Mobility Management Focused Transit Manager Peer Roundtable Summary

August 13, 2025

The Mobility Management Focused Transportation Manager Peer Roundtable discussion revolved around varying challenges and creative solutions regarding transportation in rural communities. The dialogue included insights from mobility managers who shared their experiences with rideshare solutions, partnerships with local organizations, volunteer programs, and technology innovations aimed at improving transportation access. This collaborative approach emphasizes the importance of resource-sharing and community engagement to address pressing transportation needs.

Employment Transportation Challenges: Enjoli Dixon National RTAP Rural Transit Project Manager, introduced the issue of transportation barriers to employment in rural communities, post-COVID-19. She highlighted the importance of coordinating transportation services to assist job seekers facing difficulties accessing work.

Local Transit Solutions: Cristi Williams, South Western Oklahoma Development Authority, shared how local transit agencies collaborate to manage routes for employment transportation, noting the limitations of demand-response models and the efforts made to maximize resources.

Partnerships with Rehabilitation Centers: Jeremy Bell, National RTAP Tribal Transit Liaison, discussed his experience with Choctaw Transit, indicating the effectiveness of partnerships with vocational rehabilitation centers to secure transportation for job seekers and individuals with disabilities seeking employment.

Commute Smart Initiative: Donna Marceau, Nashua Regional Planning Commission, talked about the Commute Smart ride-sharing service in New Hampshire, which allows individuals to share rides and the provision of free bikes to overcome individual transportation challenges.

Volunteer Church Programs: Bell mentioned involving local churches to provide rides for those unable to access transportation, emphasizing the significance of volunteers in addressing gaps in services. Further elaborating on transportation solutions, Bell introduced the concept of a volunteer driver program using community vehicles to bridge gaps in service availability.

Collaborative Partnerships: Teri Palmer, RLS and Associates, highlighted partnerships with rental agencies to provide affordable transportation solutions for employees, elaborating on community-

specific transportation needs in rural areas. Discussions on expanding volunteer driver programs and the challenges posed by accessibility of vehicles for disabled individuals in rural locales are brought forward by Palmer.

Leveraging Technology: Palmer introduced a website initiative that consolidates transportation options, providing a valuable resource for planning travel and staying informed about community needs.

Community Outreach Efforts: Dixon explored various outreach strategies with local organizations to raise awareness about available services and engage community members.

Engagement Events: Williams shared an example from Altus Air Force Base, showcasing how resource fairs can effectively connect newcomers with local services, including transportation solutions.

Networking and Communication: Insights were provided on maintaining relationships with military bases and the importance of continuous communication to ensure transitions between leadership positions.

Maintaining Morale Among Managers: Dixon solicited a discussion on the mental health of mobility managers, encouraging positive interactions and stories of impact to combat burnout and foster resilience.

What types of transportation barriers are prevalent in rural areas? Rural communities often face limited access to public transportation and mobility options, particularly affecting job seekers needing reliable transport.

How can community members support transportation initiatives? Community members can participate in volunteer driver programs, raise awareness about services, and collaborate with local organizations to enhance transportation options.

What role do partnerships play in improving transportation? Collaborations between transit agencies, nonprofits, and community organizations leverage resources, share funding, and ensure broader access to transportation services.

How can technology enhance transportation services in rural areas? Developing websites and mobile applications can provide centralized information about available transportation options, making it easier for users to find rides.

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