

**Public Transit - Human Services
Coordinated Transportation Plan for Jefferson County, Ohio**

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

*Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson Planning Commission
Conference Room
124 North Fourth Street, Second Floor, Steubenville, OH
Tuesday, February 26, 2008
10:00 – 11:30 A.M.*

**DRAFT
Meeting Minutes**

Attendees

Mike Paprocki.....BHJ
Shawn Price.....BHJ
Jim Morgan..... Jefferson Community College
Carol Loman..... Jefferson County Job and Family Services
Robert Herceg Checker Transportation
Jeffrey DeStefano Change, Inc.
Peggy Garner WVDRS
Robert Ducker.....Health Ways Inc, Weirton
Tim Reinard Weirton Transit Corporation
Becki Stout..... Weirton Transit Corporation
Michael Hagg..... HCSW, Weirton
Paul Giannamore Herald Star Newspaper
Jim McLaughlin..... Wilbur Smith Associates
Suzann Rhodes Wilbur Smith Associates

Welcome and Open

Mike Paprocki opened the steering committee meeting at 10:04 a.m. and welcomed participants. He asked participants to introduce themselves.

Meeting Purpose

Jim McLaughlin briefly discussed the meeting purpose:

- § Review Draft Final Report
- § Discuss and Agree on Goals and Strategies
- § Discuss funding for implementation
- § Discuss potential offers and options
- § Coordination with WV Counties

Review of Draft Final Report

Jim McLaughlin reviewed the major issues presented in the Draft Final Report. He explained the purpose for the plan was both for the region to be able to continue to access three pots of federal funds including 5310, 5316 and 5318 and also create a community

based planning process that can evolve and expand over time to serve the mobility needs of the area. He explained that regional agencies and transit agencies have been preparing plans for the use of these funds for over 20 years. The difference is that today:

- § The only way to continue to be eligible for the funds is to do a coordination plan;
- § Technology improvements have made it feasible for coordinate among and between agencies to actually happen;
- § The need for coordinated services is greater today with a growing elderly population (This is even more evident in Steubenville given the poverty levels.);
- § It is possible that through collaboration and efficiencies, all programs could do more.

Jim discussed the comprehensive needs analysis and other research completed for the study.

Suzann Rhodes presented an overview of the three public open houses. She explained that these events confirmed what we heard in the stakeholder interviews and saw and the survey results. One issue raised several times is the need for service that is truly regional and not bounded by county or state lines. Mike Paprocki elaborated on the need to get people between the MPO area and Columbiana and Carroll counties, Pittsburgh and Wheeling.

Jim discussed examples of coordination from around the U.S. indicating that some states have “mandated” coordination but Ohio did not. He explained that successful programs around the U.S., where there is no mandate for coordination, often hire a “Mobility Manager” to make coordination work.

He referred participants to the Draft Final Report and explained the Family of Services and tiered level action plan as well as the Mobility Council and the role of the proposed “Mobility Manager.” He explained the steps needed to make coordination work.

Plan Goals

There was a discussion on plan goals. In general the following goals listed in the document came from national goals and are agreed as a good starting point:

- Goal 1: More rides for target populations for the same or fewer assets
- Goal 2: Simplified access
- Goal 3: Increased customer satisfaction

It was felt that local goals were also needed. These includes operational goals that were linked to performance measures were also needed and that these needed to be specific to the area but could be developed by the “Mobility Council” some examples included a goal to agree to work together and a goal to have more people know what services are available.

There was discuss and agreement on strategies as recommended in the final report.

- Adopt “family of services” concept
- Approve tiered implementation strategy
- See attachment for Tier activities

The following issues were discussed:

- § ? Can funds be used across state lines?
- § A. Theoretically yes, the Feds say that there is “no Federal impediment” that prohibits this and BHJ discussions with FTA regional representatives indicate that they feel it is acceptable to spend money within the urban area on either the WV or OH side. However there may be state regulations that stand in the way of this.
- § ? Can each state DOT transit staff make exceptions?
- § A. Yes. Possibly programmatic changes are needed to make this happen. The key is to keep working at it. There are examples out there, this is why a Mobility Manager would be good, it would be that persons job to get this through the red tape and make it a reality.
- § A. Currently the Weirton area is returning \$800,000 every 3 years and it is important to try to keep this money in the region and use it for transit services.

Consensus and Recommendation

The attendees discussed the strategies and recommendations.

- Overall:
 - We have reached the point that coordination is needed, people need transportation; especially to get to work. We need to think holistically – we need to see the tri-state region.
- Mobility Council: (consensus of opinions/discussion)
 - it is best to keep this Council at a staff level vs. a policy level
 - people on the council will need to be dynamic and know this is a need
 - the main purposes of this type group should be to “solve shared problems” and “get clarification and understanding” on issues and problems
 - participants will need to check their silos at the door
 - The council needs to work with the Mobility Manager to develop an action plan – the action plan would need to identify projects and set priorities
 - It would make sense to have the Council include agencies from both sides of the river
- Mobility Manager and Tiered approach
 - This person would need to be a “lightning rod”
 - Jim explained this position would do more than make individual referrals, they would work with the Mobility Council to identify and find solutions for problems, they would put together public information and educational information to help people in the community understand eligibility and services, and they would identify and solve problems.
- Funding
 - Mike Paprocki indicated that there is Federal funding that could pay part of this person’s salary and the rest raised through local match from participating agencies
 - Mike indicated he has had some early discussion on where and how to “house” this person

Next Steps

- WSA will finalize document and provide a very brief executive summary

- It was agreed to present the plan for approval by BHJ's Policy Board.
- It was agreed that each potentially participating agency should be given the plan for their leadership to review since they would be asked to officially participate in the recommendations and help provide the local match for moving ahead with the Council and Mobility Manager.
- Submission of the coordination plan to the State DOTs and FTA would not occur as a separate document but it would be presented as part of BHJ's 20 year Long Range Transportation Plan for the region
- BJH will move to officially create a Mobility Council and call meeting of the council the last Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m.

Adjourn

There being no other comments or business, Mike Paprocki adjourned that meeting at 11:30 a.m.