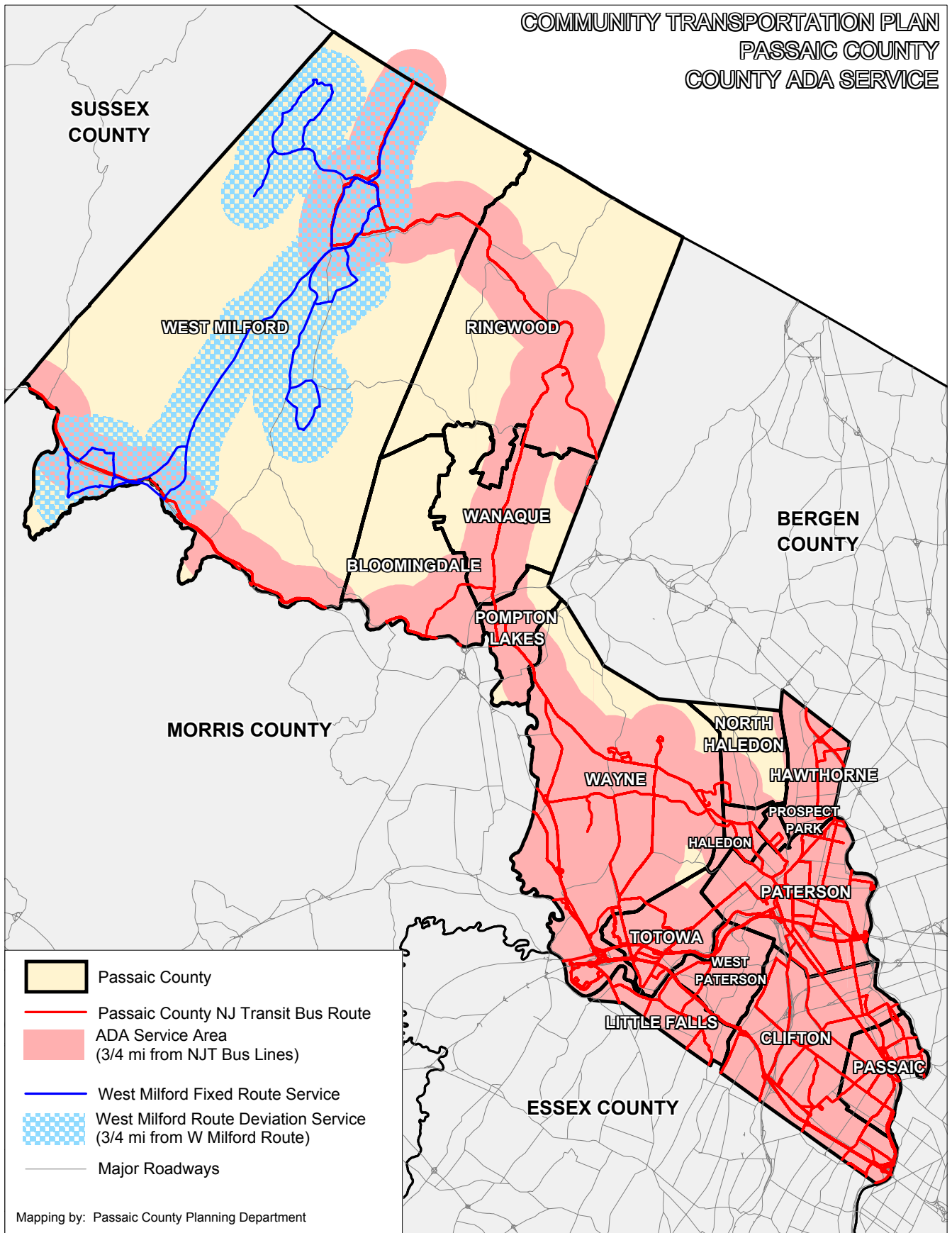
Trip Purpose - Access Link does not consider trip purpose when accepting and scheduling trip requests.

Days and Hours of Service – Access Link Services are available during the same days and hours as the fixed route service. This policy enables the service to be available throughout the day and into the evening, and in many instances services are provided late at night and on weekends, both Saturday and Sunday.

According to information obtained by the Passaic County Planning Department, approximately 15,700 Access Link trips were provided to county residents in 2005, amounting to an estimated 25% of the Region 6 trips.

Figure 3-3 ADA Service Area

**COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PLAN
PASSAIC COUNTY
COUNTY ADA SERVICE**



In terms of overall services provided to seniors and persons with disabilities in Passaic County, the Access Link trips represent approximately 10% of all trips

Board of Social Services Transportation

The Board of Social Services provides transportation for low income persons who are eligible for services under Medicaid (Title XIX), the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Program and Work First New Jersey/Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (WFNJ/TANF). Transportation is only provided for eligible services (medical and social services) that are reimbursable under these programs.

The Board of Social Services fleet consists of approximately 15 vehicles (cars). They employ eight full time drivers for their transportation program. The hours of service are from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm on weekdays. The primary service area is within Passaic County, but they will transport beyond county borders if the trip is approved by Medicaid.

Eligible individuals that are unable to use (access) the Board's vehicles are required to use one of the Medicaid/SSBG certified private transportation providers that are equipped to transport non-ambulatory passengers.

Based on data provided by the Board of Social Services for November 2006, it is estimated that they provide approximately 13,000 trips per year using their own vehicles.

Access Passaic Community Shuttle

The Access Passaic Community Shuttle is a fixed route service operating on a daily basis from Paterson to Bloomingdale. It was designed specifically to provide opportunities for urban residents to reach employment opportunities at health care and rehabilitation facilities such as the Preakness Health Care Center (2 sites) in Haledon and Wayne, the Wanaque Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation and the Healthcare Center at Bloomingdale.

The schedule provides for five round trips per day, starting at about 6:00 am and ending at midnight. There are two morning runs, two afternoon runs and one night run. There is no fare for trips from Paterson to the Preakness Center, and a fare of either \$2.00 or \$3.00 to other locations depending upon distance traveled. Fares are waived for patrons presenting a monthly pass issued by a participating employer.

The service is operated by a private contractor (Galaxy Transportation, Inc.). The funding for the service is provided by the FTA under the Federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program, and from NJDHS and local match funds. The JARC funds are administered by NJ Transit. Based on the most recent data from mid-2006, it is estimated that the shuttle service provides approximately 25,000 trips per year.

West Milford Modified Fixed Route Service

The Township of West Milford operates a modified fixed route bus service on weekdays from approximately 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. The service is open to the general public. The bus will deviate from the fixed route up to $\frac{3}{4}$ mile upon request. The standard one-way fare is \$1.00, with an additional charge of \$1.00 for a deviation from the route. There is a half fare program for seniors and persons with disabilities.

The bus takes approximately 90 minutes to complete the route which stretches across the township and includes several short loops (see Figure 3-1). The schedule provides for three complete trips and two shortened trips (one for a lunch break and one based on the end of the operating day) every day.

West Milford also operates one other bus route that only operates on Wednesdays from approximately 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Route deviation is also provided on this service.

Other Transportation Services

There exists a large group of additional transportation services operated by a variety of agencies. In a number of instances these services provide mobility to the same disadvantaged populations as the County Para-Transit System. For the most part however these services tend to be much more specialized and restrictive, serving:

- only a specific destination site or area
- only those clients participating in the particular program or activity of the sponsoring agency
- very limited trip purposes that correspond primarily to the agency's or program's mission

Due to these limitations, it is not likely that these providers would be suitable for inclusion as part of the County's initial coordination strategy. On the other hand, this information can be readily compiled as part of a resource directory that can be used for referrals.

Based on the Planning Department staff and Steering Committee familiarity, a list of potential agencies was compiled and a brief telephone interview was conducted to extract some basic information concerning their operation. This information is summarized below in Figure 3-4.

Figure 3-4 Summary of Other Transportation Providers

Provider Agency	Scale of Operation	Scope of Services	Service Oriented to:
State			
Montclair Univ.	Large	Limited	Students, Campus
William Paterson Univ.	Large	Limited	Students, Campus
County			
Sheriff's Dept.	Moderate	Limited	Jurors, Courthouse
Preakness Healthcare Center	Limited	Limited	Site Residents
Camp Hope Commission	Large	Moderate	Seniors, Children
Community College	Limited	Limited	Students, Campus
Municipal			
Clifton			Rail Station Commuters
Haledon	Limited	Limited	Seniors
Hawthorne	Limited	Limited	Seniors
Paterson	Large	Moderate	Downtown
Totowa	Limited	Limited	Seniors
Wayne	Moderate	Limited	Seniors
Private Non-Profit			
Buddies of New Jersey	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients Low-Income
Coalition of Aids in Passaic County	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients Low-Income
Center for Family Resources	Moderate	Limited	Agency Clients Children
Strengthen Our Sisters	Moderate	Moderate	Agency Clients Low-Income
Greater Paterson OIC	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients Low-Income
Daughters of Miriam	Moderate	Limited	Agency Clients, Residents
Barnert Hospital	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients
Catholic Family and Community Services	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients
Christian Health Care	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients
Jewish Family Services of No. Jersey	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients
Living in Freedom	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients
St. Joseph's Home	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients
Community Options	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients
Passaic Co. Elks	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients
ALFA Development	Limited	Limited	Agency Clients

NOTE:

Scale of the Operation is based on Size of Fleet or Amount of Resources used to Operate

1 vehicle=Limited, 2 or 3 vehicles=Moderate, 4 or more vehicles or \$100,000/year=Large

Scope of Services is based on Range of Geographic Destinations, or Range of Trip Purposes Served. One primary destination and Trip Purpose=Limited, Multiple Destinations, or Purposes=Moderate

It is noted that Meadowlink (a Steering Committee member) has been provided additional resources by the NJ Department of Human Services to conduct a far more detailed and comprehensive inventory of community transportation providers throughout Passaic and adjoining Counties. This will include private operators and less formal operators such as those provided by faith-based agencies.

Assessment of County Para-Transit System Performance

Overview of Assessment Process

The County Para-Transit System is by far the largest specialized transportation program in Passaic County, with an overall budget of approximately \$4 million per year to transport some 155,000 passengers. As part of the coordination planning process, it was important to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the overall system. Since the operation consists of five separate systems, it was necessary to conduct an individual assessment of each operation. The objective of the assessment was to collect data on the operations, performance and service policies of each system.

The methodology for conducting the assessment consisted of two steps:

1. Review of data collected by the Passaic County Planning Department
2. Telephone interviews with management and operating personnel at each system

Basic data regarding the operational performance of each system was obtained from a statistical report prepared by the Passaic County Planning Department. The report is based on data provided by each of the five providers that make up the Passaic County Para-Transit System. The statistical report provides monthly data on passenger trips, vehicle miles and vehicle hours. The operations data for demand response trips (based on an advance reservation) and subscription trips (regularly recurring trips not requiring advance reservations) are presented separately, and the data is also categorized according to funding source (Casino Revenue, Title III, Veterans and Easter Seals).

The data on trips, miles and hours for each provider made it possible to compute a number of operational performance measures. The most important performance measure was productivity – defined as the number of passenger trips per vehicle service hour. This is important because it is a direct measure of the paratransit system's ability to meet the transportation needs of the community (provide trips) with a given amount of resources (vehicle service hours). For this reason we will refer to the productivity of a system as a measure of efficiency and effectiveness. It should also be noted that there are many factors that can affect the productivity of a paratransit system, therefore it is important to understand as much about these important factors and how to measure them. For the purposes of this study, we examined the following given the data that was available:

- **Average trip length** – defined as vehicle miles divided by passenger trips – paratransit systems with a large service area typically have higher average trip lengths which results in lower productivity
- **Average vehicle speed** – defined as vehicle miles divided by vehicle hours – paratransit systems operating in congested urban areas will typically have lower average vehicle speeds which results in lower productivity

In addition to their value in conducting the assessment of performance, these measures are useful in identifying data problems and inconsistencies. For example, a preliminary review of the data showed that in some cases the reported vehicle hours were too low, resulting in operational performance numbers that were not realistic, e.g., average speed in service in excess of 40 miles per hour (mph). This inaccuracy in the reporting of vehicle hours required that some additional data be collected

Since the scope of the project did not provide for the collection of detailed data (vehicle runs and driver shifts) necessary to compute vehicle service hours accurately for each provider, a decision was made collect some basic information that could be used to make an estimate of vehicle service hours as part of the telephone interview process.

In order to estimate vehicle service hours, each provider was asked about the number of full-time and part-time drivers and the number of hours each category of driver works during a typical week. Allowing ten days off for vacations and holidays, there are 50 work weeks in each year. It is recognized that individual systems may provide more or less days off, but slight variations will not affect the operational performance comparisons. Therefore, each driver has an annual total of 50 x average hours per week available (paid hours) to work. Of that annual total available driver hours, it is estimated that 10% of the time will be spent on non-driving activities such as vehicle safety checks, fueling and designated breaks. Therefore the driver has a maximum of 90% of their available hours to provide service. The total annual vehicle service hours for each provider is the sum total of the driver hours available to provide service.

There are several ways to define vehicle service hours. The estimating procedure described above will come closest to the following definition:

Vehicle Service Hours – measured from the time the vehicle leaves the garage/base till the time it returns, less any scheduled breaks, including shift breaks and lunch breaks

In addition to driver hours, the following information was also collected as part of the telephone interview:

1. Who is eligible for the service – who determines eligibility?
2. Trip purpose – any priorities or limitations
3. Days and hours of service
4. Service Area – how far can customers travel?

5. Fares or Donations
6. Advance Reservation Requirements (for demand responsive services)
7. Number of vehicles in fleet and maximum number used in daily operations (peak vehicles)

Service Policies and Operational Performance

This section provides a description of the service policies and operational performance for each of the following providers in the County Para-Transit System:

- City of Clifton – Senior Outreach
- City of Passaic – Senior Affairs
- City of Paterson – under contract to Father English Center
- Township of West Milford – Senior Services
- County Para-Transit Division – Department of Senior Services, Disabled and Veteran’s Affairs

The **City of Clifton – Senior Outreach Service** operates curb-to-curb service for eligible individuals from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on weekdays. Most trips are within the county, but they will transport passengers to destinations as far as five miles from the county border. In order to be assured of a trip most individuals will call in their trip reservations at least two weeks before the trip. Trip requests made close to the travel date will be accommodated on a space available basis.

There is no formal eligibility determination process. The key information regarding age and/or disability is collected during the initial intake process when the person first calls. There is no requirement to submit any documentation so it is essentially an honor system. It should be noted that in a system of this size, the drivers will be quick to identify and notify management of any passengers that do not apparently fit the criteria. They do check if a person is enrolled in Medicaid, and if the answer is affirmative the caller is requested to call their social worker to arrange for transportation.

They will try to accommodate all eligible passengers, but passengers with critical transportation needs, such as dialysis and medical trips, are considered to be priority trips.

There is no fare for the service, but there is a suggested donation of \$1.00 per trip.

Using the operations data provided by the Planning Department and the estimating procedure for vehicle service hours, the operational performance for the City of Clifton - Senior Outreach Service is as follows:

- Maximum vehicles used in service 5
- Annual Vehicle Service Hours 11,000
- Annual Vehicle Miles 120,000
- Annual Trips 33,000
- Productivity (trips per vehicle service hour) 3.0
- Average Service Speed (mph) 10.9
- Average Trip Length (miles) 3.6

The **City of Passaic – Senior Affairs Service** operates curb-to-curb service for eligible individuals from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm on weekdays. Most trips are within the county, but they will transport passengers to destinations as far away as approximately 10 miles from the county border. In order to be assured of a trip most individuals will call in their trip reservations at least two weeks before the trip. Trip requests made close to the travel date will be accommodated on a space available basis.

There is no formal eligibility determination process. The key information regarding age and/or disability is collected during the initial intake process when the person first calls. There is no requirement to submit any documentation so it is essentially an honor system.

Most trips are for medical, dialysis, nutrition and food shopping

There is no fare for the service, but there is a suggested donation of \$1.00 per trip.

The statistical data on vehicle miles for the City of Passaic service was incomplete; therefore the operational performance data was limited to the following:

- Maximum vehicles used in service 5
- Annual Vehicle Service Hours 7,300
- Annual Vehicle Miles N/A
- Annual Trips 23,700
- Productivity (trips per vehicle service hour) 3.2
- Average Service Speed (mph) N/A
- Average Trip Length (miles) N/A

The **City of Paterson Senior and Disabled Transportation Service** is provided under a contract with the Father English Center. They provide curb-to-curb service for eligible individuals from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on weekdays. Most trips are within the county, but they will transport passengers to destinations as far away as 10 miles from the county

border. In order to be assured of a trip most individuals will call in their trip reservations at least one to two weeks before the trip. Trip requests made close to the travel date will be accommodated on a space available basis.

During the initial telephone intake, callers are asked a variety of questions to establish their basic transportation information (type of mobility aid, need for special assistance, etc.). If the initial request comes as a referral from another agency that has its own eligibility screening process, such as referrals from the Department of Aging, that will be sufficient to verify eligibility. Individuals with disabilities calling for service are requested to submit a letter from SSI to verify eligibility, except for veterans traveling to the VA Hospital who only have to provide their SS number.

The Father English Center does not prioritize any trips – it is a first come, first served system. However, they will contact the doctor’s office or dialysis center on behalf of a passenger who requests a trip in a time slot that is already fully booked, in order to negotiate a time change to an available time slot. This effort has proven successful in many cases

There is no fare for the service, but there is a suggested donation of \$1.00 per trip. The contractor provides donation envelopes for the riders on a regularly scheduled basis.

The operational performance for the City of Paterson - Senior and Disabled Transportation Service is as follows:

- Maximum vehicles used in service 8
- Annual Vehicle Service Hours 14,400
- Annual Vehicle Miles 138,000
- Annual Trips 38,700
- Productivity (trips per vehicle service hour) 3.2
- Average Service Speed (mph) 9.6
- Average Trip Length (miles) 3.6

The **Township of West Milford – Senior Services** transportation program operates curb-to-curb service for eligible individuals from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm on weekdays. Most trips are within the county, but they will transport passengers to destinations as far away as Hackensack. The general principle is that given sufficient advance notice, they will provide service “anywhere within reason.” In effect, all trips are accommodated on a space available basis.

There is no formal eligibility determination process. The key information regarding age and/or disability is collected during the initial intake process when the person first calls. There is no requirement to submit any documentation so it is essentially an honor system.

They accommodate all eligible passengers on a first come – first served “space available” basis.

There is no fare for the service, but there is a suggested donation of \$1.00 per trip.

The operational performance for the Township of West Milford Senior and Disabled Transportation Service is as follows:

- Maximum vehicles used in service 4
- Annual Vehicle Service Hours 6,700
- Annual Vehicle Miles 75,000
- Annual Trips 9,700
- Productivity (trips per vehicle service hour) 1.4
- Average Service Speed (mph) 11.2
- Average Trip Length (miles) 7.7

The **County Para-Transit Division Senior and Disabled Transportation Service** is part of the County’s Department of Senior Services, Disabled and Veteran’s Affairs. They provide curb-to-curb service for eligible individuals from 6:00 am to 5:00 pm on weekdays. Most trips are within the county, but they will transport passengers to destinations as far away as New York City if the trip can be accommodated. For a trip to such a distant location, there has to be sufficient time in the schedule to allow the driver to wait until the passenger is ready to return. They will take trip requests up to a month in advance but they do not start scheduling trips until two weeks before. All trip requests are accommodated on a space available basis.

There is no formal eligibility determination process. The key information regarding age and/or disability is collected during the initial intake process when the person first calls. Individuals that are SSI-eligible are directed to the County Board of Social Services to arrange for transportation. There is no requirement to submit any documentation so it is essentially an honor system.

They accommodate all eligible passengers on a first come – first served “space available” basis.

There is no fare for the service, but there is a suggested donation of \$1.00 per trip.

In this case it was necessary to make some adjustments to the reported data. The vehicle miles reported by the County Para-Transit Division to the Planning Department resulted in average service speeds and average trip lengths that were much lower than expected. A detailed evaluation of the methodology used to report vehicle miles showed that the County Para-Transit Division was measuring and reporting “live miles” (miles when one or more passengers are on the vehicle) instead of total vehicle miles. In order to estimate total miles, a sample driver completed trip manifest was analyzed, with the result that total

vehicle miles were approximately 1.7 times greater than the reported miles. Accordingly, the reported mileages were adjusted by this factor in order to provide estimates of vehicle miles for the computation of operational performance.

The operational performance for the County Para-Transit Division - Senior and Disabled Transportation Service is as follows:

• Maximum vehicles used in service	23
• Annual Vehicle Service Hours	41,200
• Annual Vehicle Miles	292,000
• Annual Trips	55,800
• Productivity (trips per vehicle service hour)	1.4
• Average Service Speed (mph)	7.1
• Average Trip Length (miles)	5.2

Comparison of Operational Performance

In order to provide some context for the comparison of operational performance for each of the five providers, it is necessary to examine the basic factors that can affect operational performance including population density and trips per capita.

Population density provides one baseline measure for comparing the productivity of paratransit systems. In general, higher population density leads to a situation where there are more opportunities to create routes for vehicles that can result in higher passenger loads, i.e., higher productivity. Paratransit systems operating in areas with similar population densities can be expected to have similar productivities unless there are some other factors that restrain demand. Such factors include the amount of funding available, the economic conditions in the area, and the process for deciding eligibility.

Trip rate (trips per capita) is a measure of the propensity of the target population in the service area to use the paratransit system. In the case of the Passaic County Para-Transit System, the target population includes older adults (60+) and persons with disabilities. Since the older adult population includes many persons with disabilities (according to the 2000 Census, in Passaic County, 42% of the population 65 years and over has a disability), using population density and trip rates based on older adults will provide the most accurate basis for comparisons

Figure 3-5 presents population density and trip rates for each of the five transportation providers and for the county as a whole, based on the older adult (60+) population.

Figure 3-5 Population Density and Trip Rates for the Five County Para-Transit Providers

Provider	Older Adult (60+) Population	Older Adult Population Density	Total Trips	Trips per Older Adult
Clifton	16,847	1,475	33,000	1.96
Passaic	7,458	2,316	23,700	3.18
Paterson	17,307	1,996	38,700	2.24
West Milford	3,148	39	9,700	3.08
County Division	32,507	348	55,800	1.72
County Overall	77,267	393	160,900	2.08

The data illustrates the significant difference in older adult population density – ranging from 39 persons per square mile in West Milford Township to more than 2,300 persons per square mile in the City of Passaic. The three cities (Clifton, Passaic and Paterson) all have relatively high older adult population densities, therefore one can expect that the productivity of their paratransit operations will be comparable. The Township of West Milford can be expected to have a lower value of productivity due to very low population density typical of a rural area.

The trip rates in each of the provider service areas are all in the same approximate range of 2 to 3 trips per older adult capita per year. This data suggests that each of the providers has been able to reach out to the target population (older adults and persons with disabilities) and provide the level and quality of service which results in fairly comparable trip generation rates.

The following provides a comparison of the operational performance and service policies of the five providers.

Figure 3-6 presents the key operations data and performance measures for each of the providers and for the system as a whole. As noted earlier, the statistical data on vehicle miles for the City of Passaic service was not available; therefore, we could not compute average service speed and miles per trip for their operation

Figure 3-6 Key Operations Data and Performance Measures for the Five County Para-Transit Providers

Service Provider	Vehicles used in service	Annual Vehicle Service Hours	Annual Vehicle Miles	Annual Trips	Productivity (trips per hour)	Average Service Speed (mph)	Miles per Trip
City of Clifton	5	11,000	120,000	33,000	3.0	10.9	3.6
City of Passaic	5	7,300	N/A	23,700	3.2	N/A	N/A
City of Paterson	8	14,400	138,000	38,700	3.2	9.6	3.6
Township of West Milford	4	6,700	75,000	9,700	1.4	11.2	7.7
County Para-Transit Division	23	41,200	292,000	55,800	1.4	7.1	5.2
System-wide Total	45	80,600	N/A	160,900	2.0	N/A	N/A

Prior to discussion of the information contained in Figure 3-6, it should be noted that Annual Vehicle Miles and Annual Trips are based on unaudited data reported by the providers, and Annual Vehicle Service Hours that were estimated from information on driver hours gathered from the providers during telephone interviews. For these reasons, the performance measures should be considered as estimates and not precise measures of efficiency and effectiveness.

The key performance measure in Figure 3-6 is the productivity of each provider since it is an indicator of efficiency and effectiveness. The productivity of the providers in Clifton, Passaic and Paterson are very close, all within the range of 3.0 to 3.2 passenger trips per vehicle service hour. This level of productivity is typical of systems that have a mix of subscription and demand response trips, where some of the subscription trips are also group trips (more than one passenger between the same origin and destination).

The productivity of 1.4 for West Milford is likely due to the fact that they make much longer trips (7.7 miles per passenger trip vs. 3.1 to 5.2 miles for the other providers) due to their large service area and low population density. Long trips are inherently difficult to schedule efficiently and they often result in significant amounts of deadheading (no passengers on board).

The County Para-Transit Division also has to serve a large area (12 towns) so one would expect that their productivity would also be low. It was somewhat surprising that their productivity is the same as West Milford (1.4) because the older adult population density is nearly ten times greater in the service area covered by the County Para-Transit Division. The County Division is also providing approximately six times more rides in an area that is

only 17% greater than West Milford, therefore it should be possible to create more efficient routes and increase the productivity.

There are many possible reasons for this lower than expected productivity for the County Para-Transit Division; therefore, it is not possible to identify the exact reason without conducting a more detailed analysis of their operations. This type of analysis, which would require collection and examination of completed trip manifests, was beyond the scope of this study.

Figure 3-7 provides a summary comparison of the key service policies for each of the providers

Figure 3-7 Key Service Policies for the Five County Para-Transit Providers

Service Provider	Eligibility Determination	Service Area	Trip Purpose - Priorities/ Limitations	Days and Hours of Service
City of Clifton	Honor system	County-wide, plus up to 5 miles outside county border	All trips are eligible, but dialysis and medical trips take priority.	Mon - Fri, 8 am - 4 pm
City of Passaic	Honor system	County-wide, plus up to 10 miles from county border	Mostly medical, dialysis, nutrition and food shopping.	Mon - Fri, 8:30 am - 4 pm
City of Paterson	Referrals from other agencies; SSI letter for disability, except for veterans traveling to the VA Hospital (SS#)	County-wide, plus up to 10 miles from county border	First come – first served, but will negotiate times with doctor's office or medical center to assure transportation	Mon - Fri, 8 am - 4 pm
Township of West Milford	Honor System	Mostly county-wide, but anywhere within reason with proper advance notice.	First come – first served, space available basis	Mon - Fri, 7 am - 4 pm
County Para-Transit Division	Honor system	Mostly county-wide, but anywhere within reason with proper advance notice.	First come – first served, space available basis	Mon - Fri, 6 am - 5 pm

It is evident that there are some significant differences in the service policies for each of the providers. With regard to eligibility determination, most of the providers are public agencies responsible for dealing with older adults. They simply collect the required information during the first call from the customer and do not require any documentation for eligibility determination. In Paterson, the service is provided under contract by the Father English Center, so they generally depend upon the eligibility screening provided by

the referring agency. Persons with disabilities (other than veterans traveling to the VA Hospital) who contact the Father English Center directly must provide documentation.

The policies with regard to service area also vary. Eligible residents in Clifton are restricted to trips that do not go beyond a five mile limit from the county border. Residents of West Milford and the other townships served by the County Para-Transit Division have no mileage limit restrictions, as long as their trip requirements can be met at the time they make their reservation.

Paterson, West Milford and the County Para-Transit Division all book trips on a first come – first served basis without any trip purpose prioritization. The Father English Center in Paterson will negotiate an appointment time change with a doctor's office or medical facility in order to fit a trip into an available time slot. In Clifton and Passaic a priority is placed on medical, dialysis and other vital services trips

There is also a considerable variation in the hours of service for each provider. The cities of Clifton, Passaic and Paterson all operate a limited service that begins at 8:00 or 8:30 am and ends at 4:00 pm on weekdays. West Milford adds one additional hour of service by starting at 7:00 am, and the County Para-Transit Division adds another two hours of service by starting at 6:00 am and ending at 5:00 pm

An examination of these overall service policies leads to two conclusions:

- Eligible older adults and persons with disabilities in Passaic County are subject to differing levels of paratransit service quality depending upon their residence location

The two providers operating in more rural areas of the county (West Milford and the County Para-Transit Division service area) offer their customers a higher level of service quality (no trip prioritization, longer trip distances, longer hours of service) than the providers in the more.

Chapter 4. Assessment of Transportation Needs

Introduction

One of the elements of a coordination plan is an assessment of the transportation needs of the target populations. This assessment typically focuses on the concept of transportation gaps, where these gaps can come in various forms such as:

- **Spatial Gaps** – areas where there is no paratransit service
- **Temporal Gaps** – times when an eligible person wants to travel, but there is no paratransit service
- **Eligibility Gaps** – paratransit service is available, but one or more of the target populations is not eligible to use the service
- **Information Gaps** – paratransit service is available, but eligible individuals are not aware of these services or how to access them

The following subsections present our assessment of the transportation needs of each of the target populations separately. This includes consideration of spatial, temporal and eligibility gaps. Information gaps are not quantified at this time, but they will be considered as part of the coordination alternatives in the next chapter.

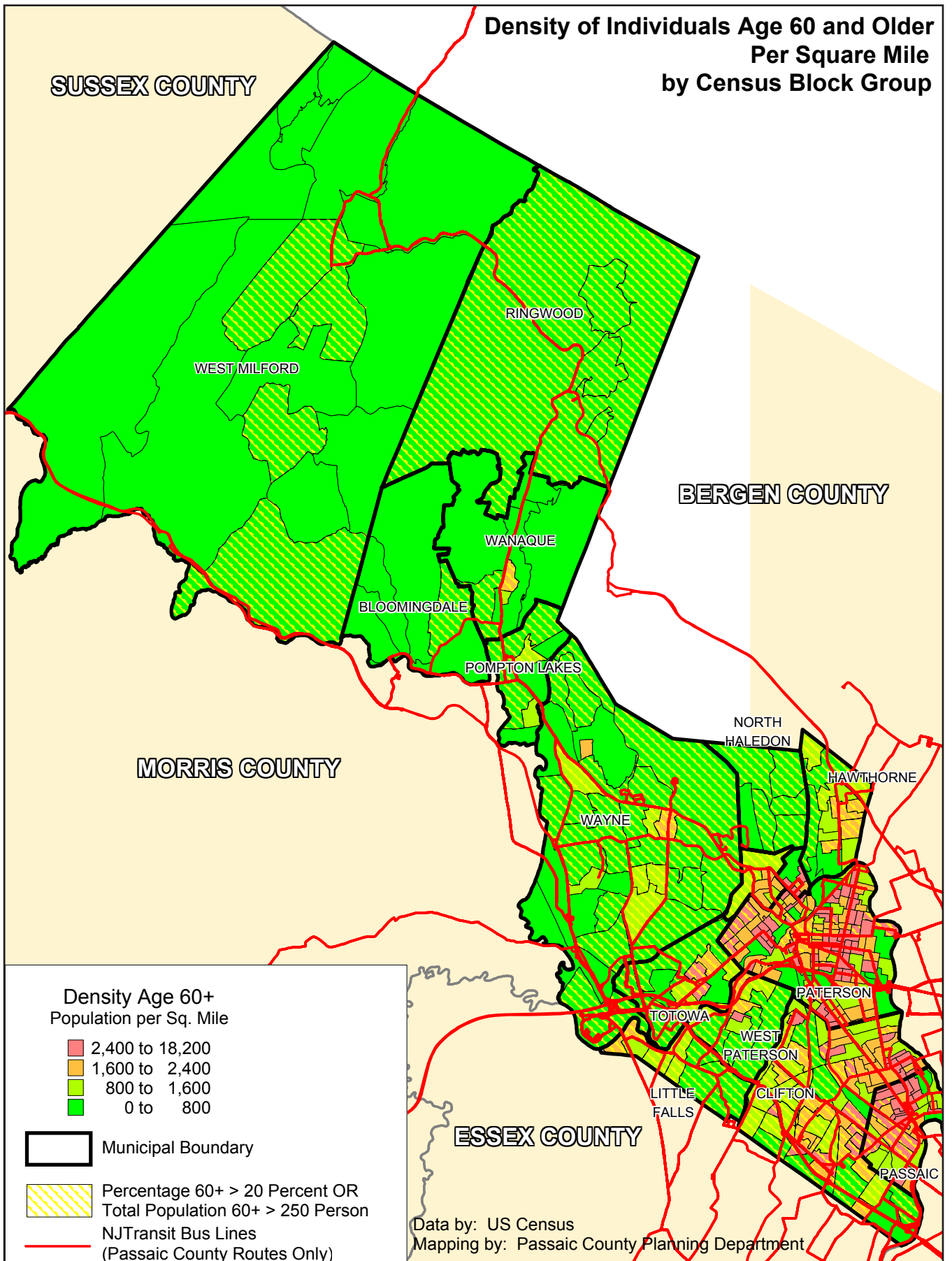
Assessment of Transportation Needs for Older Adults

There are two major providers of transportation services for older adults in Passaic County – the fixed route bus service provided by NJ Transit and the County Para-Transit System. The bus service offers the opportunity to travel without the need to make advanced reservations, therefore it can be considered to be more convenient, as long as the bus route(s) serve the trip origin and destination. The County Para-Transit System is an attractive option for any older adult willing to pre-plan their travel because they are picked up at their home (or other trip origin) and brought directly to their destination – avoiding the need to walk to and from bus stops. Another major advantage is that no fare is required on the Para-Transit System.

Since older adult transportation needs can be addressed by either provider (as well as the other smaller transportation programs serving older adults) it is necessary to examine both options.

Figure 4-1 presents a basic map that is often used to illustrate transportation gaps. The map illustrates the density of the older adult (60+) population in Passaic County, along with an overlay of the NJ Transit bus routes that serve the county.

Figure 4-1 Senior Population Density



The highest concentrations of older adults in Passaic County can be found in the cities of Passaic and Paterson. The City of Clifton has some areas with high concentrations of older adults, but the rest of the county has no similar pattern.

As might be expected, NJ Transit has an extensive network of bus routes in the lower part of the county, particularly in Passaic and Paterson. A close examination of the map shows that virtually every census block group with the highest concentration of older adults (2,400 to 18,200 per square mile) has a NJ Transit bus route passing through it. Therefore, the older adults in these areas have the advantage of choice between bus service and the County Para-Transit System to meet their travel needs.

Many NJ Transit bus routes operate 7 days a week, with hours of service from early morning to late at night. Seniors with access to these bus services can travel virtually anywhere they want in the region, at most any time of day.

The situation in the upper portion of the county is very different. There are only one or two NJ Transit bus routes in each of the municipalities. Older adults living in these areas can only utilize the buses if they live close enough to the bus route and their destination is near a route. Older adults who cannot access the NJ Transit buses have only one option – the County Para-Transit System.

There is one exception to the above - older adults living in West Milford Township have the option of using the modified fixed route bus service operated by the township. With a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile route deviation possible, approximately one-half of the township is within the service area (see Figure 3-3). This service has limited hours (approximately 9:00 am to 5:00 pm) and only serves the area within the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile boundary.

In summary, older adults living in the lower part of Passaic County have two major options to serve their travel needs, while those in the upper part of the county (with the exception of West Milford as noted above) are dependent upon the County Para-Transit System. The unmet transportation needs of any older adult who is dependent upon the County Para-Transit System are as follows:

- Trips that are beyond the service area limits established by the transportation provider – spatial transportation gap
- Trips that are outside the hours of service (early morning, evening/night, weekends) established by the transportation provider – temporal transportation gap

In addition, two of the transportation providers (Clifton and Passaic) have indicated that they prioritize vital trips such as medical and nutrition. Under such conditions, many of the more discretionary quality-of-life trips for seniors will not likely be met.

Assessment of Transportation Needs for Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities who are able to access and use fixed route buses have the same transportation options as older adults – NJ Transit buses or the County Para-Transit System. All other persons with disabilities who are unable to access or use a fixed route bus also have two options – NJ Transit Access Link (ADA paratransit) services and the County Para-Transit System.

Access Link service is designed specifically to provide service that is comparable (complementary) to the fixed route service, including hours of service and a fare that is equivalent to the same trip on the bus. The only significant differences are the need to make an advance reservation on Access Link limiting any spontaneous travel, but this is balanced by the fact that Access Link provides a more convenient service from origin to destination.

Figure 4-2 presents a map showing the density of the persons with disabilities in Passaic County, along with an overlay of the NJ Transit bus routes that serve the county.

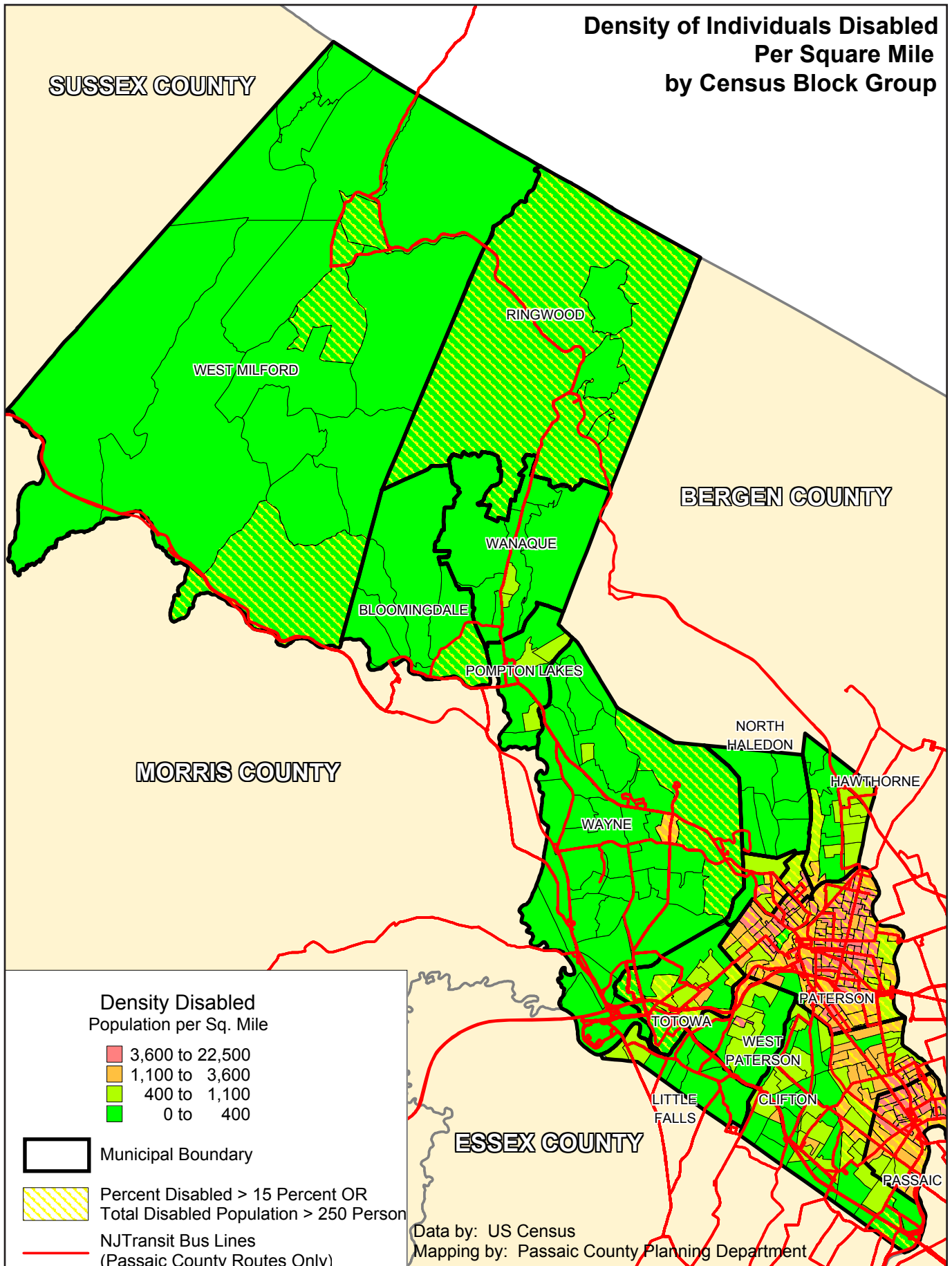
Not surprisingly, the concentrations of persons with disabilities are similar to those for older adults, with the highest densities in Passaic and Paterson, and to a lesser extent in Clifton. Based on these similarities, the overall transportation needs situation for persons with disabilities is almost the same as that described for older adults. In this case we have to distinguish between the transportation needs of those who are eligible for Access Link and those who are not.

Individuals who are eligible for Access Link and whose trip origin and destination is within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of a NJ Transit bus route can use the service to make trips that are not possible on the County Para-Transit System due to the length or timing of the trip. Due to the large number of bus routes in the lower part of the county, the whole area is available for Access Link trips (see Figure 3-3); therefore, individuals living and traveling in this area should have no problems with unmet transportation needs. Even in the upper part of the county, the Access Link service area is fairly extensive, so that eligible persons living in those areas should also have numerous options for their travel needs.

Persons with disabilities who are not eligible for Access Link and eligible individuals who reside outside the Access Link service area have to deal with the limitations of the County Para-Transit System. The unmet transportation needs of these individuals are the same as a older adult who is dependent upon the County Para-Transit System, as follows:

- Trips that are beyond the service area limits established by the transportation provider – spatial transportation gap
- Trips that are outside the hours of service (early morning, evening/night, weekends) established by the transportation provider – temporal transportation gap

Figure 4-2 Population Density - Persons with Disabilities



As noted earlier, two of the transportation providers (Clifton and Passaic) have indicated that they prioritize vital trips such as medical and nutrition. Under such conditions, it is likely that many quality-of-life trips for persons with disabilities will not be met.

Assessment of Transportation Needs for Low Income Persons

The transportation needs situation for low income persons is completely different than that for older adults and persons with disabilities. In this discussion we are referring to low income persons who are neither older adults nor persons with disabilities. Low income persons are essentially dependent upon NJ Transit buses for their travel needs. Individuals whose income is low enough to qualify for Medicaid eligibility can receive transportation for medical and social services purposes from the County Board of Social Services. General Assistance and Food Stamp clients seeking jobs or training are eligible for transportation services until they are employed. TANF clients are eligible for transportation services for work related activities.

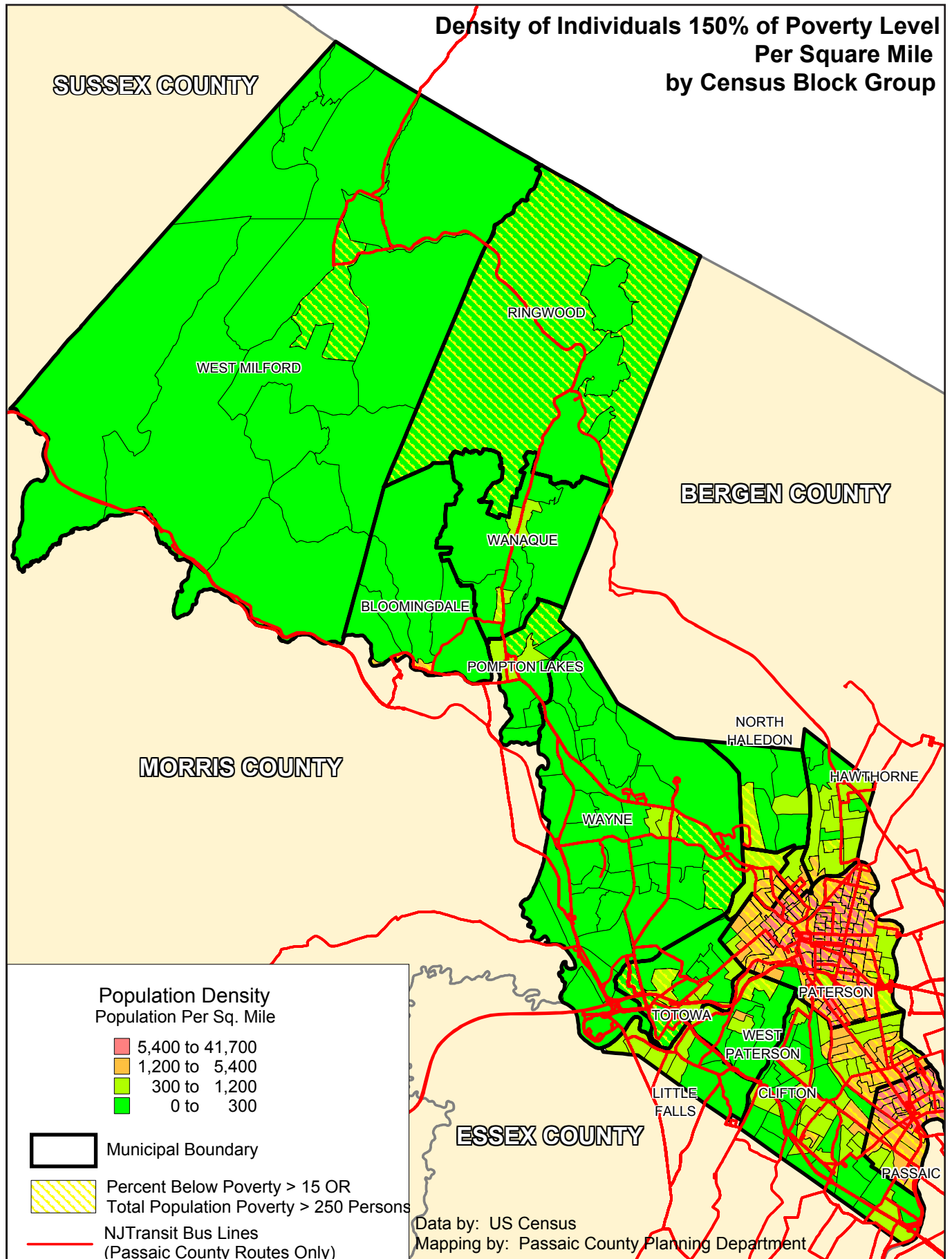
The only transportation service that was set up specifically to serve low income persons is the Access Passaic Community Shuttle - a fixed route service operating on a daily basis providing opportunities for urban residents to reach employment opportunities at health care and rehabilitation facilities. This is a limited service which although open to the general public is really designed from a scheduling standpoint to serve 4 specific employment sites. The funding for the service is provided from NJ Transit through the Federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program. Based on the most recent data from mid-2006, it is estimated that the shuttle service provides approximately 25,000 trips per year, and survey information indicates most of those trips are made by low income persons.

Figure 4-3 presents a map showing the density of low income persons in Passaic County, along with an overlay of the NJ Transit bus routes that serve the county.

The highest concentration of low income persons is found in the cities of Passaic and Paterson. The section of the City of Clifton that lies between Passaic and Paterson also has some block groups with a relatively high density of low income persons. These areas are well served by NJ Transit bus routes; therefore it is likely that most of the transportation needs of low income persons living in these cities can be met by NJ Transit buses.

For the most part, all of the areas where there are significant numbers of low income persons throughout the county (shown as block groups with 15% or more, or a total population of 250 or more low income persons) have one or more NJ Transit bus routes passing through. Since we do not know the exact geographic distribution of these individuals, it is not possible to make an estimate of the percentage of low income persons in those areas who live too far away from the bus routes to make effective use of the service.

Figure 4-3 Population Density - Low Income Persons



On an overall basis, the data and the map indicate that a large majority of low income persons in Passaic County do have access to NJ Transit buses.

One issue that has been explored in the past, as part of the 1998 Community Transportation Plan is the extent to which low income persons can use NJ Transit buses to conveniently reach potential locations where there are concentrations of firms employing entry level or limited skills personnel especially in adjoining Counties. It was found that it is difficult to access many of the sites in the Fairfield area of Essex County, the Route 46 and Rt. 23 Corridors of Morris County, and the Meadowlands area of Bergen and Hudson Counties.

It is recommended that as part of any continuing coordination planning effort, all of the potential employment centers within reasonable traveling distance which might provide job opportunities for low income persons be identified. If any center is not served by NJ Transit, it may provide an opportunity for NJ Transit to consider a route expansion or adjustment to provide the service. Alternatively, it could be considered as a possible new project to be funded by JARC.

Chapter 5. Assessment of Coordination Strategies

Introduction

The assessment of coordination strategies for Passaic County must be based on the current community transportation situation in the county. As noted in the earlier sections of this report, the County Para-Transit System is the predominant transportation option for older adults and persons with disabilities. Therefore, it should be at the center of any consideration of coordination strategies.

There are many different ways to define coordination of community transportation systems. For the purposes of this study we will consider coordination strategies that fall into two broad categories:

- Administrative Coordination Strategies – this covers a range of cooperative actions between transportation providers and purchasers that do not involve any combination or integration of operations
- Operational Coordination Strategies – cooperative actions between transportation providers that involve some combination or integration of operations

Administrative Coordination Strategies

This category of coordination strategies encompasses the following types of cooperative actions for improving community transportation:

- Centralizing information
- Sharing resources
- Joint purchasing

Centralizing Information

The ready availability of information about community transportation resources in a county or region is vital to ensure that members of the target population are aware of all the ways that their transportation needs can be fulfilled. In most cases, such as in Passaic County, there is no single place where one can find useful information about all of the community transportation resources. Useful information, in addition to basic contact information, includes eligibility requirements, service area, hours/days of operation and fares/donations. The idea is that the individual (or agency representative) seeking transportation can go to a single source and find out if there is a community transportation resource that can be used to make a trip.

The usual way to accomplish this centralization of information is to create a Community Transportation Resource Directory containing the above information for all public and

human service transportation providers. Private transportation companies (e.g., taxis) can also be included, particularly if they offer discounted transportation for any of the target population. The Community Transportation Resource Directory can be made available on the web for direct viewing and/or printing out a copy for those individuals without access to the Internet. There should also be provisions for individuals to obtain a copy of the directory in a large-print or other accessible format.

The preparation of a Community Transportation Resource Directory is fairly straightforward, but there is considerable time and effort required to collect all of the information and put it in a usable format. A group of agencies, including both public and human service transportation providers, working together in a cooperative effort, would provide the ideal approach to centralized information. They would also be knowledgeable about any changes that have taken place with any of the providers, so that information could be included as part of a regularly scheduled update process.

This type of coordination effort is very applicable to the situation in Passaic County where all of the community transportation services operate independently.

Sharing Resources

The sharing of transportation resources such as vehicles and facilities; support services such as software, driver training staff, drug testing staff and even program management staff can result in significant savings for agencies. In this strategy, we are specifically referring to using resources at different times such as with vehicle sharing, or in the case of software sharing, at the same time, but with separate databases.

Vehicle sharing requires that agencies have transportation needs that are very distinct in time, and that they are willing to work very closely together. One example of a successful coordination effort involving vehicle sharing is the Dakota Area Resources and Transportation Services (DARTS), a Minnesota-based private, non-profit human service agency which operates 37 vehicles. DARTS shares the operation of a Section 5310 vehicle with two other entities, the City of Farmington Senior Center and St. Michael's Church. DARTS applied for and received the 5310 vehicle, paid the local match, and is responsible for the insurance and maintenance. DARTS operates the vehicle in its regular service Monday through Thursday. The City of Farmington Senior Center operates the vehicle on Fridays as well as for special events after hours and on weekends. The Senior Center provides the driver and pays for the fuel as well as a fee for maintenance and insurance. St. Michael's Church operates the vehicle on weekends using volunteer drivers, pays for the fuel, but pays no other fee for the use of the vehicle. The vehicle is titled to, and is insured by, DARTS. All drivers, including those of the Senior Center and the church, must complete DARTS drivers' training program and be certified to drive by DARTS.

The above example illustrates the multiple issues that must be addressed by all parties in order to come up with a workable solution. In the DARTS example, it is clear that one large private non-profit transportation provider took the initiative to set up this vehicle

sharing arrangement. There is no equivalent situation in Passaic County. The current vehicles operated by the County Para-Transit System providers are all utilized during the week. The vehicles could be made available to other agencies on the weekend, but it would require a careful analysis of the insurance requirements for the county-owned vehicles and the development of an equitable fee or billing arrangement for use of the vehicle.

Sharing of driver training resources is one coordination strategy that appears to be very applicable to Passaic County. Each of the five providers in the County Para-Transit System is responsible for training their own drivers; therefore there will be some differences in training approach and curriculum. The same will be true for the other community transportation providers in the county.

The sharing of driver training resources can take place in different ways, including a common unified training program designed by the participating agencies, and where each provider pays in accordance with the number of personnel being trained. Another way is for the agencies to agree on a common set of training courses that are offered locally and then coordinate with each other to ensure that all drivers (new and those receiving refresher training) attend the same courses. In general, the unit cost of training drivers is reduced as the size of the class increases.

The strategy of sharing training sources is not limited to drivers; it can be applicable to all operating personnel, particularly those who have to interact with customers.

Joint Purchasing

This strategy focuses on coordinating certain functions commonly undertaken by transportation providers, with the ultimate goal of achieving greater efficiency and eliminating redundant activities. Examples include the merger or consolidation of such functions as vehicle maintenance, purchase of insurance, and substance abuse testing. Through group-purchasing of common products or services, participating providers could increase their purchasing power and get more “bang for the buck.” These activities could also result in improved service quality because of multiple interests working to achieve similar outcomes. For example, the coordination of vehicle maintenance can enhance vehicle reliability by having more days in service and fewer road calls. The useful life of valuable capital resources can be extended and the accuracy of maintenance records is increased. Coordinated vehicle maintenance can reduce costs through bulk purchasing of parts and negotiating lower labor rates from third party maintenance vendors, if needed.

The coordination of vehicle maintenance and joint purchase of insurance and substance abuse testing are strategies that may be beneficial in Passaic County. The coordination of vehicle maintenance is likely to be the easiest to evaluate. The County already provides some vehicles to each of the four city and township based providers, therefore the prime candidate for coordination of vehicle maintenance would be the County through the County Para-Transit Division. The evaluation would consist of an examination of the

vehicle maintenance costs for each provider, including cost per vehicle mile and mechanic labor rates. It will also be important to examine the time and miles involved in bringing vehicles for maintenance at the County facility and the ability of the facility to handle the additional vehicles. If the evaluation shows the potential for significant cost savings, there will be an incentive for all parties to move forward with implementation.

The joint purchasing of substance abuse testing services can also be evaluated in a straightforward manner. It may be that some of the providers are already using the same contract testing service. Through a consolidation of their requirements into a single contract they should be able to obtain a cost savings over their current contract prices.

The joint purchasing of insurance is usually much more difficult to evaluate because the paratransit vehicles are usually insured under a fleet policy that includes all of the vehicles operated by the city, township or county. Under these conditions it is possible that there would be little or no savings because the cost reductions from moving paratransit vehicles from one large fleet insurance policy to another large fleet policy would be minimal. There is also the complexity of assuring that the drivers of the vehicles being switched to a new policy meet the requirements of the insurance carrier.

Operational Coordination Strategies

The term, operational coordination, refers to cooperative activities between transportation providers that have an impact on their operations. A simple example regarding the use of vehicles will help to illustrate the concept. Under the previous discussion of sharing resources as one of the strategies under administrative coordination, vehicle sharing was discussed. Under that strategy, the participating providers continue their operations without any change. The underutilized (or unutilized) vehicle simply becomes available to another agency based on a fair and equitable sharing of the costs for use of the vehicle.

Under operational coordination, participating agencies agree to consolidate or merge certain operating functions under a single operating entity. The simplest and most common approach to this type of coordination is the consolidation of call center functions, including reservations, scheduling and (in some cases) dispatching. In this case, each participating agency will be assured that their clients will be transported, but the decision on which vehicle they will travel on will be based on scheduling efficiency. The choice of assigning client trips will be based on the total number of vehicles under the control of the call center, providing many more opportunities to assign trips onto a single vehicle for increased efficiency.

Under operational coordination, it is very likely that clients from different agencies will be on the same vehicle at the same time. This type of situation can be considered ride sharing, as contrasted to vehicle sharing discussed earlier. It is also referred to as commingling of clients.

Operational coordination strategies range along a continuum from the consolidation of call center functions described earlier to a comprehensive consolidation involving both call center and service delivery functions. In this case, the participating agencies may not be involved in service delivery at all. That will depend upon their ability to deliver transportation services in a cost effective manner as one of the carriers under contract to a single operating entity, often known as a broker.

Under this type of comprehensive consolidation, the single entity may provide all trips with its own vehicles (referred to as the centralized model), or it may contract with other carriers for all service delivery functions (decentralized model). There are also instances where the single entity uses a combination of both in-house transportation services and contract carriers..

The primary benefits of these operational coordination strategies is that they:

- Create cost-efficiencies by consolidating the trip reservations, scheduling staffs (and potentially the dispatching staffs as well)
- Maximize the opportunities for ride sharing resulting in a more efficient operation

All of the operational coordination strategies are potentially applicable to community transportation in Passaic County. The following example scenarios will help to explain how two operational coordination strategies at opposite ends of the coordination continuum would be applicable.

Scenario 1 – Call Center for the County Para-Transit System

A single unified call center would be established for the five providers that comprise the County Para-Transit System. The call center will be responsible for handling all trip reservations and scheduling those trips onto any provider’s vehicle based on the creation of the most efficient routes. The call center will use one of the proven reservations and scheduling software packages that are available to support this type of service. The individual providers will be responsible for controlling (dispatching) their own vehicles and drivers. The determination of eligibility for service will remain with the providers or with the municipality sponsoring the service. The call center will be responsible for all recordkeeping and performance monitoring.

The costs of the call center would be allocated between the five providers based on the percentage of use. This would most likely be based on the percentage of trips made by residents in each of the five service areas; however, like all matters in coordination, the determination of the appropriate cost allocation formula would be up to the parties that are operating/funding the service.

Scenario 2 – Consolidated Community Transportation System

In this scenario, all of the key community transportation services identified in Chapter 3, with the exception of NJ Transit Access Link ADA Paratransit Service, would become the

responsibility of a single entity – which for the purposes of this report will be identified as the Passaic County Community Transportation Broker. The broker will handle all trip reservations, scheduling and service delivery. The agencies contracting for transportation services for their clients/customers would retain responsibility for determining eligibility. The broker will provide transportation services through contracted services with a variety of transportation providers. These transportation providers can include the existing agencies involved in providing community transportation services, other private non-profit agencies and private for-profit transportation companies (including taxi companies).

One major responsibility of the broker will be to first identify all of the providers that can meet the service level and service quality requirements of the agencies that need transportation for their clients/customers. As a next step, the broker will negotiate contracts with qualified and interested providers, including the terms and conditions for providing service and the reimbursement rate for services rendered. Reimbursement can be on a cost per trip, cost per vehicle mile or cost per vehicle hour basis, whichever is more appropriate for the particular type of transportation to be provided.

The implementation of any operational coordination strategy is a process that requires the full interest and cooperation of all agencies that are responsible for funding and/or delivery of transportation services. This process takes a long time because it is necessary to build the working relationships and trust required for these organizations to accept the fact that a major change in their way of doing business will lead to improvements in service quality and the cost-effectiveness of the entire system.

Chapter 6. Peer Review – Coordination in Other New Jersey Counties

Introduction

New Jersey's experience with coordination reaches back to 1984/85 when the original legislation for the Casino Revenue Fund was approved. The Senior Citizens and Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program (SCDRTAP), which is funded by the Casino Revenue Fund (7.5% of the dollars collected), is designed to:

- Strengthen the County role in transportation
- Foster coordination among various county transportation programs and funding sources (Offices on Aging, Transportation and Human Services) by requiring annual applications, coordination planning, a local Citizens Advisory Committee and a local public hearing process to address the use of funds and the provision of transportation services
- Focus efforts on increasing mobility and accessibility for seniors and persons with disabilities in an effort to maintain their independence as part of the community
- NJ Transit retains 15% of the SCDRTAP funds (85% is allocated to the counties by formula) for administration of the program (maximum of 1.5%), with the balance used to fund bus and rail accessibility improvements

The specific service provided varies from county to county, but each of the 21 counties provides a transportation service for seniors (older adults) and people with disabilities. Some counties have been able to secure additional grant dollars for rural transit or income disadvantaged residents, but casino revenue is generally the largest single source of funds for these local services. Most counties provide a demand-response service where registered clients call ahead and schedule a trip for medical, nutrition, shopping, educational or any other purpose. Non-emergency medical transportation is the most significant and largest trip purpose in these systems. Some counties also provide modified fixed-route or shuttle types of services which run on a regular schedule.

Given this extensive time period to work on coordination issues, it is believed that many counties have made significant progress in achieving a high level of coordination in their transportation programs. Therefore, it was decided that a survey of coordination efforts in other New Jersey counties would provide valuable input to the coordination planning effort in Passaic County. The selection of counties was based on proximity to Passaic County and on counties that had been identified as having significant coordination programs in place. The following ten counties were selected:

- Bergen County
- Essex County
- Hudson County

- Middlesex County
- Monmouth County
- Morris County
- Ocean County
- Somerset County
- Sussex County
- Warren County

A telephone interview was conducted with each of these counties to determine the following information:

Service Description

1. Description of the type of service provided
2. Who is eligible for the service – who determines eligibility?
3. Trip purpose – any priorities or limitations
4. Days and hours of service
5. Service Area – do they go beyond county borders
6. Fares or Donations
7. Advance Reservation Requirements

Operations Data

1. Who operates the service (Contractor, Agency, county, municipality)?
2. Number of vehicles used in daily operations (maximum)
3. Number of drivers – full time/part time and average hours per week
4. Annual service hours
5. Annual passenger trips

Cost/Funding Data

1. Annual cost of transportation program
2. Funding sources and estimate of percentage of funds from each source

Coordination Questions

1. Is there any group or committee currently working on coordination of transportation programs in the county? Are there any plans to form such a group?

2. Do you coordinate your transportation service or collaborate in any way with other transportation providers inside or outside the county?
3. Are you aware of any other coordination efforts in adjoining counties or at the state level?

The following section presents the results of the telephone interviews, including an overview of the transportation service provided in each county and any key findings regarding coordination.

Peer Review Results and Key Findings

A summary of the transportation services provided in each county and key findings regarding their coordination efforts are provided in the following sections.

Bergen County

The service is operated by the county under the name Bergen County Community Transportation. It provides the largest number of trips (462,500 per year) of the counties surveyed. The service is dedicated to the transport of seniors and persons with disabilities within the county, with the only trips outside the county going to Veteran's Hospital in East Orange.

The only coordination that takes place is with the municipalities that operate their own buses, which typically take people to medical appointments and shopping. The county will provide inter-town service (but not intra-town) for other types of trips.

Essex County

Essex County Special Transportation has the RSD Unit operated by the county and road operations operated by a contractor – Corbert Express in Union, NJ. Service is provided to seniors and persons with disabilities from 5 am to 11 pm on weekdays and from 5am to 3 pm on Saturdays, allowing eligible individuals to make late evening and weekend appointments. They provide service to any location within five miles of the county border. They have also set up an evening shopping program where the eligible residents of each town can travel to a mall once a month. In addition, if five or more people are interested, they will provide for daytime trips to any location in New Jersey if space is available in the schedule.

Essex County also contracts with a private vendor for the JARC program for work trips for low income residents, and the WAVE Program to provide access to one stop centers within the county, but neither program is coordinated with Special Transportation. There was no indication of coordination with any other providers in the county

Hudson County

The service is provided by the county under the name Hudson County TRANSCEND. They provide service to seniors and to persons with disabilities who are not Medicaid eligible. They provide service for all types of trip purposes including medical, dialysis, competitive and non-competitive employment, nutrition sites and shopping. Dialysis ride hours are from 7 am to 8 pm on weekdays, and they also provides Saturday dialysis service. Medical ride hours are limited from 10 am to 2:30 pm on weekdays. TRANSCEND provides trips outside the county to Newark and the Oranges (Essex County), and also makes limited trips to Manhattan..

TRANSCEND does not coordinate with any other transportation providers in the county. If a client is not eligible for TRANSCEND, the dispatcher will refer the individual to an appropriate alternative service such as Access Link if the person is ADA paratransit eligible.

Middlesex County

Middlesex County provides both paratransit and modified fixed-route service. The paratransit service, known as Middlesex County Area Transit (MCAT), is operated by the county DOT, while the modified fixed-route service is operated by a contractor – State Shuttle Livery Services. The modified fixed-route service is set up to serve economically disadvantaged persons (Work First clients) using JARC and county overmatch funds, but the general public can use the service with a suggested fare of \$1.00 per trip.

Hours of service are from 6 am to 10 pm on weekdays, with limited service from 6 pm to 10 pm. MCAT has Saturday service from 8 am to 6 pm for group charters, involving 3 or 4 vehicles. Most of the service is provided within the county, however it does transport to contiguous counties (Mercer, Monmouth, Somerset and Union).

The Middlesex County DOT is very involved in coordination efforts including continuing discussions regarding coordination with municipalities, human service agencies and NJ Transit. In one example of coordination, it purchases NJ Transit bus and rail tickets (taking advantage of available NJ Transit discounts) for use by its passengers for a part of the trip. MCAT will drop off or pick up the passenger at a transfer point, thereby shortening the paratransit portion of the trip, and improving the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the overall operation.

Monmouth County

The service is operated by various entities under the name Monmouth County Community Transportation. Three types of service are provided to seniors and disabled persons, covering most hours of the day. SCAT operates Monday to Friday, 5 am to 5 pm. Contractor JBI offers service on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from 8 am to 4 pm, and shared rides on Thursday from 4 to 9 pm. BETS/employment transport is available for disabled and Work First users on Monday through Saturday, 6 am to midnight. Fares

range from \$2 up to the full cost of transport, depending on the purpose and distance of the trip and whether there is a sponsoring agency or municipality.

The large service area extends beyond county borders north to Newark, west to Ocean, and south to Mercer counties.

Aside from accommodating passengers from other agencies that have faxed over trip requests, Monmouth County Community Transportation does not coordinate with other transportation providers except the Department of Social Services for its Medicaid transport.

Morris County

The County Department of Senior Disability and Veterans Services operates a regional transportation system for seniors and disabled persons through four regional providers. Morris County runs the largest operation—Morris Area Paratransit (MAPS)—direct service in 33 of 39 municipalities.

Service is available from 6:15 am to 6:30 pm inside county borders. The County used to subcontract with towns on the outskirts, but all new passengers must stay within the County (however a few people who live outside the county were grandfathered in). While nobody is denied service for lack of funds, most people donate \$1 per ride, which goes into a fund for new vehicles.

Morris County DOT is waiting for direction from the State under United We Ride to begin a comprehensive coordination program. Until then, coordination will remain informal, with drivers keeping an eye out for other service providers' vehicles and reporting back to the dispatchers if they see redundancy. In addition to the county operated paratransit service, the county contracts with Jefferson Township and Five Town Dial-A-Ride to provides service in their area. The Southeast Morris Chapter of the Red Cross will operate service in the Madison, Chatham and Stirling area until the end of 2006 at which time the county will take over the provision of service in that area. Lastly, the County is participating in the TransOptions ridesharing program, as well as using a Voorhees grant for a Regional Concierge Program to study how to best transport persons with disabilities to work.

Ocean County

Ocean Ride is operated by the Ocean County Transportation Service Department. This county-wide service is shifting from a focus on senior and disabled transportation to community transportation. Ocean ride includes two core service types and additional specialized programs. Its core service includes 17 bus routes and an advanced reservations system called Reserve-a-Ride (exclusively for seniors and persons with disabilities). Bus routes are used by general public. Among its specialized programs, is a robust dialysis service, whose tremendous demand was documented in a study funded by the Administration on Aging.

County demographics drive the service—seniors make up 27 percent of the population and there are 93 adult communities in 33 municipalities, so demand for the service is higher than ever. Ocean Ride serves all 638 square miles in the County, plus 5 miles outside county, per NJ Transit regulations. A private contractor runs two of the 17 bus routes. A JARC-funded route has long hours—7 days a week in summer, 6 days a week from early morning to 10 pm during the rest of year—so it wasn't appropriate for the County to run the service. The other route is state funded by Division of Family Development. Because dialysis appointments are three days a week, four hours at a time, they can drain resources from other service types, so a contractor runs extra dialysis transportation. A contractor also runs DETS service.

While there's no formal coordination process, Ocean County has a long history of collaborating with other agencies and transportation providers. It has an advisory committee network and it gets all the key people together to discuss the community's evolving needs. The director is well-connected to the senior services department; she goes to regular meetings with all the program directors to share what Ocean Ride is doing and spark ideas for collaboration. For example, Ocean County works with Monmouth County to serve people who live in one county and have medical appointments in the other county. Coordination is an institutional philosophy.

Somerset County

Somerset County Transportation (SCT) - through the Office on Aging - offers coordinated transportation services to persons with disabilities and senior citizens. It has a FTA funded Section 5311 service for rural demand-response needs and also operates two public bus lines—the Dash and the Scoot. They have provided Medicaid transport for many years.

Fares for employment trips are \$1.25 to \$3.50, depending on income, and \$4 to \$ 6 per round trip for recreation trips depending on distance. Passengers are billed for trips except Saturday shopping, when they pay in a fare envelope to the driver. Donations are accepted for services not covered by the required fare. Donations and fares are funneled back into the system to hire new drivers.

The service is highly coordinated. From fixed-route down to taxis - SCT has become the broker and the coordinator for it all, in order to save money. SCT doesn't have formal coordination meetings, but the staff has all been in the county so long that they have an ongoing dialogue with the Board of Social Services, the Division of Human Services, and Human Resources. For example, if agencies want to run a new program, they call SCT and they always try to work the new program into the existing services.

SCT attributes its success to a combination of several factors, including its placement under the Department of Public Works. SCT has found that they have been able to obtain a large share (60 to 70%) of their transportation budget from the County based on the enthusiastic support of their passengers and presentation of a strong justification for their cost numbers.

They have also been successful in cross-training so that SCT employees can perform a number of different tasks if required.

Somerset also coordinates with Middlesex and Hunterdon counties. The directors from all three agencies talk to each other on a monthly about individual client needs. If there are opportunities for one agency to transport another agency's client, they will work out a suitable arrangement.

Sussex County

Sussex County Transportation (SCT) provides transportation services to persons with disabilities and senior citizens, as well as employment transportation under JARC and 2 public bus routes funded by FTA Section 5311. Other services include Work First, Medicaid, and Welfare-to-Work trip referrals from the Division of Social Services. If a passenger doesn't qualify for paratransit, SCT also provides modified fixed-route transit service.

The hours of service are from 5 am to 6:30 pm on weekdays, with no weekend service available. There are 24 full-time drivers who operate about 18 paratransit vehicles and 4 public transit vehicles.

Although SCT calls itself the "county coordinated system," there are no coordination agreements with any of the four municipalities that have decided to run their own systems. There are two municipalities that contract SCT for service and the ARC contracts its own private operator to provide some of its own trips.

Warren County

A private for-profit company (First Transit) contracts with the Department of Human Services to provide extensive transportation service to Warren County residents, including persons with disabilities, senior citizens, veterans, low-income persons, and those who live in certain areas of the county. Besides regular in-county transportation, passengers can go to medical care facilities/offices located approximately 30 miles outside the county. Destination cities range from Allentown to Bethlehem to Lyons and East Orange VA Hospitals, but people can go as far as Newark, New Brunswick, New York City, and Philadelphia, if they need to.

Regular hours of service are from 7:30 am to 5 pm on weekdays, except holidays. Passengers can pay a suggested donation of \$.50 one-way within the county, \$2 one-way up to 30 miles outside, and \$10 per trip beyond 30 miles.

There is a Phillipsburg-Belvidere shuttle that runs twice a day, leaving Phillipsburg at 8:30 am and noon, and leaving Belvidere at 12:30 and 4 pm. Food shopping trips go to Hackettstown (Monday and Tuesday), Washington (Wednesday), Phillipsburg (Thursday), and Belvidere (Friday).

There are no NJ Transit routes in Warren County. The only service for the general public is Shuttle Route 57 which is provided through JARC funding, and taxi services are unaffordable to low-income or disabled clients, Therefore Warren County's Transportation Coordinator states that, "Everybody needs everybody—we can't afford to not be coordinated."

The Transportation Advisory Council looks for ways to better coordinate, such as training dispatchers to schedule three passengers on the same trip to a doctor's office, even if their appointments are a few hours apart. In addition, the County recently began coordinating Veterans trips with Hunterdon, Mercer, and Middlesex, but the program is in the infant stage.

Comparison of Coordination Programs

The following presents a comparison of coordination programs in each of the ten peer counties with the coordination program in Passaic County. The comparison is based on four indicators that were selected to represent the degree of coordination that has been achieved in each county. These indicators and the reasons for selecting them are as follows:

- Number of funding sources and programs integrated into the coordinated system – used as an indicator of relative scope and sophistication of the coordination effort and the potential for significant economies of scale through coordinated funding
- Number of population segments served by the coordinated system – used as an indicator of potential efficiency and productivity improvements through service to a larger customer base and as a means of simplifying access for the consumer
- Types (modes) of service provided and the hours of service – used as an indicator of the range of services and level of service provided to the consumer
- Number of providers funded by Casino Revenue funds (SCDRTAP) – used as an indicator of potential economies of scale, uniform operating procedures, and a 'one-stop' approach for clients as the number of independent providers are reduced

Although there is a certain amount of inter-relationship among these indicators, it is felt they are useful to further compare and contrast the coordination programs with that of Passaic County. The information for these comparisons was based on the telephone interviews and on program information for 2005 which was provided to NJ Transit by the selected counties. It is noted that there appeared to be several inconsistencies in the manner that each county reports the information, and certain assumptions were used to refine the data to facilitate more uniform comparisons.

Number of Funding Sources and Programs

Figure 6-1 presents the number of funding sources and programs for each of the ten selected counties, along with the same information for Passaic County.

**Figure 6-1 Supplemental Funding Sources and Programs Used
(in addition to Casino Revenue)**

County	5307 JARC or TANF	5311 RURAL	Title III Aging	Title XX Medicaid	Ryan -White HIV/AIDS	Veterans	Safe Housing	Municipal	County	Non-Profits	Other including Fares/Donations
Bergen	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓		✓
Essex			✓	✓					✓		
Hudson						✓			✓		
Middlesex				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Monmouth	✓	✓	✓						✓		✓
Morris									✓		✓
Ocean		✓		✓		✓			✓		
Somerset		✓				✓			✓	✓	
Sussex	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓
Warren		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓
Passaic			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

There is a wide variation in the amount of funding available from each of the above sources. In addition, while some coordinated systems utilize funding from the same source, the actual amounts can differ significantly. Although the funding and programs in use within each coordinated system varies widely, it appears no one system makes use of all potential funding sources. In some cases, a given funding source such as Section 5311 Rural is restricted to certain locales.

Although Passaic County seems to be on par with many of the other Counties in the variety of funding utilized, it is conceivable that new and significant amounts of resources can be gained by bringing additional programs, including JARC, TANF, and Title XX /Medicaid, under the County’s coordinated system.

Number of Population Segments Served

Figure 6-2 presents the number of population segments served by each coordinated system.

The coordinated systems in most counties serve a broader range of constituencies than the Passaic County Para-Transit System. This is a clear indication that there would be potential advantages in broadening the customer base in Passaic County, leading to potential efficiency and productivity improvements and simplifying access for the consumer.

Figure 6-2 Populations Served

County	Senior	Disabled	Low Income	General Public
Bergen	✓	✓	✓	
Essex	✓	✓		
Hudson	✓	✓		
Middlesex	✓	✓	✓	✓
Monmouth	✓	✓	✓	✓
Morris	✓	✓		
Ocean	✓	✓	✓	✓
Somerset	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sussex	✓	✓	✓	✓
Warren	✓	✓	✓	✓
Passaic	✓	✓		

It is noted that the populations served is somewhat correlated with the Programs that the given County participates in; however, since many Counties (including Passaic) do contribute a significant amount of local funds, there could be considerable discretion in serving a additional mobility limited segments of the population.

Types of Service Provided and Hours of Service

Figure 6-3 presents the types (modes) of service provided by each county coordinated system, along with the hours of service for each system.

Passaic County, along with Bergen, Essex, Hudson and Morris, have only incorporated the standard paratransit service modes in their coordinated operations. The other county coordinated systems have expanded to include other service modes into their operations providing them with more flexibility to serve their customers. Because Passaic County possesses a unique geography that encompasses a wide variation of development patterns, a greater range of services may be appropriate to serve its territory effectively.

With the exception of Ocean County (which has an extensive set of fixed routes as part of the overall coordinated service), Passaic County offers the least number of service hours on weekdays and has no weekend service.

Figure 6-3 Modes and Hours of Service Provided

County	Mode of Service								Hours of Service Provided		
	Demand Response	Subscription	Taxi	Fixed Route	Modified Fixed Route	Charter	Volunteer	Transit Subsidy	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Bergen	✓	✓							11.0		
Essex	✓	✓							18.0	10.0	
Hudson	✓	✓							14.0		
Middlesex	✓	✓	✓					✓	16.0	10.0	
Monmouth	✓	✓	✓		✓				18.0	8.0	
Morris	✓	✓							12.0		
Ocean	✓	✓		✓					7.0		
Somerset	✓	✓							11.5		
Sussex	✓	✓			✓				13.5		
Warren	✓	✓			✓				9.5		
Passaic	✓	✓							9.0		

Number of Providers Funded by Casino Revenue

Figure 6-4 shows the number of transportation providers in each county that receive Casino Revenue funds.

Figure 6-4 Providers Funded by Casino Revenue

County	Providers Receiving Casino Revenue Funds
Bergen	1
Essex	1
Hudson	1
Middlesex	1
Monmouth	1
Morris	4
Ocean	1
Somerset	1
Sussex	1
Warren	1
Passaic	5

With the exception of Morris County, Passaic County is the only county which supports multiple independent providers with Casino Revenue (SCDRTAP) funds. It has the largest number of providers (5), and four of these are essentially restricted to pick-ups within a single municipality. As noted earlier, there are potential economies of scale, uniformity of operations and simpler access for customers as the number of independent providers are reduced.

In summary, based on the comparison of Passaic County's coordination program with those of the other counties, there is substantial opportunity for Passaic County to expand its system to include more funding sources and offer a more comprehensive range of services to the target populations. There also appears to be a strong case made by the examples of the other county coordinated systems for reducing the number of transportation providers in order to improve the efficiency of the existing transportation services and simplify the process of obtaining a trip.

Comparison of Trip Generation Rates, Operational Efficiency and Cost per Trip

This section contains a discussion of the performance of each county coordinated system with that of Passaic County. The specific performance attributes that are considered include:

- Trip Generation Rates – the number of trips per capita, using the number of older adults (60+) in the county as the base
- Operational Efficiency – as measured by the productivity (trips per vehicle service hour)
- Cost per Trip

The data for this section was derived from a number of sources. The basic data on the number of trips and the cost of transportation for each county coordinated system was derived from information provided by NJ Transit, which in turn had received the data from the respective counties.

The data on the number of annual trips was compared to the results of the telephone interviews, which in most cases turned out to be directly comparable. In those cases where there was a significant difference, the NJ Transit data was used. The same methodology was applied to the cost data. There was no opportunity to conduct verification and consistency checks on each data item, so the information should be considered as approximate and used only for the purposes of providing guidance for this coordination planning effort.

The procedure for estimating vehicle service hours was the same as that used for the transportation providers in the Passaic County Para-Transit System. The procedure, which

involves the use of information on the number of full time and part time drivers and the hours that they work, is described in Chapter 3.

Trip Generation Rates

Figure 6-5 presents a comparison of overall trip generation rates based on the number of older adults in each county with that of Passaic County. The counties are ordered by trip generation rate.

The population density of each county is presented in the table in order to obtain a sense of rural vs. urban counties. Census data on median household income for each county is also included as an approximate measure of the relative resources available at the county level.

Figure 6-5 Comparison of Trips per Older Adult Population

County	Total Annual Trips	Trips per Older Adult	Population Density (persons per square mile)	Median Household Income (1999)
Warren County	179,000	10.59	286	\$56,100
Somerset County	406,000	9.17	976	\$76,933
Sussex County	108,000	5.92	277	\$65,266
Ocean County	411,000	3.01	803	\$46,443
Monmouth County	297,000	2.96	1,304	\$64,271
Bergen County	462,500	2.66	3,776	\$65,241
Passaic County	155,000	2.01	2,485	\$49,210
Morris County	125,000	1.69	1,003	\$77,340
Middlesex County	166,000	1.38	2,422	\$61,446
Hudson County	96,000	1.04	13,044	\$40,293
Essex County	122,000	0.98	6,285	\$44,944

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, New Jersey Transit

The trip generation rate (trips per older adult) is one measure of the performance of the coordinated system in that it shows the degree to which the service is meeting the needs of one segment of the target population. The older adult population also contains many persons with disabilities and low income persons

Figure 6-5 shows that there are three counties that have very high trip rates ranging from approximately 6 to 11 trips per older adult), four that fall into a much lower range from approximately 2 to 3 trips per older adult, and four that form the lowest range (approximately 1 to 2 trips per older adult).

The three top counties are all rural counties as measured by population density. One possible reason for the higher rate is the lack of other means of transportation for the target population in more rural counties. However, when we look at other counties with low

population densities, such as Ocean, Monmouth and Morris, we see that their rates are much lower so it is difficult to generalize such trends. For the purposes of this study we can simply postulate that some counties have been able to do a better job at meeting the transportation needs of their senior citizens.

There is no apparent pattern with regard to the effect that relative wealth or resources available in each county (as measured by median household income) has on the trip rates.

If we arbitrarily use a value of 2.5 trips per older adult as a dividing line between coordinated systems that have been most successful in providing for the transportation needs of their senior residents, we can pick the top performers as:

- Warren County 10.59 trips per older adult
- Somerset County 9.17 trips per older adult
- Sussex County 5.92 trips per older adult
- Ocean County 3.01 trips per older adult
- Monmouth County 2.96 trips per older adult
- Bergen County 2.66 trips per older adult

It is recommended that as part of the continuing coordination planning effort in Passaic County, a more detailed examination of the factors that have resulted in the higher trip-generation rates for these counties should be conducted. One important factor is likely to be that the coordination effort in each of these counties has resulted in the incorporation of low income persons and/or the general public into the overall service. As discussed in the earlier section on Comparison of Coordination Programs, the inclusion of additional segments of the target population and/or the general public into the service mix should result in increased ridership. In effect, these systems have been successful in actually coordinating their various transportation operations so that the trips represent much more than transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Operational Efficiency

Figure 6-6 presents the estimated productivity for the coordinated systems in each county. The counties are presented in order of decreasing productivity.

Using productivity (trips per vehicle service hour) as a measure of efficiency and effectiveness, we can observe that Passaic County has the second lowest value (1.9), while Warren County has the highest value (4.1). This ability to operate at a higher productivity may also be a major factor in the much higher trip generation rate in Warren County

It is very difficult to make specific findings regarding the reasons for one county to have a high productivity without some further evaluation. For example, Warren County may have a demand profile that includes many more group trips (two or more persons traveling together between the same origin and destination) than other counties. This will

automatically increase productivity and have nothing to do with the efficiency of scheduling on the part of the county.

Figure 6-6 Comparison of Estimated Productivity (Trips per Hour)

County	Total Trips	Estimated Vehicle Revenue Hours	Estimated Productivity (trips/hour)
Warren	179,000	44,000	4.1
Monmouth	297,000	83,000	3.6
Bergen	462,500	134,000	3.5
Ocean	411,000	122,000	3.4
Morris	125,000	38,000	3.3
Essex	122,000	42,000	2.9
Sussex	108,000	43,000	2.5
Somerset	406,000	166,000	2.4
Hudson	96,000	50,000	1.9
Passaic	155,000	81,000	1.9
Middlesex	166,000	115,000	1.4

If we use 3.3 trips per hour as an arbitrary dividing line between systems that appear to be most efficient and productive, the top performers are:

- Warren County 4.1 trips per hour
- Monmouth County 3.6 trips per hour
- Bergen County 3.5 trips per hour
- Ocean County 3.4 trips per hour
- Morris County 3.3 trips per hour

It is interesting to note that the top four counties are also on the same list presented earlier as having the highest trip generation rates. This is a further reason to recommend a more detailed look at these top five counties to determine the reasons for achieving higher levels of productivity.

The purpose of conducting these more detailed examinations of operational efficiency and effectiveness is to determine whether there are some specific procedures, practices and/or technology that should be considered by Passaic County as part of their coordination planning effort.

Cost per Trip

Figure 6-7 presents the estimated cost per trip for the coordinated system in each county, along with the productivity. The counties are ordered by increasing cost per trip.

Figure 6-7 Comparison of Estimated Cost per Trip

County	Estimated Productivity (trips per hour)	Estimated Cost per Trip
Bergen	3.5	\$7.50
Warren	4.1	\$10.00
Morris	3.3	\$12.00
Middlesex	1.4	\$13.50
Hudson	1.9	\$14.50
Monmouth	3.6	\$15.00
Ocean	3.4	\$15.00
Sussex	2.5	\$15.50
Somerset	2.4	\$16.00
Passaic	1.9	\$23.50
Essex	2.9	\$24.00

The median cost per trip for all systems is \$15.00, and the average is \$15.14 per trip.

The estimated cost per trip is dependent upon two factors:

- Efficiency of the service as measured by productivity
- Cost of providing the service as measured by cost per vehicle service hour

The top three counties in Figure 6-7 all have high productivities. Bergen County which has the lowest estimated cost per trip achieves that value through the combination of high efficiency (productivity) and a low cost of providing service (cost per vehicle service hour).

Middlesex County, which has a low estimated productivity, is able to provide trips at a reasonable cost due to their low cost of providing service.

Passaic County, which has the second highest cost per trip, is in that position due to a combination of low efficiency and high cost of providing service.

Summary of Findings

The data on trip generation rates, operational efficiency and cost per trip make it clear that there is substantial room for improvement through further coordination planning efforts in Passaic County. The earlier discussion of the differences in the structure and funding of the coordination programs in the other counties indicates that the major changes that should take place in Passaic County include:

- Expand the system to include more funding sources and offer a more comprehensive range of services to the target populations
- Decrease the number of independent providers involved in the coordinated community transportation service

Based on the experience of the other county coordinated systems, it is reasonable to expect a substantial improvement in the operational efficiency and cost per trip through the implementation of the above changes.

Chapter 7. Recommended Coordination Strategy for Passaic County

Introduction

This chapter of the report presents the recommended coordination strategy for Passaic County. The recommended strategy is the result of series of meetings with the Steering Committee where the results of the assessments presented in the preceding chapters were discussed at length. A summary of these discussions is presented in this section, followed by a presentation of the recommended strategy.

Summary of Steering Committee Discussions

The first discussion of coordination alternatives took place at the fourth meeting (January 2007) of the Steering Committee based on the discussion paper entitled “*Strategies for Coordination,*” which focused on three primary alternative approaches to coordination in Passaic County. As a starting point the alternatives were presented in terms of the five key transportation providers that comprise the County Para-Transit System. The three alternatives were outlined as follows:

1. “Working Around the Edges” Alternative

- Implement those coordination activities that enable each provider to continue separate operations.
- Examples include putting out combined customer information materials and developing a shared curriculum for driver training classes.

2. Joint Call Center and Scheduling Alternative

- Establish a joint call center and joint scheduling as this is the foundation of a system that will aid in better utilizing resources.
- Other items included in alternative 1 would also be included as time allows.

3. Comprehensive Brokerage Alternative

- Define a step-by-step plan that will result in an active brokerage for transportation services that will:
 - Cover the service areas of all participating providers
 - Preserve the unique role in the community of each of the participating entities
 - Provide a wide range of services (curb-to-curb; door-to-door; and door-thru-door) as needed for various client abilities
 - Enable entities to purchase transportation if they wish to do so

- Provide for joint decision-making
- Build community support for additional resources for specialized transportation

It was determined that the Comprehensive Brokerage alternative was such a large and ambitious undertaking that it should not be considered as a realistic alternative for any continuing coordination planning effort on the part of the county. Committee members expressed interest in further details of the other two alternatives, including the range of costs that could be expected.

A discussion paper entitled “*Coordination Alternatives – Details and Implementation Issues.*” was prepared and discussed at the fifth meeting (February 2007). Some of the specific topics addressed at the meeting are described below.

Transportation Resources Directory for Passaic County – the development of a transportation directory for the county is an essential first step for the participating agencies and transportation providers. The process of discussing the format and information to be presented in the directory and the means of communicating the information to others in the community will provide the opportunity to work together on a very tangible task. An example of the types of information that can be presented in a directory (the DuPage County, Illinois Transportation Resources Directory – 2007 edition) was discussed with the Committee. The preparation of a Transportation Resource Directory was identified as a low cost activity.

Joint Driver and Operations Staff Training - The implementation of a joint Driver and Operations Staff Training program would be a collaborative effort among the participating agencies. The core group of participants would include the five key transportation providers that comprise the County Para-Transit System. The participation of other transportation providers that are interested in the development of such a program would be encouraged.

The group would work on identifying a common set of driver and operations staff training standards and a training program that would ensure that drivers are certified for the types of vehicles and clientele that they will be responsible for, and that call takers and dispatchers have received training for their interaction with their customers. It is essential that the transportation providers come to agreement on the training standards so that it is possible to identify suitable training programs that are already available and can be adapted to the needs of Passaic County.

It was also noted that there were some excellent training programs available from such organizations as the National Transit Institute at Rutgers. NJ Transit is also likely to have training program recommendations based on their experience in operating Access Link services. Once the participants have agreed on the common elements that should be included in the training program, it will be possible to evaluate what is available and

estimate the costs. Since many of the programs are either free or have a nominal charge, it is expected that the development of a joint Driver and Operations Staff Training program will be a low cost activity.

Joint Call Center and Scheduling Alternative - Under this alternative coordination strategy, the trip reservations and scheduling functions now provided by the five key transportation providers at their own locations would be consolidated into a unified call center. It would also be possible to incorporate the dispatching function into the call center.

The reason for starting with the five key transportation providers is that they all have the common mission to serve seniors and persons with disabilities in Passaic County and they all have common funding sources. The basic purpose of the unified call center will be to allow these providers to do their jobs more efficiently and provide the county and other funding sources with a uniform means of measuring the operational and financial performance of the Passaic County Para-Transit System. Once the call center has been up and running successfully for a period of time, there will be an opportunity for other transportation providers to consider joining, or for those agencies that are currently purchasing transportation to consider purchasing those services from the Para-Transit System.

The unified call center will handle trip requests and cancellations, prepare schedules for all trips and prepare performance and financial reports that meet the reporting requirements of the participating agencies. The potential benefits are more efficient vehicle schedules/runs, a reduction in overall administrative and staffing costs, and improved customer service.

The specific requirements for the call center including communication links, telephone lines, computer software, and radio communications were presented to the Committee. It was also noted that customer service standards, training requirements, scheduling guidelines and reporting requirements would need to be agreed to by all participants.

The cost of setting up a call center has to be considered as a high cost item compared to the alternative of establishing the Transportation Resource Directory or the Joint Driver and Operations Staff Training program. The actual cost can only be established by going through a detailed design process. The operating cost of a centralized call center typically ranges from 5% to 10% of the total operating cost of the system. For example, in Denver, the centralized call center operated by First Transit under contract to the RTD at \$1.7 million is 7% of the total operating costs.

Based on the discussions at the fifth meeting, the Committee expressed interest in obtaining more detailed information on the proposed Joint Call and Scheduling Center. The Committee also appreciated the special presentation on the history of coordination in Ocean County NJ made by the Executive Director of Ocean Ride. This session provided the opportunity to ask numerous questions regarding the experience of transforming an existing small transportation operation into a highly successful coordinated transportation system.

The sixth meeting (March 2007) was based on the discussion paper, “*Moving on to Implementation – Outline for Strategic Plan.*” The document addressed the issues to be addressed in implementation of the proposed Joint Call and Scheduling Center and presented some “Lessons Learned” from other coordination efforts around the country to better insure successful implementation.

The next section presents the recommended strategy for coordination in Passaic County.

Recommended Coordination Strategy

The prior work in this study, as reported in the preceding chapters has identified the administrative and operational coordination of the five key transportation providers that comprise the County Para-Transit System as a major priority. A brief review of the findings will help to set the stage for presentation of the key elements of the Strategic Plan.

Finding No. 1 – The Passaic County Para-Transit System does not operate at a high level of efficiency and effectiveness when compared to other peer county paratransit systems in New Jersey

Using productivity (trips per vehicle service hour) as a measure of efficiency and effectiveness, we have found that Passaic County is one of two counties that have the lowest value of productivity (1.9 trips per vehicle service hour) compared to nine other county paratransit systems. This difference in productivity means that Passaic County is paying more for each trip than other counties operating similar services.

Finding No. 2 – The data collection and reporting systems used by the five transportation providers to report operational performance are not uniform, making it impossible to monitor system performance and efficiency on a consistent basis.

The key data used to measure the operational performance of a paratransit system includes passenger trips, vehicle service hours and vehicle miles. There are no standards for the reporting of the data on hours and miles leaving each provider to make their own determination of what to report. This has led to a situation where it is not possible to compare the performance of each system. It also makes it impossible to compile overall performance statistics for the County Para-Transit System as a whole.

Finding No. 3 – The service policies and hours of service are not consistent among the five transportation providers, therefore the level of service and service quality for users varies by residence location.

There are differences in eligibility determination procedures, prioritization of trip purposes, service area, and hours of service among the different providers.

It is in the best interests of the County to have a truly coordinated Community Transportation System. The starting point for this coordinated system will be a new

administrative and operational approach to providing services to seniors and persons with disabilities. The proposed Joint Call and Scheduling Center will resolve all of the problems as identified in the three findings cited above. The following discussion presents the resolutions for each of the findings.

The most important improvement to be gained from the proposed Joint Call and Scheduling Center is the projected improvement in the efficiency and cost effectiveness that will arise from the centralized scheduling of all trips currently being provided by all five providers. Based on the data from other NJ counties, it is anticipated that an increase in productivity on the order of 20% is a realistic estimate. It is also likely that the current operating cost for all five providers which is estimated to be \$46.50 per hour will be reduced due to the centralization of the trip reservations and scheduling staff.

To provide some context in terms of potential cost savings, an improvement of 20% in the efficiency of operations would result in a savings of approximately \$800,000 per year based on an estimated cost of \$4,000,000 to operate the current service. Any reduction in the cost of operations due to centralized staffing would add to that savings.

Based on the experience in other coordinated systems, the operating cost of a centralized call center typically ranges from 5% to 10% of the total operating cost of the system. Assuming the maximum of 10%, the net savings would be conservatively estimated at \$400,000 per year, again assuming no cost reduction due to centralized staffing.

Another way to look at the results of efficiency improvements is to increase the number of trips provided to County residents by 10 to 20%, amounting to approximately 15,500 to 31,000 additional trips per year, without increasing the transportation budget.

One of the other benefits of the Joint Call and Scheduling Center is the centralization of all data collection and reporting in the software system that will be used for trip reservations and scheduling. The system will keep track of all customers (users) and drivers, the trips that they make, the routes of the vehicles with time and mileage tracking, and the overall performance of the system including telephone response time, on-time performance and missed trips. The reports that can be generated with all of this data will allow the County to get a true picture of system performance and be in a position to spot any problem areas or adverse trends.

The users of the system will benefit in many ways from the implementation of the Joint Call and Scheduling Center. First of all, there will have to be a uniform eligibility procedure ensuring that all residents of the County are treated the same. They will receive an ID number that they will use when making a trip reservation allowing the reservations agent to bring up all their information quickly and minimize the time spent on the phone. The hours when trip reservations can be made will also be uniform for all eligible residents. Users will also be provided with a "Where's My Ride" phone number that they can use to check on the status of their ride when it is running late.

Other user benefits will include an assurance that all eligible residents have the opportunity to travel to the same destinations (e.g., key medical facilities) that are beyond the County borders, or that they can all travel the same distance beyond the border (e.g., five miles). Finally, they will all have the same hours of service (e.g., 7:00 am to 5:00 pm).

One of the most important “Lessons Learned” from the experience with coordinated transportation programs in other states is that in order for coordination to be successful, there must be a strong and dynamic “local champion” taking the lead in coordinating services. In the context of Passaic County, we believe that the source of the leadership for coordination will have to originate from the Freeholders. Other successful county coordination programs in New Jersey always cite the importance of Freeholder support and leadership as the primary reason for their achievement.

The overall strategy is dependent upon first obtaining the approval of the Freeholders to move ahead on the planning for implementation of the Joint Call and Scheduling Center. The County provides the largest share of local funding by far, so their interests will be served through the proposed improvements to system administration and operation. The next stage of approvals will have to come from the participating municipalities, who will have to be assured that any proposed changes will not be a problem for their eligible residents.

It is recommended that coordination activities involving the other key transportation providers in the County be placed on hold until the planning for implementation of the Joint Call and Scheduling Center has been approved at the County and municipal levels.

The implementation of the Transportation Resource Directory and the Joint Driver and Operations Staff Training program should be integrated into the continuing coordination planning effort for the Joint Call and Scheduling Center because they are complementary activities.

APPENDIX A

UNITED WE RIDE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Appendix A. United We Ride Community Assessment Process

The United We Ride Community Assessment process was introduced during the first meeting of the Steering Committee. The forms for conducting the Community Assessment were reviewed and provided to the Steering Committee members. Members were asked to complete the forms and return them before the second meeting of the committee in October. Members requested that the forms be provided electronically and that they would fill in the information and return via email.

The form consists of 26 questions categorized into five sections as follows:

- **Section 1: Making Things Happen by Working Together**
- **Section 2: Taking Stock of Community Needs and Moving Forward**
- **Section 3: Putting Customers First**
- **Section 4: Adapting Funding for Greater Mobility**
- **Section 5: Moving People Efficiently**





The self-assessment process was developed as a means for community leaders and other stakeholders to build a shared perspective and determine how they will move forward together. The questions on the form are designed to help a community assess its progress in developing a coordinated transportation system and develop a plan to move forward.

The forms contain a great deal of information in the form of “Decision Helpers” that are intended to assist the person making the assessment determine progress in a particular area of coordination. The problem with having so many “helpers” is the potential for a respondent to assume that all of the actions implicit in the helpers must be accomplished in order to have a successful coordination project. Committee members were advised that this is simply not the case.

The other problem with the helpers is that a number of the actions suggested as measures of progress toward coordination may not be familiar to the reader, or they may not ever wind up being applicable to the Coordination Plan that is developed for Passaic County. Committee members were advised to only respond to those actions that were familiar and which they understood, in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Examine each question and, if applicable, provide a response (directly below the question) based on your knowledge and understanding of the current situation in Passaic County. You do not have to respond to each question.
2. Examine each Decision Helper and, if applicable, provide your assessment of the progress (directly below the helper). You do not have to respond to the helper if you

are not familiar with the description of the action or have no direct knowledge of the status of actions taken to date.

3. Even if you are unable to make an assessment of progress, please **highlight** any actions, policies or issues described in the helpers that you believe to be important to the success of this coordination planning effort. It would also be helpful if you describe your reasons for attributing importance to the highlighted area.
4. Provide your overall evaluation of progress for each of the five sections of the assessment by **highlighting** one of the four categories:
 -  Needs to Begin
 -  Needs Substantial Action
 -  Needs Some Action
 -  Done Well

The responses from the Committee members were tabulated and summarized in a document entitled “*Summary of Community Assessment Responses from the Passaic County Steering Committee,*” which is presented on the following pages.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:

BUILDING THE FULLY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

A Self Assessment Tool for Communities

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES FROM PASSAIC COUNTY STEERING COMMITTEE

Section 1: Making Things Happen by Working Together

Driving Factor: *Individuals and organizations are catalysts for envisioning, organizing, and sustaining a coordinated system that provides mobility and access to transportation for all.*

- ❑ **1. Have leaders and organizations defined the need for change and articulated a new vision for the delivery of coordinated transportation services?**

Responses

- Needs Substantial Action 5
- Needs to Begin 4
- Needs Some Action 2

Comments and Highlights

☑ *Leaders in human services agencies and public transportation have acknowledged that the existing network of transportation services is not yet sufficiently efficient, cost effective, or flexible enough to meet the mobility needs of people in the community or region.*

- *At the present time, most participants are not familiar with the other organizations needs and how we can work together to achieve a synergistic outcome. The first meeting was a great start.*
- *Just beginning to articulate this.*
- *There needs to be a better definition of the span of services being covered.*

- **2. Is a governing framework in place that brings together providers, agencies, and consumers? Are there clear guidelines that all embrace?**

Responses

- **Needs to Begin** 5
- **Needs Substantial Action** 5
- **Done Well** 1

Comments and Highlights

- *We are just at the start of this. We have to see if there is “staying power”.*
- **Done Well** - *The timetable is both realistic and workable. The assembled team members seem to represent a broad spectrum of providers.*
- ✓ *A shared decision-making body such as a coalition, lead agency, advisory board, and/or working group is taking a leadership role.*
- ✓ *The shared decision-making body includes public and private transportation providers, non-profit human services agencies, health providers, employment providers, and consumers.*
- ✓ *Those at the table are clear about and comfortable with the decision-making process, whether it is based on consensus or majority rule.*
- ✓ *Roles and responsibilities are outlined in a formal, written agreement.*
- ✓ *The shared decision-making group communicates effectively with those not at the table.*
- ✓ *The group meets regularly, establishes strategic and measurable goals and objectives, follows a work plan, and regularly evaluates its progress and performance.*

- **3. Does the governing framework cover the entire community and maintain strong relationships with neighboring communities and state agencies?**

Responses

- **Needs to Begin** 7
- **Needs Substantial Action** 3
- **Needs Some Action** 1

Comments and Highlights

- *With only one meeting, this is difficult to judge.*
- *Existing systems service specific populations and are subject to time, regulatory, fiscal, institutional, donor and practical constraints when attempts to broaden target populations, coverage territories and time availability are proposed.*
- ✓ *The shared decision-making body covers an appropriate area, such as a region, and maintains collaborative working relationships with neighboring areas and with human service and state transportation agencies.*

□ 4. Is there sustained support for coordinated transportation planning among elected officials, agency administrators, and other community leaders?

Responses

- **Needs to Begin** 5
- **Needs Substantial Action** 5
- **Needs Some Action** 1

Comments and Highlights

- *This is unknown at this early stage but everything dies if it is not accomplished.*
- *Again, with only one meeting, more must be done.*
- *As a practical matter, many schedules cannot be rearranged to suit a multiplicity of transit or vehicle schedules, compounded by scheduling transfers of numerous individuals*
- ✓ *It is widely recognized and accepted that transportation must be integrated into community initiatives related to aging, disability, job training, and health care and services to low-income persons.*
 - *Needs some coordination*

□ 5. Is there positive momentum? Is there growing interest in and commitment to coordinate human service transportation trips and maximize resources?

Responses

- **Needs Substantial Action** 4
- **Needs to Begin** 3

- **Needs Some Action** 2
- **Done Well** 1
- **Do not Know / No Answer** 1

Comments and Highlights

- *TOO EARLY*
- *All parties realize the urgency and how funding cuts could impact the population served.*
- **Section 1 Evaluation Comment** - *I believe that the first meeting was the initial framework discussion. So much has to be done and then we need to see if there is any will or funding for implementation. But you have to start somewhere so let's go.*
- **Section 1 Evaluation Comment** - *An awareness of how coordinated transportation services should be constructed needs to begin.*
- **Section 1 Evaluation Comment** - *the fact that a consultant has been hired is a beginning, but delivery of service is not clearly defined/delivered among county providers, the task almost seems daunting.*
- **Section 1 Evaluation Comment** - *I am not too familiar with a lot of the subjects mentioned. I am specifically a transportation supervisor of 24 bus drivers and am not involved with the higher- level decision-making. The decision making process needs to be more structured and these decision makers need to have specific areas in which they are responsible and accountable for their research and for informing my level of management of what they want done. I think it would be my responsibility to attempt executing what ever that decision might be and I would then be accountable for reporting the progress to them. There is no set chain of command with in our transportation system and therefore we have too many people doing what they think is best rather than what should be agreed upon at the decision-making level.*

Section 2: Taking Stock of Community Needs and Moving Forward

Driving Factor: A completed and regularly updated community transportation assessment process identifies assets, expenditures, services provided, duplication of services, specific mobility needs of the various target populations, and opportunities for improvement. It assesses the capacity of human service agencies to coordinate transportation services. The assessment is used for planning and action.

- **6. Is there an inventory of community transportation resources and programs that fund transportation services?**

Responses

- Needs Substantial Action 5
- Needs to Begin 4
- Needs Some Action 1
- Do not Know / No Answer 1

Comments and Highlights

- We have not yet touched on details. I expect we will at the next meeting.
- Current scope of project is inadequate. It needs non-profits and church participation

- **7. Is there a process for identifying duplication of services, underused assets, and service gaps?**

Responses

- Needs to Begin 7
- Needs Substantial Action 2
- Needs Some Action 1
- Do not Know / No Answer 1

Comments and Highlights

- *I would argue that given existing regulations, insurance liability and constraints noted above, and the dispersion of residences, agencies and destinations, there is very little real overlap that can effectively be merged.*
- 8. Are the specific transportation needs of various target populations well documented?**

Responses

- **Needs Substantial Action** **4**
- **Needs to Begin** **3**
- **Needs Some Action** **2**
- **Do not Know / No Answer** **2**

Comments and Highlights

- *Maybe true of some providers/agencies but no central data place.*
 - *There is very little time for agencies to engage in such an effort. Data collection cannot be an end in itself. The costs diminish participation. Prior survey (WFNJ) was essentially ignored*
- Information and data that outlines the needs and expectations of individuals with disabilities, older adults, youth, job seekers and persons with low-incomes has been collected.
- Has started but needs to be developed further.
- Non-users of transit have been asked through surveys, focus groups, or similar means to identify what characteristics would make transit an attractive choice.
- 9. Has the use of technology in the transportation system been assessed to determine whether investment in transportation technology may improve services and/or reduce costs?**

Responses

- **Needs Substantial Action** **5**
- **Needs to Begin** **4**
- **Needs Some Action** **2**

Comments and Highlights

- *Not done in any coordinated way.*

- Who will pay for such technology?

- **10. Are transportation line items included in the annual budgets for all human service programs that provide transportation services?**

Responses

- **Do not Know / No Answer** 5
- **Needs Substantial Action** 2
- **Needs Some Action** 2
- **Needs to Begin** 1
- **Done Well** 1

Comments and Highlights

- *My agency's budgeting rules are set by the state as are many other agencies. Whether they include transportation or not, or should, is a state controlled issue. I doubt that we have the capacity to absorb additional costs in fiscal analysis.*

- **11. Have transportation users and other stakeholders participated in the community transportation assessment process?**

Responses

- **Needs Substantial Action** 4
- **Needs to Begin** 3
- **Do not Know / No Answer** 3
- **Needs Some Action** 1

Comments and Highlights

- *Historically, I have attended SCDRTPC, but no longer. The WFNJ Transportation Subcommittee uses what little time remains.*
- *Not really, problems with transportation in getting to meetings.*

- **12. Is there a strategic plan with a clear mission and goals? Are the assessment results used to develop a set of realistic actions that improve coordination?**

Responses

- Needs to Begin 6
- Needs Substantial Action 3
- Do not Know / No Answer 2

Comments and Highlights

- **13. Is clear data systematically gathered on core performance issues such as cost per delivered trip, ridership, and on-time performance? Is the data systematically analyzed to determine how costs can be lowered and performance improved?**

Responses

- Needs to Begin 4
- Needs Substantial Action 3
- Needs Some Action 2
- Do not Know / No Answer 2

Comments and Highlights

- *Who would pay for the collection costs and periodic analyses?*

- **14. Is the plan for human services transportation coordination linked to and supported by other plans such as the Regional Transportation Plan, State Transportation Improvement Plan, human service program plans, and other state and local plans?**

Responses

- Needs to Begin 4
- Needs Substantial Action 2

- Needs Some Action 2
- Do not Know / No Answer 2
- Done Well 1

Comments and Highlights

- *I can testify that these “plans” have little concern with the needs of our clients, let alone providing an effective means to participate*

- 15. Is data being collected on the benefits of coordination? Are the results communicated strategically?

Responses

- Needs to Begin 6
- Needs Substantial Action 3
- Do not Know / No Answer 2

Comments and Highlights

- **Section 2 Evaluation Comment** - *This project is bigger, and more difficult than most realize.*
- **Section 2 Evaluation Comment** - *Passaic County is in the process of purchasing scheduling and statistical recording software. This will make the scheduling process more efficient and also the reporting of all statistics more accurate and precise. We are long over-due waiting for this technology*
- **Section 2 Evaluation Comment** - *This survey comes far too early in the process. One meeting only introduced the participants to the tasks that are ahead of us. It is difficult to evaluate the process thus far.*

Section 3: Putting Customers First

Driving Factor: Customers including people with disabilities, older adults, and low-income riders have a convenient and accessible means of accessing information about transportation services. They are regularly engaged in the evaluation of services and identification of needs.

- **16. Does the transportation system have an array of user-friendly and accessible information sources?**

Responses

- Needs Some Action 4
- Needs to Begin 3
- Do not Know / No Answer 2
- Needs Substantial Action 1
- Done Well 1

Comments and Highlights

- **Done Well** - We have the Transportation Counseling Center (staffed by Meadowlink) within the One-Stop Career Center that assists clients with scheduling, bus & train information and brokerage for ridesharing / carpooling. Meadowlink has a database for matching rides with clients and offers an Emergency Ride Home Program for those clients utilizing public transit or a carpool to get to an emergency that might develop at home for up to 3 times a year.
- This is done for specific target populations. Not centralized.

- **17. Are travel training and consumer education programs available on an ongoing basis?**

Responses

- Needs Some Action 4
- Needs to Begin 3
- Done Well 2
- Do not Know / No Answer 2

Comments and Highlights

- *THESE SERVICES ARE NOT UNIFORMLY OFFERED*
 - **Done Well** - Meadowlink offers presentations to explain the services offered at the Counseling Center, how to read bus & train schedules and the transportation services that are available at the Center at all Work First NJ contracted vendors on an ongoing regular basis in English & Spanish to our “Work First NJ” participants.
 - *This is done for specific target populations. Not centralized.*
- **18. Is there a seamless payment system that supports user-friendly services and promotes customer choice of the most cost-effective service?**

Responses

- **Needs to Begin** 5
- **Do not Know / No Answer** 5
- **Needs Substantial Action** 1

Comments and Highlights

- *This violates numerous fiscal controls, regulations, confidentiality laws and should not be considered unless the huge overhead costs are met and laws revised.*
- **19. Are customer ideas and concerns gathered at each step of the coordination process? Is customer satisfaction data collected regularly?**

Responses

- **Do not Know / No Answer** 6
- **Needs Substantial Action** 2
- **Needs to Begin** 2
- **Needs Some Action** 1

Comments and Highlights

- **20. Are marketing and communications programs used to build awareness and encourage greater use of the services?**

Responses

- **Needs Some Action** 4
- **Do not Know / No Answer** 4
- **Needs to Begin** 3

Comments and Highlights

- *IN A SCATTERED MANNER*
- *There is high utilization already.*
- **Section 3 Evaluation Comment** - *I think the will is there – just not accomplishing the goal throughout the county*
- **Section 3 Evaluation Comment** - *The only information access I am aware of is the Passaic County Brochure and from what I understand, there is also a website in which the consumers can go to for information. Other than those 2 information sources, the consumer can call my office and the staff explains the system to them. At this time, there is no charge to the consumer except for special group trips in which a suggested donation is outlined.*

Section 4: Adapting Funding for Greater Mobility

Driving Factor: Innovative accounting procedures are often employed to support transportation services by combining various state, federal, and local funds. This strategy creates customer friendly payment systems while maintaining consistent reporting and accounting procedures across programs.

- 21. Is there a strategy for systematic tracking of financial data across programs?

Responses

- Needs to Begin 6
- Do not Know / No Answer 3
- Needs Substantial Action 2

Comments and Highlights

- 22. Is there an automated billing system in place that supports the seamless payment system and other contracting mechanisms?

Responses

- Needs to Begin 5
- Do not Know / No Answer 4
- Needs Substantial Action 2

Comments and Highlights

- This is not a question. It is an objective that may result from the plan. The Federal government is reducing funding which prevents paying for more technology.

Section 5: Moving People Efficiently

Driving Factors: Multimodal and multi-provider transportation networks are being created that are seamless for the customer but operationally and organizationally sound for the providers.

- 23. Has an arrangement among diverse transportation providers been created to offer flexible services that are seamless to customers?

Responses

- Needs to Begin 5
- Needs Substantial Action 3
- Do not Know / No Answer 2
- Needs Some Action 1

Comments and Highlights

- Who pays for these brokers and phone banks?

- 24. Are support services coordinated to lower costs and ease management burdens?

Responses

- Needs Substantial Action 5
- Needs to Begin 4
- Do not Know / No Answer 2

Comments and Highlights

- Yet another conclusion before the research is conducted.

- **25. Is there a centralized dispatch system to handle requests for transportation services from agencies and individuals?**

Responses

- Needs to Begin 5
- Do not Know / No Answer 3
- Needs Substantial Action 2
- Needs Some Action 1

Comments and Highlights

- *Another costly conclusion before the research is conducted.*

- **26. Have facilities been located to promote safe, seamless, and cost-effective transportation services?**

Responses

- Needs to Begin 3
- Needs Substantial Action 3
- Do not Know / No Answer 3
- Needs Some Action 2

Comments and Highlights

Section 5 Evaluation Comment - *This seems like the point of the entire project. If the answers were in the affirmative, would we need to do this?*

Section 5 Evaluation Comment - *present system very fragmented*

Section 5 Evaluation Comment - *As for now, my office provides transportation to 14 municipalities. The other towns such as Paterson, Passaic, Clifton and West Milford have their own transportation offices. Usually, if one of the 4 municipalities gets into a jam, they call us for assistance. There is no current coordination procedure to assist each other on a regular basis for daily routine trips.*

Summary Evaluation Comment - *There have been some efforts at coordination but there must be a more comprehensive approach. Meadowlink, through the Transportation Counseling Center, has done a great job but we need to have all of the providers on the same page.*

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix B. Community Transportation Study Questionnaire



Community Transportation Study Questionnaire

The County of Passaic, through the Planning Dept. is conducting a study designed to enhance mobility services for segments of the population who are unable to drive themselves or do not have ready access to a private vehicle. These efforts are designed to enhance their personal quality of life and enable them to more fully participate in the social and economic life of the community at large. As defined below the study is focused on needs of Transit Dependent Populations and the proper role of Community Transportation in meeting these needs.

Transit Dependent Populations

Individuals who lack access to auto transportation, typically due to factors such as age, infirmity, personal preference, lack of license, or affordability.

Community Transportation

The term 'Community Transportation' includes a range of locally based flexible transportation services. The characteristics of these services often differ from the traditional fixed route bus and rail transit services, such as those operated by New Jersey Transit. Community Transportation usually offers highly flexible and personalized services that can include:

- door-to-door service (using escorts), or curb-to-curb service
- services custom tailored to clients of specific agencies or programs
- special equipment and assistance provided for those with physical limitations
- Advance reservation based services, with vehicles scheduled according to the patron's desired pick-up/drop-off times, and origin/destinations.

If you or someone you know is using, or would benefit from, community transportation services in Passaic County, please answer the following questions. We appreciate your time and effort and look forward to your comments and opinions.

1. Please let us know if you are answering for yourself, or for someone else.

Please check one of the following:

- For myself
- For a family member
- For a friend
- As an advocate

2. Are you (family member/friend) currently using community transportation services?

- No Yes *If yes, what is the name of the transportation service?*

3. What is the primary reason for you (family member/friend) to use, or want to use, community transportation services? Please check one.

- Advanced age
- Disability
- Prefer not to drive
- Unable to obtain driver's license
- Can not afford vehicle

4. What is the primary purpose for you (family member/friend) to use, or want to use, community transportation services? Please check one.

- Medical appointments
- Dialysis or chemotherapy
- Work
- School/training
- Agency sponsored programs (adult day care, senior center, support group, group workshop, etc.)
- Social/recreational (including visits to family or friends)
- Shopping
- Personal business (banking, salon appointments, etc.)
- Religious worship or faith-based activities

5. Have you (family member/friend) ever tried to make a trip reservation on a community transportation service and been turned down?

- No Yes *If yes, please identify the transportation provider and check one of the following reasons for the trip denial.*

Name of Provider:

- not eligible to use the service
- destination was too far (outside service area boundary)
- trip was too early (service not operating)
- trip was too late (service not operating)
- trip was on Saturday (service not operating)
- trip was on Sunday (service not operating)
- an accessible vehicle was not available
- other, please provide specifics

6. If you (family member/friend) use a community transportation service, is there some key destination (medical center, employment center, etc.) that is outside the transportation provider's service area boundary?

- No Yes *If yes, please identify the name and location (address) of the key destination:*

Name and Location:

7. Do you (family member/friend) know where to get information on community transportation services in Passaic County?

- No Yes *If yes, please identify the source of the information:*

8. Please indicate your (family member/friend) Zip Code:

Please provide any additional concerns, issues, comments or suggestions in the space below.

When you are done, please email the form back to: edwardl@passaiccountynj.org

Thank You!