



## Housing and Services Resource Center

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### The Role of Transportation in Cross-Sector Collaborations Designed to Improve Housing Stability

February 27, 2023 | Webinar Transcript

**LORI GERHARD:** Hello and welcome to the Housing and Services Resource Center's Webinar, The Role of Transportation in Cross-Sector Collaborations Designed to Improve Housing Stability. We know that you are going to learn a lot from the presenters today, and we have built in a variety of opportunities for you to be able to be active participants too. Thank you so much for joining us today.

My name is Lori Gerhard and I'm the Director of the Office of Interagency Innovations at the Administration for Community Living, an operating division within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. I will be serving as the facilitator for today's webinar, and it's a privilege to have so many of you here with us here today. Your active involvement in this webinar is essential for us to have an engaging discussion.

Today, we will go over first some welcome and housekeeping items, and then we will be starting off by asking for your input on a Zoom poll. Next, we will talk to some of the HSRC, or Housing and Services Resource Center, federal partners about how housing stability is impacted by transportation or no access to transportation. Then, we will feature two examples of exciting partnerships. One in Arizona that combines paratransit, rideshare services, and fixed route buses to serve one underserved community, and one in King City California, a House America partner, that serves an also underserved, mostly Hispanic population in a largely rural area with several transit programs and services. Following that, we will be joined by a representative by the Federal Transit Administration who will demonstrate how to use an online resource to find partners in your area. Finally, all of our presenters will be back at the end of the end of the presentation for a panel question and answer segment.

Before we jump in, let's take care of a few housekeeping items. This meeting is being recorded. By staying to participate, you are consenting to the recording. Also, all attendees have been muted for audio quality. One hallmark of our webinars is active participation from the attendees,

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so please use the chat to make comments and talk with your fellow attendees. We will also prompt you to answer some questions in the chat later in the webinar. For questions, please submit those at any time using the Q&A feature in the Zoom dashboard. We will do our best to respond to all of the questions that we receive, and for those that we are unable to respond to today, we will get back to you with a frequently asked questions document.

We are unable to respond to raised hands, so please use the Q&A function to ask questions. If you have comments or questions at any time during or after the webinar, you can email us at [hsrc@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:hsrc@acl.hhs.gov). You can also use the chat or email if you have technical issues.

Now, let's get into the poll. We are curious to learn who is being represented here today. Would you please respond to this short poll? How would you describe your group/organization's current role in providing transportation support to increase access to community services and ensure housing stability? The options are: provide direct transportation support, partner with a transportation provider, do not currently provide support but may in the future, or it is not applicable to our community. Thank you for responding.

While you are responding to the poll, I would like to tell you about the HSRC, or Housing and Services Resource Center, which stems from a partnership between ACL and other Health and Human Services, or HHS, department agencies, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD. In every state and community, there are a number of entities and programs that help people access housing and supportive services. Often, the housing systems and the service systems are siloed, or not connected. Stronger collaborations between these systems would enable more older adults, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness to achieve housing stability, live with dignity and independence in the community, and avoid homelessness and costly institutional care. So, people with disabilities and older adults can stay stably housed, healthy, and engaged in their communities, the Housing and Services Resource Center provides technical assistance across the federal agencies to cultivate cross sector partnerships that bring together housing, homelessness services, disability services, aging services, health, including physical, behavioral, and mental health services, and transportation—one of our partners here today.

After the webinar, I hope you will look at the HSRC website at [acl.gov/housingandservices](http://acl.gov/housingandservices), at the end of the webinar. We will also share our email address again in the chat so you can be in touch with us and get periodic updates.

Let's close the poll. While we're getting the poll results, please enter your name and the organization you're from in the chat. That helps us know who is attending today and it lets the other partners know, too, who is on the call.

It looks like 37% of you are already partnering with transportation providers, that is great to hear! Many of you, it is not applicable right now. And 19% do not currently provide support but may in the future, and 17% are providing direct transportation support. Hopefully, we can continue to build these numbers out after our webinar today and increase those partnerships.

For those of you that have a transportation partner or are the transportation partner, please place your agency's name and the name of your transportation partner in the chat box. This will also help us identify where we have partnerships across the country. Often, we have found, from the technical assistance that we provide, that the peer-to-peer training is often received the

best and is most effective, and we are hoping to do a little bit of that today with the three presenters we have today from Arizona and King City, California.

As we move into our topic today, I want to first explore with you some of the ways in which transportation affects housing stability. No matter our age or ability, each of us needs a way to get from our homes to jobs, stores where we can buy necessities like food, to access health services, school, participate in education, recreation and more, and to be socially connected.

If we have a caregiver, they also sometimes need a way to reach us. Some people with disabilities, older adults, and people experiencing homelessness don't have a car or may be unable to drive, yet they still need to go places. Unless people with disabilities and older adults have accessible, reliable, and safe transportation options, their housing situation can become unstable. People experiencing homelessness also need ways to get food, health, and other services. Some have jobs they may lose if they cannot get to work. In fact, transportation and housing are consistently top reasons that people call the Administration for Community Living's hotlines, the Eldercare Locator and the Disability Information and Access Line, or DIAL. In fact, last year we received 29,000 inquiries on Eldercare Locator around transportation or transportation-related services, and 840 calls to DIAL for transportation or transportation-related services. These hotlines connect people with disabilities, older adults, and caregivers to information and services that promote independent living and address fundamental needs. Later in the webinar, we will share those hotlines with you.

As we move onto our topic today, I want to introduce our federal partners that are with us today. Our first speaker will be Danielle Nelson. She is a Senior Transportation Analyst at the U.S. Department of Transportation. After Danielle will be Erica McFadden, who is the Director of the Office of Independent Living Programs at the Administration for Community Living. I'll turn the mic over to Danielle.

**DANIELLE NELSON:** Thank you Lori. I appreciate you all hosting today's webinar and making today possible.

As Lori mentioned, I am from the Federal Transit Administration, or FTA for short, and as Lori mentioned I am in the Office of Program Management. I also meant to thank the Housing and Services Resource Center for hosting today's webinar and arranging today's speakers. I am very much looking forward to hearing from the local perspectives in a little bit. I also want to thank all of my HHS partners for their leadership on this important topic and for recognizing the value of transportation and cross sector collaboration's.

As Lori mentioned, later on in today's webinar, I am going to be sharing with some of you that answered in the poll that you're not yet partnering with transportation—there will be a live demo of a tool to help you find some of those potential partnerships in your communities. You came today, so you probably already know how important transportation is to everyday life and how it allows people to get to essential services.

Our mission at the Federal Transit Administration is to improve America's communities through public transportation. At the core of what we do, FTA for short as we're called, we work to ensure the safety of riders and provide resources to public transit agencies so they can operate that service. The enactment of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law included a significant increase in funding for public transit, much needed and very welcomed funding. The FTA invests more

than \$12 billion annually to support and expand public transit. We at FTA support transit systems serving both large and small urban areas as well as rural agencies and tribes. That tool I am going to show you a little bit later really shines a light on some of the best kept secrets, which is our rural public transportation as well as tribal transportation that we fund. We provide funding to more than 3,000 transit systems across the country, including 1,800 of those providers who are in rural and tribal areas. So again, I look forward to showing you the mapping tool a little bit later so we can show you exactly where those 3,000 FTA grantees are located across the country and how, if you're interested, you can find them, as well as their contact information, if you're interested in starting up transportation partnership opportunities.

And before I turn it over to my HHS colleague, I just wanted to share a very recent study that was published that's all about partnerships. The National Academies, the Transit Cooperative Research Program, just published—the title is, "Partnerships for Equitable Pandemic Response and Recovery." I am going to put it in the chat in just a moment. This publication underscores the nontraditional ways in which organizations, many of whom are both HUD and HHC grantees like the ones represented here today, how they partnered with our FTA grantees at the local level, so local public transit agencies, during COVID, to meet community needs and support equity goals. So, some of the highlighted partnerships in this publication are innovative partnerships that included food delivery, supply delivery, transporting homeless veterans to medical care and vaccination sites, and providing internet and Wi-Fi access for remote communities that needed to access work, school, etc.

With that, I would like to pass things over to my other HHS colleague, Erica McFadden. Erica.

**ERICA MCFADDEN:** Thank you, Daniel. And thank you for that great introduction! I think we all know how difficult it is to locate accessible and affordable housing as well as transportation. From the looks of everybody here from across the country, it is exciting to see you all here, we all know that it is a huge need.

And we know that medical transportation is important, but we also know that transportation goes beyond that. People with disabilities and older adults want to be included and engaged in their communities. They want to be able to shop, go to church, visit friends, go to work, and live a life they want like anybody else. Essentially, reliable and accessible transportation allows people the ability to live the lives they want to lead and to live safely and stably in their community. If they are able to access their community freely and they feel safe in doing so, their housing stability is increased. That's why transportation continues to be a top concern in which people turn to disability and aging networks to help with resources and solutions.

Specifically, I want to share information with you all regarding the role of our disability networks. I am part of the Administration for Community Living's Administration on Disabilities. It includes our protection advocacy organizations, our state developmental disability councils, and our university centers for excellence in developmental disabilities. They all focus on housing and transportation as part of their work, and they're all located in every state and territory.

But, specifically, I wanted to highlight the Administration for Community Living grants for more than 350 awards for our centers for independent living. That's the program I oversee. The goal of the centers—they are run by people with disabilities for people with disabilities and their goal is to support independent living. They are the boots on the ground serving people with disabilities of all ages and types of disabilities by providing information and resources,

independent living skills training, assisting youth who left high school, and helping move people out of institutions, among many other services to help people live the lives they seek.

But like Lori said earlier with the DIAL calls, some of the top calls that centers get are around locating housing and transportation. In fiscal year 2021, CILs served about 237,000 people with disabilities of all ages. They provided 50,000 people with transportation services and about 53,000 people with housing services.

If you want an idea of how centers work, one of the stories was from our center in Norfolk Virginia. An older woman was starting to lose her vision and she needed to find an affordable apartment. So, she met with the staff, and they helped connect her with support groups about her vision loss and they also provided her with a list of apartments that would allow her to utilize paratransit. They told her about paratransit, what it was, they helped her apply, and she contacted one of the places on the housing list, was approved, and now is living on her own and rides paratransit successfully. She doesn't see the vision loss as a loss because now she is a part of a greater community and knows she can still live the life that she wants.

Where there are limited options in housing and transportation, CILs are at the table advocating to expand these options. In fact, both the aging and disability networks are great partners in coordination, as they are tuned into the needs of the communities they serve. To address the need for transportation and housing stability for people with disabilities, older adults, and caregivers requires coordination at every level. It is a complex, wicked problem. And so, recognizing the importance of partnerships to advance community living, ACL collaborates across Health and Human Services and with HUD, the FTA that Danielle was just talking about, to strengthen these partnerships that are needed at the federal, state, and community levels to coordinate housing and transportation for our communities.

So today, you are going to hear examples of these partnerships that are going to showcase how they work together to be able to solve some of these problems. In Flagstaff, they convened people with disabilities, older adults, and community partners to develop a macro transportation service, that you'll hear about, that were able to give people access to jobs, shopping, and other things that I discussed previously. The second example is coming from King City, California, which I was told is the salad bowl capital of the world. So, that's great. It's a rural area that built a partnership across community organizations to get funding and support to bring a rail stop with micro transit to King City.

These examples are going to highlight the importance of accessible transportation to support community living and how coordination with community partners, like aging and disability networks, make it possible. After all, an emphasis on partnerships is essential for our work and advancing community living for all populations. Thank you.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you Erica and thank you Danielle for this wonderful information and opening remarks.

We are going to move now to our first partners who are on the call, and that is Estella Hollander who is a Mobility Planner with Mountain Line in Flagstaff Arizona, and Holly Creager, who is the Director of Programs for the Flagstaff Shelter Services. Their organizations came together to form a partnership that provides necessary rides for individuals experiencing homelessness to

connect them and others to the surrounding community. I'll just note that Estella led one of our Mobility on Demand projects for Transit Planning 4 All, so we're really pleased to have Estella here today and her partner, Holly, to tell us about their experience in Flagstaff Arizona. I will turn things over to Estella to get us started.

**ESTELLA HOLLANDER:**

Thank you, Lori. And I will actually turn it over to Holly to introduce the shelter.

**HOLLY CREAGER:** Good morning. At Flagstaff Shelter Services, we are a low barrier shelter providing shelter and housing resources to folks regardless of their faith, sobriety, mental health, criminal background, race, ethnicity, or gender identity. So, we are really helping to shelter folks and connect them to housing resources.

Our client population, we serve an elderly demographic, and we also have a large group of folks that have some mobility challenges. So, in accessing services throughout the Flagstaff community, we partnered with Mountain Line to help in accessing those services for the clientele that serve. I will go ahead and turn it over to Estella to talk more on that.

**ESTELLA HOLLANDER:** Excellent, thank you. Mountain Line and the shelter have really partnered for a variety of years, they are a part of our discounted pass program where we provide discounted passes. We also donated two paratransit vehicles to them to help with their services. But, specifically, this partnership was trying to fill a transportation gap in the Huntington industrial area in Flagstaff. It's really, I call it, a forgotten area in Flagstaff. There is a lack of sidewalks and crossings, as you can see from the pictures on here. It is a low-density area. However, there is a high concentration of human services. The shelter is located here, there is also a dialysis center, clinics, there is a food bank as well. So, it's really an area that needs mobility options but currently has no fixed route service. However, there are some fixed routes surrounding the area. It is difficult to access, as again, noted by the lack of sidewalks and crossings. There are also railroad tracks to the north that are hard to pass as well as the Interstate 40 to the south.

This project really focused on inclusive planning, so bringing together key partners such as the shelter, we also brought together the county, our council of governments area agency on aging, as well as some other important stakeholders. We also brought people who may be using this program. We had older adults and people with disabilities as part of the planning and implementation of this program, so really helping with those decisions and throughout this project really defined the critical path items. Through the steering committee, helped with the decision making, figuring out what this service will look like through the whole planning process.

So, some of the outcomes -- Our project was a micro transit program, which is an on-demand service that uses our paratransit vans. The service combines—it is the same vehicle for paratransit as well as with this new micro transit. It could be that both riders are together in one vehicle.

Since implementation, we have had around 600 trips. We did some rider satisfaction; it is high rider satisfaction, which is great. About 63% of the riders are older adults or a person with disabilities, which were self-identified. Focusing from trips from the shelter and getting to services, 25% were to Walmart -- this was really a key destination in this area to make sure

people staying at the shelter can get to Walmart. As well as medical care and other services -- 16%. We have a connection center that is basically three routes that come into this connection center, so then they can really get to all of Flagstaff from these routes. Around 28% of the rides were from there. And then the housing authority, which provides a variety of housing services were about 5% of the rides.

The purpose of this service was to provide greater access to our fixed route as well as to the surrounding area to fill this missing transportation gap in Flagstaff.

Lastly, one quick quote, this is from Sandra, the first rider of this program. "I am 86 years old, and I go to Walmart to get one to two weeks' worth of groceries. It is difficult for me to maneuver my cart on the regular bus. I love the "One dollar bus," as she puts it. "It is easy to get my cart on there since there is more room and the driver puts the lift down for me. Really, the people on there are very friendly and the drivers are wonderful." She applied for paratransit but did not qualify, since she can still use the bus. This service is connecting people and providing that gap for people who have some mobility challenges but may not fully qualify for paratransit. And that's it from me.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you Estella and Holly. If you will stand by, we are going to turn now to Doreen Liberto, who is the AICP Community Development Director at King City, California. Doreen, can you tell us about what is happening in California?

**DOREEN LIBERTO:** If you're talking about the storm, we're getting snow in our area. An area where you couldn't go skiing, you can now go skiing. We can now use that as part of our tourist brochures.

Good day, everybody. I am going to give you a flavor of King City. It is a very small city in the central part of California in Monterey County. As mentioned earlier, we are considered the "Salad Bowl of the Nation". The next time you have a salad or eat strawberries, you can think of King City, please do. We are a small rural town of less than 14,000 people, less than 4 square miles.

We do have a disadvantaged community. We have a number of people that are below the poverty line. You can look at the demographics, the majority of the people are Hispanic and the majority of people who live there speak Spanish as their primary language. Median income is far below at almost \$60,000 when you compare it to the U.S., or California, or Monterey County, we are a very disadvantaged community. The number of people that live in our households, again if you compare this to the U.S., California, or Monterey County, we are about at 4.15, as opposed to the United States average of 2.6. We have a number of people that are living within existing housing, a number of older people that are living in those conditions and we are attempting to provide more housing and transportation choices.

While we have several projects we are working on, I do want to highlight one. There was old Highway 101 that went through the city. It was then diverted elsewhere, and a lot of the old 1940s – 1950s hotels are sitting there idly. We are now looking, if you look at the top slide, that will show you what the hotel looks like, and on the bottom one is we're starting to look at providing planning and housing and commercial facilities for our senior population. This is one that we're currently working on. There will be commercial below, senior facilities in the rest of

the facility, there is transit, we do have a program for mobility for all. This is close to grocery stores, close to other retail uses, and our historic downtown area.

One project I want to emphasize and talk about is the King City multimodal transit station and the collaborative process we used. This is the area that we are working on to bring in a reestablished passenger service. We began this process in 2006. At the time, it was thought there was no way Amtrak or Union Pacific would ever allow a train to stop in King City again. But we said, "Let's do it. We need to provide some alternative transportation for this community, we need to look at what we do to reduce our greenhouse gases." We are a predominantly agricultural area. We identified that the military base close by, Fort Hunter Liggett, had a history with the city. Back during World War II, they took their troops on the rail outside the area.

We want to look at the collaborative process—what do we do. The first thing we did, as I mentioned we started earlier, 2006, we found that there used to be a train that stopped in King City for passenger service in the 1940s. It ceased to exist. We said let's do it again. Let's see if we can start it again. I have to tell you a lot of people laughed at us, they didn't think we could do it because we were the small, poor town, and there was no way that we could get Amtrak to stop there again. But we defined the project early on and identified the stakeholders, which was critical.

One of the major stakeholders was Fort Hunter Liggett. This is the Army base of about 165,000 acres. They bring about 80,000 troops per year into that area, and they were using single occupancy vehicles to do it. We reached out to them, and we said, "Let's build a relationship. Would you be willing to transport your troops again?" And they said absolutely. Early on we brought a major stakeholder into our process. We built strong leadership, and our communication process was important. We decided that our elected officials would talk to other elected officials at all levels, that staff people would talk to other staff people. We actually had this form of communication and a strategic plan that we developed.

We next identified what documents needed to be amended to incorporate this multimodal transit center. What do we have to change in order to get the state to approve this and provide us with funds. We identified funding sources and we applied for them as much as we could. During this whole time, we kept the communication going and expanding our stakeholders. We finally got Amtrak to agree to stop.

We received funding to work on the engineering design plans, and finally after all this time, I'm happy to say in 2023, Union Pacific is reviewing our engineering plans. We had the opportunity of a collaborative meeting that included the State Transportation Department as well as the Chief Deputy Secretary for the Rail and Transit Department. Amtrak, Union Pacific, and Fort Hunter Liggett all came together and we're going forward. The last thing I'll say because I know my time is up is don't give up. Whatever you do, keep going and you will succeed in providing transportation.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you, Doreen. And thank you, Holly and Estella. Holly, could you tell us why it was important for your shelter to pursue this strategic partnership and what has been the value added to your shelter and the people you serve?

**HOLLY CREAGER:** This partnership was vital in connecting the client population that we serve to various resources in the community. Specifically, healthcare and housing resources. Those



were the main ones. It has definitely been able to help connect those folks into permanent housing solutions and helping end their homelessness.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you, Holly, Estella, could you tell us why it was so important to get the input from people with lived experiences, both in planning and once you were operational?

**ESTELLA HOLLANDER:** I think it is absolutely essential to have a successful program. When planning a program there are so many questions, like “What are the service times? What are the key destinations people are trying to get to? How are people going to request rides?” There’s a variety of things you have to figure out and I think often times as a planner, it is very much this high-level view so it is important to get the feedback from people who might be using the program. It also helps gain that trust early on so they can become potential riders in the future.

We really did a boots on the ground approach where we went to the shelter a variety of times, talked with the people staying there and asked them various questions of, “What are their transportation challenges? Where are they trying to get to at what times a day?” That kind of thing to try and create a successful program that is usable for the people who need the transportation services. Once it is implemented, I think figuring out the marketing tactics, that kind of thing. How are people getting the information? It is really important to have the steering committee or just a group of people and champions throughout the planning and implementation.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thanks, Estella. And Doreen, could you tell us, how did you work to overcome barriers with your partners? How did you get them to buy into the plan?

**DOREEN LIBERTO:** The first thing is that we had to have a clear definition and idea of what we were proposing. In our case, we knew we wanted to reestablish passenger service. Then we had to identify what our common goals could be with the other stakeholders. How can we add value to what you are doing? How could this project add value? For example, Fort Hunter Liggett, at 80,000 troops coming and going, they needed to reduce their greenhouse gas footprint under national law, and they wanted to reduce their cost. We talked about what value this would have. We could design a staging area for the troops to take the train, get off, save you a substantial amount of money, and reduce your greenhouse gas footprint. It was again, getting back to it, clearly defining what the project is, looking for common goals with other stakeholders, and then showing how the project provides value.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you. I would like to ask this question of all of you. One of the questions we get often is, “How are these partnerships coming together? How do you keep them going once you get started?” What is the one thing, and I will give you each a shot at this question, what is the one thing you would say was most important in maintaining and forming the collaboration? Estella, do you want to go first?

**ESTELLA HOLLANDER:** Sure. I would say listening to the people and acting upon what they are saying. Really making meaningful change. I think that creates trust and makes people continue to be engaged. I think too often in planning you will hear various complaints or criticisms or whatever it is, and then you just keep doing the same track. I think it is important to listen, reflect, and make the appropriate changes or implement the possible changes if possible.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you, Estella. And Holly?

**HOLLY CREAGER:** I would say definitely that collaboration and just looking at similar solutions that various agencies may have and kind of how everybody can serve the same kind of goal and purpose.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you. And Doreen?

**DOREEN LIBERTO:** Our process has been longer, since 2006. It was really critical that we continued to communicate. I mentioned that we have communication at different levels to make sure that the elected officials kept in contact with other elected officials, that staff kept in contact with other staff people. Just keep the communication going, updating people when we had a victory in the sense we got funding or we overcame an obstacle, really sent it out to everybody, get them excited about the project and just pushing it forward.

One thing we found is that we couldn't depend on other agencies to do it for us. This very small city said, "We need to do it. We need to push this forward. It is important to the region, to the community, and to our residents." I think just keep pushing it forward and maintain communication.

**LORI GERHARD:** Terrific. Thank you, Estella, Holly and Doreen, for this wonderful information, all your leadership in your communities and the work and the partnerships that you have going on. We are going to ask you back in a little bit here, but now we are going to shift.

We would like to now ask all of you to respond to this question: what is the biggest success your state or locality has had in developing cross-sector collaborations that include transportation? And if you can put your responses in the chat. Again, what is the biggest success your state or locality has had in developing cross-sector collaborations that include transportation? We are going to come back to Danielle Nelson here from the Federal Transit Administration to demonstrate a tool that they have. Danielle, we'll turn it over to you.

**DANIELLE NELSON:** Thank you all. I really enjoyed that presentation. Especially because it leads perfectly into the conversation that I wanted to share with you all today. The Federal Transit Administration, or FTA for short, funds several national technical assistance centers, and the one I want to share with you today is our National Center for Mobility Management, or NCM for short. They have grant opportunities that they put out annually to help bring together partnerships like the one you just heard. Housing and transportation, transportation, aging, and disability—the sky is the limit. I just wanted to share with you the grant funding opportunities.

For example, they just announced, they haven't posted it yet because it's brand new, three of their ready-to-launch grants. These are awards of \$75,000. The next notice of funding will be out soon, but this is the one from last year that was just published. One of them went to a rural part of Tennessee, upper Cumberland region, and it's supporting a new ride to recovery

program, and it has multiple partners. The other one is access to pop-up food distributions in rural Rockbridge County, Virginia. Also, a lot of great partnerships for that one. And the third one is Rides and Smiles. This one is suburban in Eastside King County, and this one is for health and aging. There are funding opportunities through the center, but what I'm going to show you all today is this partnership tool, which is a great opportunity if you do not currently partner with your public transit provider. This is a resource that was developed by the National Center for Mobility Management.

I mentioned earlier that there are over 3,000 FTA grantees. If you are in an urban area, you can look on Google Maps and know when the bus or the train is coming, but when it's a rural transit provider or tribal for our older adults and people with disabilities program, it's harder. It's not set, it's demand response. You have to call or look on a website. We developed this tool with FTA funding through the center, and I hope that you all will feel comfortable using it.

How this works, and I will show you quickly, is you can type in your address of where you live, or you can zoom in. As you can see, it's nationwide, but I want to be up front. Each dot here does not show the service delivery. If we go to Missouri here, you can zoom in here and you can see by looking at the area, the dot isn't showing a large service area, but where the headquarters is. Each dot represents a transportation service. The dot is placed either in the town or ZIP Code or headquarter location of that transit grantee.

When you click on it, I also want to share, that sometimes there will be two options down here. Sometimes there will be two providers in a community. All you have to do is look at the bottom and notice if there is an option to go to the second page. That's how you know if there is more than one provider in a community.

All of the data for this tool uses FTA's National Transit Database. It also uses our National Rural Transit Assistance program's rural database, our National Aging and Disability Transportation put in all of the data for senior transportation and our older adult transportation. Also, all of our state DOTs provided information as well, so it was a very collaborative effort. This just was released; it is a brand-new tool. I am really excited to share it with you all today.

I also wanted to share the opportunity for partnership. Let's go to the West Coast, let me type in Eugene, Oregon. Also, if I can use this tool, anyone can because I am not tech savvy. You can either click on it here or let me see... In Eugene Oregon, there is Lane Transit District. It will always have the phone number of the service and the website, and then the website directly for fare information. And a best kept secret is that we require all of our fixed route transit to provide half fare, meaning you pay half of the cost of the fare, if you have a Medicare card. This will take you to that information.

This seems like a little bit of inside baseball but each funding source, so whatever that transit agency receives, it shows here. These are the numbers to the programs. So, 5307 is the urbanized area program, 5311 is the rural program, and 5310 are the formula programs, those

are the older adult and people with disabilities programs. Other means they could get any of our other competitive grant funding.

Let me now click on the website to show you what it takes you to if you want to find a transit provider. It will take you directly to the public transit provider so you can plan your trip, learn more about the fares, riding, and it also has the phone number if you want to call them directly. It tells you what funding they receive.

Now, let's go to a rural community. Let's now go closer to the East Coast, Lost Creek, West Virginia. As you can see, there are no dots, meaning there is no FTA grantee in Lost Creek. But if you zoom out, we can see there's dots around it. Looking here, the closest dot is in Clarksburg. If you click on that and go to their website, we can see here they receive section 5310 which is the enhanced mobility. This is a senior service, specifically for seniors. If you go to the next one, now this is the public transit provider, that also does paratransit. If you click their website, let's see if they cover Lost Creek. Again, the pin is dropped where the headquarters is, but it doesn't show the larger service area. And see here? It does cover Lost Creek, it has a very large service area. That's how you can tell, even if there is not a pin exactly in the community you are looking at, go one town over and you can see if it covers your service area. In this case, it does.

With that, I want to turn things back over because I know we really want to get to questions, Lori, but I also really wanted to highlight that issue about half fare. If you didn't know about it, I want everyone to leave here today with at least one thing: if there is fixed route transit in your area, you can ride it, if you have a Medicare card, for half the cost, half fare.

I live near Washington DC. If you click the Washington DC area and you go to fares, right here it says "reduced fares" and it will tell you how to apply. In my community, you get a yellow SmarTrip card which charges you only half the cost. With that I will pass it back over to Lori and thank you for the opportunity to share this resource.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you, Danielle. I'd like to ask all of our speakers to come back. Now, we'll take a few questions from the audience, there are a few pending out here.

One of the questions that the audience has asked is, "What are some of the barriers you faced in the process?" Maybe we could go ahead and start with Doreen, do you want to respond to that question?

**DOREEN LIBERTO:** One of the barriers that we had in the very beginning was our demographics. Many people would say that it was only King City, you didn't deserve it, you're a rural community. I think that was one barrier, the stereotype that people had. Or that there were larger communities that deserved the funds more than we did.

Quite honestly, we found that upsetting because our citizens deserve transportation and housing as much as anybody. And I think in a lot of ways that motivated us too, to say that we

could do it. But that was one barrier that we had, that we are just a small rural community and larger communities deserve the money, not us.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you Doreen. So, no matter what your size, keep that passion going to drive you to what it is you are looking for.

Estella, were there any barriers you faced in that process and how did you overcome them?

**ESTELLA HOLLANDER:** It is always hard with gaining and maintaining participation and getting partners to be invested. I think finding those common goals, like with the shelter, they had challenges with getting some of their clients to the fixed route, so I think there was a common goal of "they need transportation, and we want to provide transportation in this area." I think it can be challenging maintaining that partnership throughout the years with riders or with people who are participating in the planning process.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you, Estella, and thank you for those tips on how to maintain those relationships. And Holly, from the shelter's perspective, what are some of the barriers that you faced in the process and how did you overcome them?

**HOLLY CREAGER:** Just getting the word out to the masses and keeping that engagement and looking at new ways to paint the picture of what we're doing and the collaboration behind the Mountain Line micro transit. Just continuing to promote that and get that out to the folks that are accessing the services.

**LORI GERHARD:** So, helping people stay aware of what is available and getting them connected. Thanks Holly. And Danielle, there is a question here for you. "Does the partner locating tool have a way to filter for transportation that is available to the general public rather than just those that serve people with disabilities or those experiencing homelessness?"

**DANIELLE NELSON:** Yes, it does. It has the listing there of who it serves. It will say "seniors" at the top, or it will say "paratransit." It does have by funding source at the bottom, it reiterates who it is for. If it is the Older Americans Act Title III B services, it will say "seniors" at the top and will have that funding source listed. So, yes, to an extent.

**LORI GERHARD:** That's great. I think the other piece is that there are some social service organizations that serve a lot of people and are looking to use some of these tools. It sounds like, Danielle, the transportation provider tool might be a good tool to use?

**DANIELLE NELSON:** Absolutely! It's why we asked our center to develop it, because there is a need to find transportation. It was just released, so it is now being updated. Eventually, it will show the service area in the greyed-out box rather than just a dropped pin. We are looking at ways to improve it and make it a more useful tool. The goal is to help people find sometimes the best-kept secret, which is rural public transit and other opportunities to connect with our grantees. That is the purpose of the partnership tool.

**LORI GERHARD:** Terrific. They are also asking whether the website has information available in multiple languages. Danielle?

**DANIELLE NELSON:** That is a great question. I will reach out to Amy Conrick, who is the Director of the National Center for Mobility Management. I don't believe there currently is, but there may be an opportunity to have it translated into other languages. So, I will follow up with you, Lori, about that.

**LORI GERHARD:** Okay, that's great! I have one more question, and this is open to everybody, Doreen you may be able to weigh in on this one. Could you describe some potential paths forward for a small city, 40,000, that does have a small bus system, however, the routes are only served during limited hours. Is there an example of region, city, or town that got FTA funding partnerships to extend an existing service to later in the evening? This community service ends at 5:45 PM which curtails the movement of residents who do not have cars and prevents them from taking jobs in the late evening. Danielle, you also might be able to respond to that.

**DANIELLE NELSON:** Is the question do FTA grantees extend service outside of the normal service hours? The question is if that is an option?

**LORI GERHARD:** Yes, I think that's an option, and then also they're asking for some potential paths forward. I thought Danielle, maybe you could respond to the FTA piece? Doreen, you may have some ideas, too.

**DANIELLE NELSON:** I will mention if you are interested in having these conversations with your local public transit grantee, the National Center for Mobility Management has a phone number on their website and an email. They can help to initiate those conversations. Of course, funding is a challenge, so it's always great to have other partners, whether aging, housing, etc. are coming to the table to help. We allow federal fund braiding, so other non-DOT funds used as local match to three of our formula programs, so these types of partnership opportunities are wonderful conversations. I would say to contact the National Center for Mobility Management to have a conversation specific to your community. It is eligible, the question is just how to extend the service to be most useful to the community and how to fund it.

**DOREEN LIBERTO:** I will add. We are a small community, and of course we partner with nonprofits and also religious institutions, and so we do try to build a collaboration of the government, private, nonprofit, and we try to set up something so that if people do need transportation in the evening it is arranged. We do have mobility for everybody. But we do put out something that we do have a network with all the nonprofits to see if maybe we could provide transit in the evening for people. Also, go after some additional transit funds through our regional transportation agency for evening service.

**LORI GERHARD:** Thank you so much. And Estella and Holly, I don't know if there's anything you would add to that question?

**ESTELLA HOLLANDER:** I would say to think outside the box. Are there taxi companies that could provide the rides? Is there Uber or Lyft? I think there is some sort of late-night program that the shelter has partnered with. I think, see what all the options are in your community and see if there are ways to partner.

**LORI GERHARD:** And I have to tell you all, you all are sending in some really great questions here. Erica, one of the questions that has come in too is, how do you find the disability and aging partners? Is there anything you might add to help transportation partners find their counterparts?

**ERICA MCFADDEN:** If they ever feel like they don't know who they are, they can contact us here at the Administration for Community Living and we can connect them to who they need to go to. There is also DIAL. DIAL is also a resource for everybody to use, so if you're looking for who they are in your community, we have that awesome hotline to use as well. You can contact us or DIAL and we will all connect you to the right people.

**DANIELLE NELSON:** Lori, if I may. Bill Wagner, who also works in the National Center of Mobility Management is here, and I saw you in the chat so thank you Bill. They do one on one intensive technical assistance and regional forums, so thank you Bill, shout out for putting that in the chat. They are an excellent resource. Also, I saw USAging who is a partner on the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center. They also provide free, one on one technical assistance to communities. I just want to say Estella, thank you for thinking outside of the box, encouraging those partnerships, and if you need a little extra assistance, those TA centers are there, a free resource, to help.

**LORI GERHARD:** Those are all wonderful resources to be sharing. I want to thank our panelists again and our speakers for today. We do have more questions than we had time to get to, but we want to keep everyone on time today. The speakers will review the questions and provide responses.

We would like, before we move on to the closing, to again share these additional resources. The Eldercare Locator and DIAL help older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers learn about transportation resources. As we mentioned earlier today, transportation is the most frequent inquiry to the Eldercare Locator, along with housing. The Eldercare Locator is a national service of the Administration for Community Living and they received 29,000 calls, as I mentioned earlier, in 2022 for transportation. Their call center hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 9 PM Eastern time. The website is [eldercare.acl.gov](http://eldercare.acl.gov). In chat, that is available too.

The Disability Information and Access Line, or DIAL, can be reached at 888-677-1199. That is supported with funding from CDC and ACL. In addition, the DIAL call center can also assist and

help people with disabilities access independent living resources, such as connecting to their local Center for Independent Living. DIAL received 840 transportation related calls in 2022. There is also a website, [acl.gov/DIAL](https://acl.gov/DIAL). Chat by text, video or phone is available. You can also email DIAL at [DIAL@usaginganddisability.org](mailto:DIAL@usaginganddisability.org). American sign language is also available on DIAL.

A big thank you to all of our presenters for giving us such valuable insight into the role that transportation plays in connecting housing, aging and disability and health partners. We hope that through the discussion you've gained some insight into ways to collaborate with transportation partners in your communities, and for transportation partners to be collaborating with the housing, disability, aging and healthcare sectors.

We have all heard opportunities on things we can act on, so we want to encourage you to use the Housing and Services Resource Center as a way to get connected and learn more about the different resources that are available.

The HSRC team is very excited to feature another webinar on cross-sector partnerships on April 18! We will be focusing on partnerships with continuums of care serving the growing population of older adults and individuals with disabilities experiencing or at risk for homelessness. Please register today to get notices about this upcoming webinar.

And I would like to just ask if you can all please take three minutes to answer our short feedback form. Your feedback is really important in helping us improve these webinars to make them most effective for you. And the HSRC is your resource center, so please email us at [hsrc@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:hsrc@acl.hhs.gov) about your technical assistance needs, website suggestions and tell us about your own cross-sector partnerships. We're always looking to highlight successful partnerships that are out there and help people share stories.

Finally, we want to thank Mission Analytics, USAging, Emily Stiles, our ASL interpreter, and Serena, our CART specialist, for their roles in producing today's webinar. We are especially grateful for everyone who's joined us today. Thank you for your questions, for sharing your partnerships, and thank you again for all the work you do to help people stay stably housed and help those that are homeless get housing and transportation and live full lives in the community. Thank you and have a good afternoon!