ETPN Launch Summit Meeting Notes
Friday, June 24th, 2022
10:00am – 3:00pm
Hybrid

Participants: Aaron Morrow (Community Advocate), Ahmed Suliman (MAS Transportation), Amy Biggs (Snoqualmie Valley Transportation), Ausha Potts (Pierce Transit), Aws Abdullah (American Transport), Bebhinn Gilbert (Hopelink Mobility Management/King County Mobility Coalition), Brock Howell (Snotrac), Chris Bekkouri (Bethany at Silver Lake Skilled Nursing Facility), Cliff Perry (Northshore Senior Center), Daeveene May (Pierce County Coordinated Transportation Coalition), Darvan Cosby (Pierce County Department of Emergency Management), Diane Reese (Access 4 Care Transportation), Greg Kim (Northwest Transport), Ivan Tudela (Pierce County Department of Emergency Management), Janeen Olson (City of Redmond Fire Department), Jeremy Trenhaile (King County Metro), Jonathan Prociv (Catholic Community Services), Juli Rose (Homage Senior Services), Julie Burrell (King County Metro), Kari Ware (Solid Ground), Lisa Figueroa (City of Redmond), Marianna Hanefeld (Washington State Department of Transportation), Mona Steele (Homage Senior Services), Rodney Chandler (Pierce Transit), Sammie Keller (Snohomish Department of Emergency Management), Staci Sahoo (Hopelink Mobility Management/One-Call/One-Click), Tammy Mason (Hopelink NEMT), Tina McCulloch (Puget Sound Dispatch), Tom Sharp (King County Department of Emergency Management), Tyler Verda (Snohomish County Human Services), Victor Londono (Hopelink Community Van),

Staff support: Amy Conrick (NCMM), Bill Wagner (NCMM), Bree Boyce, Dean Sydnor, Heather Clark, Julio Perez, Roz Novikova, Salwa Raphael, Sandy Phan, Sara Sisco

Welcome & Introductions

Welcome, Thanks, and Logistics: The RARET staff, Bree and Dean, would welcome attendees to the summit and introduce the NCMM facilitators, Bill and Amy. A round of introductions would be conducted for those attending the meeting in-person and virtually. The event would see a wide selection of agencies and organizations present with transportation providers, emergency managers, mobility management, and more all present.

Then the agenda was introduced, with the day starting off with a Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation (RARET) and Emergency Transportation Provider Network (ETPN) project history and overview before transitioning to a series of three breakout exercises for the remainder of the event. The focus question for the day is “how can regional partners collaborate to provide an Emergency Transportation Provider Network (ETPN) that will increase the availability of transportation for special needs populations during adverse weather or emergencies and offer formalized procedures and increased predictability to providers during heightened conditions?”
History & Objectives

• RARET Overview
  o While some partners have been working with RARET for years, not all attendees were so familiar. For the sake of introducing RARET as the managers of this project, a refresher was conducted. To summarize, the Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation (RARET) was formed in 2013 following an Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) conference where transportation for vulnerable populations was identified as a major regional need.
  o RARET’s mission is to increase the life sustaining transportation services available to seniors, people with disabilities, low-income individuals, and other vulnerable populations in the event of a major emergency in the Central Puget Sound region (Snohomish, King, and Pierce Counties).
  o RARET works to achieve this mission through resources, coalition building, piloting strategies, and trainings. Some highlights of RARET’s work include:
    ▪ The Adverse Weather Driver Training Resources page
    ▪ Weekly update and announcement emails/monthly newsletters
    ▪ After action reports
    ▪ Network pilot for COVID vaccine access
    ▪ Adverse weather preparedness workshops

• ETPN Project History

The Emergency Transportation Provider Network (ETPN) has been a foundational aspiration of RARET for years and takes aim at a key issue that arises during emergencies. This is the coordination of providers, and the ability to efficiently provide transportation to special needs population during an emergency. Emergency events often create time sensitive environments and making the most effective use of this limited time span to marshal transportation resources in an impactful way is the key challenge.

• ETPN Objectives

The goal of ETPN is to increase the availability of transportation for special needs populations during adverse weather or emergencies by formalizing procedures to increase the predictability of which providers will be operating during heightened conditions. Overall, the objective is to have better outcomes for end users, but the path to this is paved by better identifying roles and coordination. ETPN aims to formalize roles and communication channels during emergencies. This should streamline the transportation coordination efforts, save precious time, and ensure that the appropriate partners are in-the-loop when it comes to essential information about transportation needs. RARET hopes to leave partners with a better understanding of what partners can do in the event of an emergency.

ETPN Components

• ETPN Components

To contextualize these objectives, an overview was provided on the type of emergencies and trips that ETPN would mobilize for. This includes but is not limited to snow events, heat waves, extreme cold weather, earthquakes/volcanic activity, wildfires, pandemics, and flooding/storms. Additionally, the type of ETPN trips might include, but is not limited to essential medical appointments, food access, shelter or transitional housing, return home from a destination, evacuation, and serving non-eligible clients.
ETPN is the proposed solution to the problems of identifying and mobilizing transportation resources – be better prepared. Stakeholders often do not have up to date knowledge of transportation provider capacity and capabilities. Providing a structure to facilitate this should increase the availability of transportation for special needs populations during adverse weather or emergencies by formalizing a framework. ETPN has no inherent fees associated with joining. In fact, providers stand to gain by joining via better tools to prepare their own services for emergencies and new connections which can help them mobilize in adverse conditions.

Additionally, an overview of the various roles and responsibilities of RARET, transportation providers, and other stakeholders was provided. RARET is responsible for leading this project, maintaining partnerships and understanding of the network’s needs, developing planning documents, developing survey instruments, testing assumptions, and more. Transportation providers are responsible for designating a point of contact, maintaining commitments, receiving request and responding in a timely manner, participating in surveys, trainings, exercises, and more. Other stakeholders are responsible for providing resources as relevant, assisting with ETPN requests, participating in surveys and events, and more.

RARET next provided an overview of ETPN’s “Guiding Principles” document which includes flexibility, cross-sector collaboration, punctual communication, and accessibility.

- **One-Call/One-Click Connection**

Another related project from Hopelink Mobility Management is the One-Call/One-Click project. This project is a multi-modal trip planner and ride requesting platform. It shares the same regional focus as ETPN (King Snohomish, and Pierce counties) and aims to connect users to all mobility options. In the context of adverse weather use cases, One-Call/One-Click will centralize non-emergency transportation requests, understanding and communicating which providers are operating. This project has an ability to input eligibility requirements and software flexible to accommodate emergencies. The goal is to closely integrate this project with ETPN as they both develop.

- **Q&A**

  - Any plan to expand to Skagit or Island Counties?
    - Not right now as RARET serves Snohomish, King, and Pierce Counties.
  - Cascadia Rising? How do we participate in future trainings?
    - RARET partners with others who are experts to provide trainings. Part of ETPN is connecting partners across sectors and enabling participation in such exercises and trainings. More to come on this in the future but please let us know if there’s a training you’d like to see or an event you think RARET should participate in.
  - Does ETPN provide transportation to central distribution points? (e.g., schools, Red Cross, etc.)
    - If there was a request that focused on that area and partners willing to go there, there is no reason that could not be done. Also addresses getting goods to those who need them rather than just transporting people.
  - Memorandums of Understanding (MOU’s) for partners?
    - MOU’s with ETPN partners is likely but there has not been a formal draft ready to share at this juncture.
One-Call/One-Click? How does this work for other regions?
- We do hope to facilitate some adverse weather-related transportation requests (dialysis, etc.) but we are not 911 and need to be clear on these expectations. We do hope OCOC can be used by emergency managers and assist with more than just “blue sky days”. ETPN will need to be able to process requests quickly so trying to anticipate what situations will be like and figure out use cases to increase response times. For now, OCOC is best for blue sky trips in King, Snohomish, and Pierce Counties.

(OCOC) How does the communication work with transportation providers?
- Technology should take care of that by creating one place where you can make a request and it filters requests that providers can meet (region, eligibility, etc.)

Can RARET provide planning documents. Providers/agencies – list of services, level of readiness
- Yes, RARET is currently developing planning documents and gauging partners’ level of interest and ability to participate in ETPN. Partners are encouraged to take the survey at the end to help us start tracking this information. Additionally, sharing resources that you can provide for ETPN will be helpful for planning.

Janean – comment – Cascadia Rising exercise could inform transportation planning during an emergency. After action report would be good to refer to.

**Breakout #1: Use Case Scenarios**

The first breakout session would see partners given a selection of three transportation scenarios in the context of plausible emergencies in the Central Puget Sound Region. Partners are encouraged to use the “Use Case Scenario Worksheet” to take notes.

Below are outlines of the provided scenarios and highlights of the group responses:

**Scenario #1** involves a group of older adults, 8 in total, in rural King County who are sheltering in a library after their homes flooded in Snoqualmie Valley. The time frame is ASAP as flooding is rising and will impact routes in the coming days, all routes will be cut off in the coming days, so it is imperative that these folks are moved today while it is still safe to travel. Six people need to go to Redmond Inn, one is requesting Monroe, and another is requesting to go to Preston.

**Group Response #1:**
The first group responding to this topic noted that, despite the preference of two of the riders, their first choice is to evacuate all to Redmond Inn (or to safety) and then connect the clients to their preferred destinations from there. They noted that there would be a need for more than one vehicle, likely 2-3 vehicles with one accessible for the XL wheelchair. On the subject of potential needs for special training, the ability to safely transfer these clients is essential while it may be useful to have working knowledge of how to break down a power chair if necessary. The group noted that there could be a need for more than one provider, and it would be wise for Snoqualmie Valley Transportation, Hopelink, and Metro to coordinate.

Pivoting to questions the group had, the following was asked: How quick is the turnaround for FEMA funding? Can ETPN help answer that?

To close out, they noted that the library would initiate the request. They considered how would the responding providers be funded and decided the best course of action is to act first and figure out
funding later and that it would be likely that a disaster declaration would be issued. One final note was to coordinate with Red Cross to help connect folks with their families at Redmond Inn.

**Group #2 Response:**

The second group noted that SR-202 is historically the least prone to flooding. Depending on which roads are open and which are closed, it may make sense to detour to Preston first for the client that wishes to be delivered there. They too noted the need to get a van that can accommodate XL wheelchair plus other individuals and a second van could take remaining individuals. It would be wise to connect with volunteer organizations in the community as there are places like senior centers that may have drivers. Does a school have a bus available? That could be a quick way to move the ambulatory riders. Calling family and friends in the area and communicating with librarians are other options to consider. There is a need for someone who can assist with the wheelchair. Transportation providers worth connecting with include Metro Access, taxis, Uber & Lyft, Community Van. On the topic of funding, they would look to state emergency funds as the group had doubts about FEMA with a situation that was so localized.

Tom Sharp, from King County Office of Emergency Management noted that with the flood levels in mind this could be appropriate for first responders to be deployed.

**Scenario #2** involves a Pierce County skilled nursing facility that needs to evacuate 50 individuals from their facility due to power issues in extreme cold weather. There are a variety of destinations straddling two counties, with a myriad of mobility needs and some clients needing 1 on 1 staff support. The facility is unable to support these clients overnight and the request is to move them ASAP.

**Group #3 Response:** With this number of clients the first step should be to clarify certain parameters such as the amount of personal medical equipment, any pets or service animals, the number and type of mobility devices, and which clients specifically require staff support. For the 30 or so ambulatory people, fixed route buses will be appropriate to move them. The 5 who need stretchers should be transported using cabulances. The additional15 requiring mobility device and 1 on 1 support from staff and the vehicles they require will be evaluated based on mobility demands such as the number of wheelchairs and non-folding walkers. Necessary training would be drivers familiar with vehicles and piloting them in adverse weather. Pierce Transit would be the first partner to connect with on the transportation side as well as Beyond the Borders and Medicaid Paratransit. If we don’t know who is paying for these trips, the first step should be to use County resources. The care facility should make a request to Pierce County Emergency Operations which is escalated to duty manager.

**Group #4 Response:** This group noted that 50 people moving to seven 7 locations means they need to be divided appropriately. Understand ability of riders getting to each facility and assess the needed accommodations – wheelchair ramps, types of wheelchairs, stretchers, cabulance, walkers, etc. Special training that may be required is the ability to secure wheelchairs/stretchers as well as ADA assistance. Multiple providers are necessary with providers geographically closest to facilities being prioritized as the first ones to reach out to. The nursing facility would reach out to RARET for these needs. Aaron Morrow noted that, we are assuming a person has ability to identify needs of client at the nursing facility to help coordinate with someone from the outside. Christine noted nursing home residents would need medical records, medications, treatment supplies, etc.

**Scenario 3** presents a Snohomish County women’s shelter which needs to get supplies delivered during a snow event. Specifically, there are a number of cots in Everett and food supplies in Mountlake Terrace.
Group #5 (Zoom group) Response: This group noted it is important to assess the size of vehicles needed, particularly for the cots it is important to ensure they are larger or even vehicles that could tow a trailer. Details would be helpful such as the volume and nature of food needing to be moved. As far as special training, the most important training would be drivers trained in inclement weather and ensuring they are CDL drivers.

There are multiple locations with supplies going out and MOUs needed to clarify things for partners. It would be wise to loop in the emergency response team as well as fire/public health, etc. Who would provide transportation? Each agency should have their own transportation plan in place (shelters, food banks, etc.). On the subject of coordination, the shelter would make the request and once the call comes in, the response is accepted or denied, and it is communicated out to facility as task is being executed. It would be useful to have a dedicated communication line that is clear 24/7. For the end user is there a tri-county response? If it is an event that covers all counties, how would those resources be equitably divided? Would the funding be from FEMA? May or may not get reimbursement depending on the situation. There was a question about the term pods used during this section, it was clarified that this is a “Point of Distribution” trailer, essentially a mobile warehouse.

Group # 6 Response: This group highlighted a need for the request drafted order of events. Which should be prioritized? Request from shelter for cots ought to be filtered to the county level emergency management office. Mobility management, and maybe One-Call/One-Click, would be a resource for connecting with transportation providers. Office of emergency management uses data to connect with transportation providers. Need for direct requests to a specific provider and know their capacity before making request. The request needs to be a phone call, and thus a direct conversation in real time as opposed to an email. As the crisis is during a snow event, routes will be varied. Transportation equipment needed would likely just be a van or two for the supplies. Training – broader response – Emergency Managers need training on ETPN. Providers would find it helpful if there was training in emergency management and the structure of response efforts. Two would be ideal due to locations that supplies are coming from. Everett Transit, due to proximity, would be a good partner to contact for the cots. On the subject of coordination, it is important for transportation partners like Homage to not get duplicate requests from multiple sources. On the topic of funding this depends on transportation provider and is a good question to bring up as MOU’s are being developed. Janeen was wondering if the food was hot or cold? How would that be handled depending on their status? Salwa asked volunteer drivers – people in the community wanting to help – how can this be coordinated? Vehicle needs would include 4x4’s or vehicles with All Wheel Drive that are large enough to effectively move the supplies.

In some final review some closing notes were as follows:

- Ivan – volunteer drivers – covered under vehicle insurance plans?
  - Bill – in New York volunteer driver programs, driver’s insurance is first source of coverage.
- Janeen – volunteer core, ask state to issue emergency worker commission number, volunteers would have to have personal coverage. Some programs have umbrella programs.
Breakout #2: “The ETPN Road Map”

This Breakout Session would see attendee groups filling out the “ETPN Road Map Activity Worksheet” to take notes. Currently, the full transcription of each one of these sheets is ongoing and will be incorporated into ETPN plans. The basic information gathered during this activity was:

- Reflections on the COVID-19 responses and discuss how those efforts served as a makeshift, reactive ETPN. How did that Work? What worked well? What could be improved?
- Referring to the Use Case Scenarios from Breakout #1 - what would the process be to implement those solutions?
  - What needs to be in place? Think of structures, procedures, policies, funding, etc.
  - What components would be necessary to create a functioning ETPN?
  - What components would be needed to make the best functioning ETPN? Such as improved access, sustainable funding, technology, shared liability, trainings, etc.

Breakout #3: Bring, Buy, Build

The final activity of the day would have attendees assess what they each can bring, buy, and build as they contribute to the network. These answers were placed on individual cards and sorted into categories in the meeting space. These responses are currently being converted to digital text and will be included in ETPN plans.

Next Steps

In the closing section of this meeting, RARET would outline their three-pronged plan for steps forward. One would be an effort to update plans and documents with the feedback and resources provided by the attendees of this Summit. The second would be to devise action items to formalize the ETPN. And third would be for partners to get involved in RARET meetings to continue to steer a path forward as ETPN develops. To stay involved in the ETPN project please contact Dean Sydnor at DSydnor@hopelink.org or sign up for the newsletter by clicking this link.

Summit Survey

Summit attendees are invited to take the ETPN Summit survey which not only gives us feedback on how to improve for the future but also helps us start to track different providers’ level of interest in ability to join the network. Click here to take the ETPN Summit Survey.

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